

Community Infant Feeding Support

Revised Consultation Document

kent.gov.uk/infantfeeding

Consultation closes 3 December 2017



Community Infant Feeding Support 2017 Public Consultation

Introduction

Consultation was initially undertaken in the summer to seek the public's views on a new delivery model as the contract with the current providers of breastfeeding support - PS Breastfeeding CIC - is coming to an end.

After listening to the concerns of service users, the consultation was withdrawn on 4 August and the council has been working with families and key groups on the proposal and documentation to support further consultation.

The main proposal is that the NHS Health Visiting service takes over the responsibility for the provision of infant feeding services, including breastfeeding, with intermediate and specialist support. It will do this as part of its commitment to offering families a minimum of five health development checks in the early years of a child's life. Health Visitors in Kent currently see a minimum of 5,600 women a month as part of their core work.

Kent is unusual in the way that it currently delivers community infant feeding services. Across the majority of the country, Health Visitors provide advice and support on breastfeeding as part of the Healthy Child Programme. However, PS Breastfeeding CIC has provided community infant feeding services since 2013. Prior to this, provision was very fragmented and KCC was concerned about low breastfeeding rates. This has always been a supplementary service but one which is clearly highly regarded by those who have used it, as the response to the earlier consultation clearly showed.

The current PS Breastfeeding service does not have the universal reach of the Health Visiting service which, as well as providing five health contacts, to women and children also has access to 111 sites from which to offer services. In this proposal the Health Visitors will provide 36 breastfeeding clinics run by health visitors and peer supporters. Specialist support will be provided by the Health Visiting service when and where it is needed.

Proposed Changes

We are proposing that PS Breastfeeding CIC are not recommissioned at the end of their contract (March 2018) and that the NHS-run Kent Health Visiting Service take over the responsibility for the provision of all breastfeeding support and advice, including intermediate and specialist support.

Further details of the changes that we propose compared to current provision are provided in the Supplementary Information document.

Table 1: Proposed changes to breastfeeding services in Kent from 1st April 2018.

What is currently provided by PS Breastfeeding C.I.C.	Proposed change that families will see from the Health Visiting service
Advice and support Advice to professionals and families	This will continue to be provided by the Health Visiting service
Peer Support Peer support training and supervision 23 peer support groups run weekly	There will be no reduction in the numbers of peer support volunteers. The Health Visiting service will provide peer support training and supervision.
Intermediate support Breastfeeding counsellors	In our proposed model this level of support will be provided by health visitors. The dedicated Breastfeeding Health Visitors at the 36 breastfeeding clinics represents an increase in this level of support compared to the current service. .
Breastfeeding counsellors provided by PS Breastfeeding CIC	Should a need be identified, the Health Visiting service will contract breastfeeding counsellors and/or lactation consultants.
Specialist clinics Eight are led by lactation consultants, seven by breastfeeding counsellors and two by a lactation consultant and a breastfeeding counsellor Total: 17 specialist clinics.	4 appointment-only lactation consultant clinics, offering up to 100 appointments per month. The model compensates for a reduction in the number of specialist clinics with a considerable increase in the number of groups with an intermediate level of support (i.e. above that provided by peer supporters alone). Where there is a need for more specialist capacity, this will be provided.
Staffing Data provided by PS Breastfeeding CIC shows they have three full time equivalent employed staff. They have 10 part time district support leads (3.58wte) and 15 self-employed sessional clinical staff (4 Lactation Consultants and 11 Breastfeeding Counsellors). Total: 28 staff (data on whole time equivalents for specialists is not available) As at June 2017 there are 246 active peer supporters in the community.	Numbers of staff available to support breastfeeding women: 307 health visitors (236.24 whole time equivalent) 90 community nursery nurses (72.12 whole time equivalent).Total: 397 staff (308.36 whole time equivalent) It is planned that there will be 4 lactation consultants in the new model and 4 breastfeeding 'champions' in each District. If there is a need for breastfeeding counsellors they will be provided. Champions will be BFI trained Health Visitors with a special interest in breastfeeding. Numbers of peer supporters will be maintained in the new model.

Baby Friendly Initiative Project management, training and audit to support the Baby Friendly Initiative accreditation for Early Help	The Health Visiting service is providing this already for their own accreditation process and will also provide this for Children's Centres. It is planned that these work streams will come together to achieve Stage 3. The Health Visiting Service anticipates that it will be ready for Stage 3 assessment by 1 st April
Website and resources Kent Baby Matters	The NHS will provide details of open access and duty telephone line services on its Health Visiting Service website.
Social marketing and insight work PSB has previously commissioned social marketing and insight work to support their activities, collecting useful information to support delivery and promotion of its services.	KCC has previously commissioned insight work to better understand different health behaviours, service demands and communication needs. KCC will continue to review all its Public Health services, undertaking analysis and insight work as required, supported by KCC led engagement with stakeholders.
Co-ordination of baby friendly venues and campaigns Provided by PS Breastfeeding CIC	The NHS is already involved in this work and will continue to work with partners. KCC Public Health will also take more responsibility for promoting breastfeeding.
Advocacy and lobbying Although this is not part of the PS Breastfeeding CIC contract with KCC, it has been a valuable part of the work that they have undertaken.	<p>This will change as the NHS does not have the independence of a third sector organisation to do this work. However, seeking and acting on the views of service users is a requirement for NHS Trusts and forms part of the KCC performance monitoring process for all contracts.</p> <p>The Health Visiting service is, in addition, a member of the Regional Infant Feeding Network which does have a role for service improvement and lobbying for change.</p>

Rationale for new proposal

KCC believes that the Health Visiting service will deliver all the aspects of the Healthy Child Programme and will provide more support to women who breast or formula feed than is currently available.

The commissioning responsibility for the health visiting service transferred to KCC in autumn 2015. In the preceding years the service received additional investment building up to over £10m additional investment annually. Since transfer, this investment has

been fully utilised and the service has continuously improved. KCC is confident that Health Visitors can now deliver routine and specialist breastfeeding support in addition to the mandatory universal contacts and support it provides, and therefore does not wish to commission provision which duplicates the health visiting offer.

In light of the Health Visiting Services' capacity to now deliver the full range of infant feeding support, the need for the additional service has passed. In line with the original plans to commission an interim breastfeeding support service until the Health Visiting Service was in a position to take on this work, KCC's focus has been on making sure that the offer from the Health Visiting Service is appropriate and will meet the needs of Kent residents.

These changes present opportunity to reduce spending of £400,000 whilst delivering a new model of universal and targeted breast feeding support at a time when KCC can be confident that the Health Visiting Service will ensure that people using the services can continue to receive all appropriate support. This will allow KCC to maintain other Public Health projects despite ongoing reductions in the Public Health Grant from central government.

Health Visitors are nurses or midwives who have received further higher education in public health and are on the Nursing and Midwifery Council Register as Specialist Community Public Health Nurses. This means the training they have received makes them fully qualified to undertake this important work.

In addition to the specialist public health training, 93% have undertaken the evidence-based UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative training to support women in the antenatal and postnatal period to ensure that they make informed decisions over feeding.

There will be 4 Breastfeeding Champions in each of the 12 Districts (a total of 48), to support colleagues and families and to promote Breastfeeding Welcome. The Breastfeeding Champion scheme identifies venues which welcome breastfeeding women, and helps signpost these premises for women with stickers and signs ensuring women can find somewhere to breastfeed when they are out of the house.

The Health Visiting Service has 4 Infant Feeding Leads (IFLs). The IFLs are currently undertaking further advanced accredited Lactation Consultant training. In addition to this training, they are obtaining further specialist training regarding Tongue Tie and have attended specific study days and conferences out of area to obtain the relevant knowledge and practical assessment skills to be confident and proficient practitioners to diagnose and refer for frenulectomy. The lead dietician at KCHFT is providing the IFLs with further education and support around more complex feeding issues within the infant feeding arena and referral processes.

In the interim, whilst the IFLs are completing their Lactation Consultant training, registered Lactation Consultants and/or Breastfeeding Counsellors will be employed to meet any gaps. We will expect the Service to provide enough specialist resource to meet the need and will keep this under review.

It is proposed that initially there will be at least 4 Specialist clinics a week across Kent. This will involve one clinic in each of the following areas; East Kent (Maidstone, Swale and Canterbury) West Kent (Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Malling and Ashford), North Kent (Dartford, Gravesham and Sevenoaks) and Kent Coastal (Shepway, Dover, Deal and Thanet). As the NHS has access to 111 venues in Kent, these clinics will be flexible and will be held in the areas that have the highest number of referrals to reduce the amount of travel time for families.

It is proposed that at least 6 slots per clinic will be available, with the length of appointments (and therefore total number) dependent on the issues women are being seen with. This will mean lactation consultants will provide at least 24 face to face appointments a week across Kent (approx. 100 appointments per month). As well as seeing mothers in the specialist clinics, the Infant Feeding Leads/ Lactation Consultants will be able to provide telephone advice and home visits.

This approach can be compared with West Sussex, which has UNICEF accreditation, has half the number of new births as Kent and only sees 24 mothers per month via its specialist service. Kent could therefore expect a need to provide specialist support to 48 mothers a month, so the 100 planned appointments represent a large amount of specialist provision compared with expected need.

KCC recognises that families value the support provided by PS Breastfeeding, however examination of other local authority activity and KCC's ongoing service reviews strongly indicate that PSB are overproviding specialist care via their Lactation Clinics. The intermediate level support provided within KCC proposed model is expected to be able to address the majority of issues currently being managed by the existing specialist clinics.

It is proposed that this is kept under careful review to allow for changes to the level of provision depending on health needs.

Other options considered

As part of the development of the proposal, KCC examined several alternative options that were subsequently assessed as not appropriate. Details of the considered options and the reasons for them not being progressed are provided below:

1) Ending the provision of Community Infant Feeding Support

There is clear evidence that this support is needed by families in Kent, and therefore ending its provision is not an appropriate option. The Health Visiting Service sees the work that PS Breastfeeding CIC undertakes as part of their core role.

2) Extending the contract with PS Breastfeeding CIC

PS Breastfeeding CIC has delivered the Community Infant Feeding Support over recent years. We believe that the KCHFT Health Visiting Service can offer a high quality service which will reach all women (approximately 17,500 births per year) and is more integrated with other parts of the health sector. As the health visiting service is now sufficiently trained and resourced to deliver this service, we no longer believe an additional service is required. Extending the existing contract would also

cost KCC Public Health up to £404,000 a year which we do not believe is the most efficient use of public funds.

3) Re-procuring an additional infant feeding support service

In view of the fact that infant feeding support is a core responsibility of the health visiting service and they are now sufficiently trained and resourced to deliver this, we do not consider that commissioning what would in effect be a duplicate service, would be an efficient use of public funds.

Maps showing current services

Figure 1 - Current locations of PS Breastfeeding CIC services

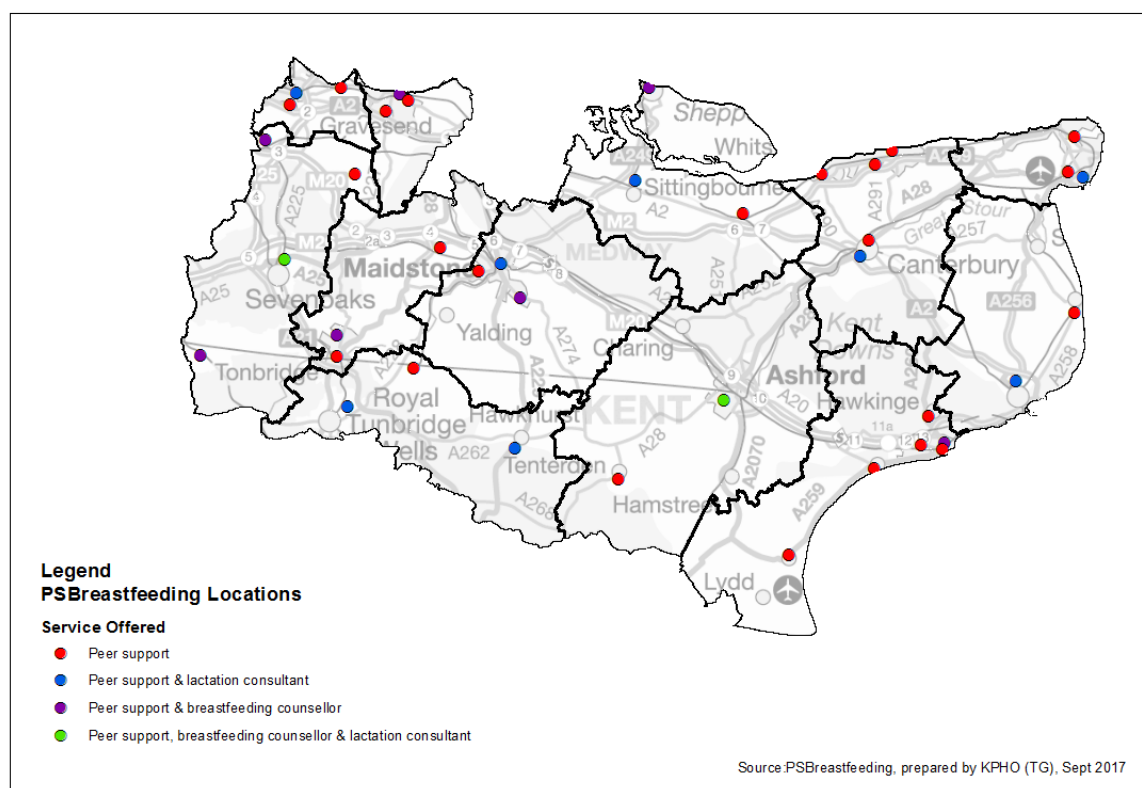
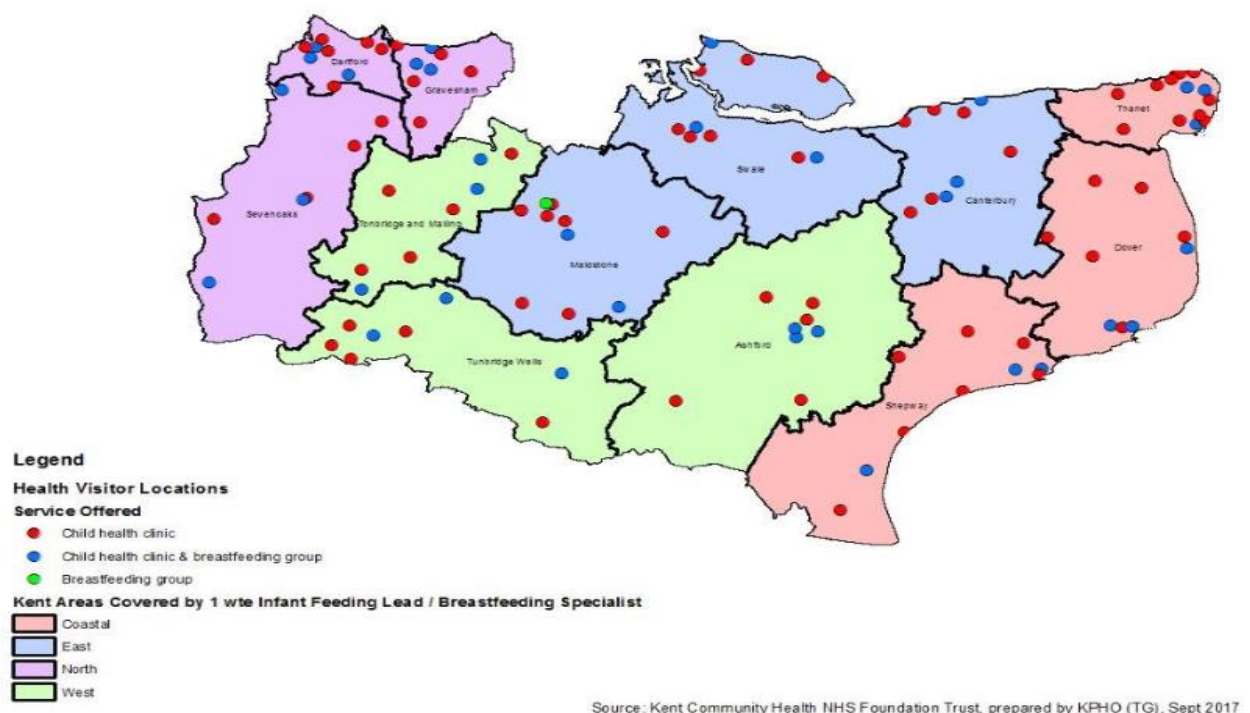


Figure 2 - Health Visitor Clinic Locations



Clarifications from the previous consultation

From the earlier consultation you have told us that these are your main concerns:

- That breastfeeding peer supporters will no longer be available

There has never been any intention of withdrawing the peer supporters, they are Children Centre volunteers and managed by Early Help. Future training and supervision will be provided by Health Visitors. The intention is to maintain current numbers of peer supporters.

- That there will be a cut in the amount of specialist support available

This is not the intention. However, when compared to other similar areas it appears that there is significant over provision of specialist community support in Kent. This will be kept under review to ensure that enough specialist support will be provided as is needed. The service will be offered by the Health Visiting service from 111 venues for which includes 36 new breastfeeding drop-ins with health visitors and breastfeeding peer supporters, 4 weekly specialist clinics, telephone appointments and home visits. Specialist clinic consultations will be by appointment but anyone can request an appointment at the clinic. KCC will monitor this closely, to ensure that adequate provision is available. If there is a clearly demonstrated need to increase the provision KCC will do so.

- Women are concerned about privacy

We understand that women need privacy to discuss breastfeeding and the 36 breastfeeding groups will be held in separate areas to the Child Health Clinics and will be run by health visitors and breastfeeding peer supporters. If there is no space for both groups at the same time the breastfeeding groups will be run at a different time to ensure that there is adequate privacy.

- Women are concerned that they will not receive help quickly enough and there will be a waiting list

As well as the open access breastfeeding drop-ins, the Health Visiting Service will have a duty line that can be accessed by anyone seeking advice. Those who request infant feeding help will be contacted within 24 hours Monday-Friday.

During out of hours the National breastfeeding helpline is open 09.30-09.30 every day. The National Childbirth Trust (NCT) and La Leche League, a group of voluntary sector organisations that promote breastfeeding and provide breastfeeding counsellors, also have a helpline.

- There is a concern that comments from the first consultation will not be included in the final report.

All responses will be analysed from both consultations.

- How will we find out where the new services are and how to access them?

This information will be available in Children's Centres and on the Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust website. The NHS and KCC will put in place a communication plan to ensure that this information is widely available.

Answers to other questions are available in the Frequently Asked Questions document.

Equality Impact

KCC Public Health has also developed an Equality Impact Assessment on the implications of the change, which may be viewed on-line at www.kent.gov.uk/infantfeeding.

In summary, there are a number of groups that Children's Centre data suggests are not being reached (2016/17 data is included as an appendix to the EIA). These groups include adults and children with disabilities, teenage parents and lone parents. As part of this consultation we have included a specific question about the needs of particular groups and we fully intend to reach the people that the EIA has shown that we lack information about. The universal model provided by the Health Visiting service will enable us to better reach these groups, as the Service is offered to all.

We would now like to hear your views before a final decision is taken.

Outlined in the following section are details of how to get involved in this consultation.

Have your say

How to get involved and find out more information:

Consultation responses will be used to improve the draft model and associated service specifications, helping to make sure that they are designed around the needs of Kent residents.

Whether you are a past, current or future user of these services, a carer or relative of a service user, a member of the public, an existing or potential provider of services, or another stakeholder we are keen to hear your views and experiences.

Please visit www.kent.gov.uk/infantfeeding to see all supporting documentation and to complete the online questionnaire. Responding via the questionnaire supports KCC's analysis process and will help ensure that your views can be taken into account.

Alternatively, complete the paper questionnaire and hand it in to your local Children's Centre.

If you have any questions about the proposal, please contact PHconsultation@kent.gov.uk

Details of the previous phase of Infant Feeding Service consultation may be viewed online at <http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/InfantFeeding/consultationHome>

More information about KCC's other consultation activity around Health Visiting in 2015 can be viewed online at www.kent.gov.uk/healthychildren

If you need the questionnaire or any other documents in an alternative format, please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call 03000 421533 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 421553). This number goes to an answering machine, which is monitored during office hours.

Kent County Council values all feedback and views provided. By completing the short questionnaire you will be assisting us to ensure that these services meet the needs of Kent residents.