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|  | Manchester Alliance for Community Care |
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| Breast FeedingA BriefingAugust 2010 |
| MACCSwan Buildings, 20, Swan Street, ManchesterM4 5JWTel: 0161 834 9823[www.macc.org.uk](http://www.macc.org.uk) |   |

**1. About this briefing**

This briefing is aimed at practitioners and managers within the voluntary and community sector who want to know more about work which is taking place in Manchester to increase breastfeeding and to start thinking through how their organisation may be well placed to contribute to this.

It provides an overview of breastfeeding in Manchester; how Manchester NHS and statutory partners are tackling the issue at a strategic level; the types of services voluntary and community sector organisations are well placed to deliver, useful resources and links to further information.

For more information about this briefing and the voluntary and community sector [Child and Family Support Forum](http://www.macc.org.uk/macc/child_families.php), please contact:

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**2. Overview**

Breastfeeding is acknowledged to offer multiple benefits to health and wellbeing for both mother and child. It has an effect upon life expectancy, child development and reduction of risk factors around chronic disease amongst other numerous benefits.

There is clear evidence that breastfeeding has positive health benefits for both mother and baby, in both the short and longer term (i.e. beyond the period of breastfeeding). For infants, it reduces the incidence of gastrointestinal and respiratory infections and reduces the risk of allergies. For mothers, it promotes maternal recovery from childbirth, reduces the risk of premenopausal breast cancer (and possibly of ovarian cancer), accelerates weight loss and aids a return to prepregnancy body weight. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months (26 weeks) of an infant’s life.

Breastfeeding also has an important contribution to make towards reducing infant mortality, childhood obesity and health inequalities. Breastfeeding is strongly linked to socioeconomic circumstances and infants from more deprived families are among the least likely to be breastfed. Increasing the uptake of breastfeeding among deprived groups can therefore help to break the cycle of nutritional deprivation.

A national target has been set to increase the number of mothers that breastfeed by 2% each year. Across England as a whole, breastfeeding initiation rates have been improving for the past 10 years. Although breastfeeding initiation in Manchester has increased in recent years (from 63% of mothers in 2005/06 to 69% of mothers in 2007/08), the rate remains low compared with the England average of 78%.

**3. Manchester’s Strategic Approach**

Priorities for NHS Manchester and partners to improve and support breastfeeding include:

* Achieving and maintaining UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative across all Manchester maternity and health visiting services;
* Providing localised, easily accessible support for breastfeeding from a variety of venues including Sure Start Children’s Centres;
* Ensuring that data is collected on breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks;
* Providing adequate training to the primary care workforce to enable them to give consistent advice and support to mothers.
* Develop a breast feeding peer support service
* Distribute a book to promote and dispel the myths surrounding breast feeding

(Manchester Public Health Annual Report 2009)

**4. How can VCS organisations contribute to increasing breastfeeding?**

* Increase uptake of smoking cessation and breastfeeding among pregnant teenagers
* Harness intergenerational support, including that from grandparents, to boost support for breastfeeding and healthier weaning practices.
* Work with specialised and mainstream services to target breastfeeding
* Support to disadvantaged groups
* Provide accessible venues for breastfeeding support services

**5. Opportunities for the voluntary and community sector**

Breast feeding is one of the work programmes being delivered by Children’s Board. The [Child and Family Support Forum](http://www.macc.org.uk) facilitated by MACC, works to increase engagement of the voluntary and community sector in the work of the Children’s Board. For more information contact Nicola Shanahan (MACC).

**6. Specialist local voluntary and community sector organisations**

[National Childbirth Trust](http://www.nct.org.uk)

For information about other organisations delivering work around breastfeeding go to [www.onecentralplace.org.uk](http://www.onecentralplace.org.uk) – an online directory of voluntary and community sector organisations in Manchester.

**7. Useful Documents**

[Manchester Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), 2008](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=2829&fileID=8459)

[Improving Health in Manchester: NHS Commissioning Strategic Plan 2009-2014](http://www.manchester.nhs.uk/document_uploads/Commissioning/NHS%20Manchester%20Commissioning%20Plan%20111108_7bcd6.pdf)

[Manchester Public Health Annual Report](http://www.manchester.nhs.uk/document_uploads/Board%207%20April%202010/Manchester%20Public%20Health%20Annual%20Report%202009%20%282%29.pdf)

[A Picture of Progress: Compendium of Statistics for Manchester](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/file/11460/a_picture_of_progress_compendium_compendium_of_statistics_for_manchester)

[Developing a Breastfeeding Strategy](http://www.babyfriendly.org.uk/page.asp?page=221) (2009) UNICEF UK

[Start4life](http://www.nhs.uk/start4life/Pages/welcome-to-start4life.aspx) (2010) Department of Health

**8. Useful Links**

[Manchester Alliance for Community Care](http://www.macc.org.uk/macc/food.php)

[NHS Manchester website](http://www.manchester.nhs.uk/default.aspx)

[Manchester Public Health Development Service](http://www.manchesterpublichealthdevelopment.org/)

[www.breastfeeding.nhs.uk](http://www.breastfeeding.nhs.uk)

[National Childbirth Trust](http://www.nct.org.uk)

[La Leche League](http://www.laleche.org.uk/)

[Baby and Bump](http://www.babyandbump.com)

[The baby friendly initiative](http://www.babyfriendly.org.uk/)

[Breast Feeding Network](http://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk)

[Young Healthy Manchester – Breastfeeding advice](http://www.younghealthymanchester.nhs.uk/yhm/newparents/breastfeed/)

**9. For more information**

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