

Diversity impact assessment

TITLE	Infant Feeding Strategy
DATE	August 2018
LEAD OFFICER	Scott Elliott – Head of Health and Well-Being

1 Summary description of the proposed change

Medway Infant Feeding Strategy has been refreshed updating the previous 2011 strategy.

The refreshed strategy has revised priority areas and targets, with the Strategy Group requiring wider partner support to positively affect infant feeding levels in Medway.

2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment

The strategy was refreshed by an independent consultant and was scrutinised by the multi-agency infant feeding strategy group to ensure that it was fair, robust and that partners could sign up to the strategy.

The multi-agency Infant Feeding Strategy group has developed a wide range of interventions and projects based on both local and national best practice and evidence and NICE guidance

This in order to positively influence breastfeeding rates and other positive infant feeding practices within Medway. Despite these efforts, breastfeeding initiation and continuation rates have remained static for the last 5 years.

The strategy was also informed by a significant piece of consultation and engagement work undertaken independently by national charity Best Beginnings.

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3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to :

- Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't?

(insert ✓ in one or more boxes)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age			
Disability			
Gender reassignment			
Marriage/civil partnership			
Pregnancy/maternity		✓	
Race			
Religion/belief			
Sex		✓	
Sexual orientation			
Other (eg low income groups)		✓	

4 Summary of the likely impacts

- Who will be affected?
- How will they be affected?

The proposed strategy has the following key aims and impacts

- A year on year increase in breastfeeding initiation and continuation rates, aiming for a 1% uplift per year
- 80% of babies discharged from the neonatal unit receive some breast milk
- All parents are supported to build close relationships with their babies
- Parents are satisfied with the support they receive and able to follow their chosen method of infant feeding
- Breastfeeding is an achievable option for all families, but parents who choose to formula feed are supported to do so

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responsively

- Medway as a place becomes a more infant feeding friendly environment
- Solid food is offered to infants after 6 months of age, with continued breastfeeding for the first year and beyond
- Increased uptake of Healthy Start vitamins from 2017 baseline.

5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

- What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?
- Are there alternative providers?
- Can demand for services be managed differently?

The multi-agency Infant Feeding Strategy Group ensures that key partners are engaged in the strategy and that there are clear communication channels regarding the potential changes.

The strategy can only work if all of the key stakeholders work together (Medway Council, MCH, MFT, and Community Organisations). Regular attendance at Strategy Group meetings indicates ongoing commitment of partners to improving outcomes around infant feeding.

Use of the recently developed Beside You campaign also supports a digital element to the strategy to ensure that information and advice is available through a variety of mediums. This campaign included a significant piece of consultation and engagement with medway families

6 Action plan

- Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Review strategy and progress against the outcomes every 12 months to ensure that the strategy is embedded and making a difference	Infant Feeding Strategy Group	Sept 2019

7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be:

- to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate
- consider alternatives
- gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

To support the new strategy and outcomes identified

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that:

- the recommendation can be implemented
- sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned
- the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Director

James Williams

Date

August 2018

Contact your Performance and Intelligence hub for advice on completing this assessment

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