

Department of Health West Midlands Breastfeeding Training Programme Report.

Breastfeeding Management Training & Strategic Support Package Training: 2008-2010

In 2008 the West Midlands Infant Feeding Coordinator and Administrator planned, co-ordinated and administered a programme of breastfeeding / infant feeding training to add skills, knowledge and service capacity to all relevant staff teams to the 17 PCT areas of the West Midlands.

The target audience for the breastfeeding management training was:

- Infant feeding co-ordinators who were newly in post
- Generic Health Visitors
- Generic Midwives from Maternity Unit and Community Midwifery Team
- Health Visiting and Midwifery Support Workers
- Children's Centre Workers who are breastfeeding leads for their centres.

It was felt that in many localities of the West Midlands generic staff had not had adequate training to effectively support their patients / clients breastfeeding management issues and much of the breastfeeding management work in the Health Sector relied on breastfeeding leads and / or breastfeeding 'champions'.

To support localities and their relevant child workforce teams to progress towards gaining UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Accreditation (or equivalent minimum standard quality assurance scheme as recommended by NICE Guidance 11 in 2007) the Department of Health West Midlands (DHWM) decided to focus on a large scale training programme of UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative delivered and certificated courses.

These courses also pre-empted the subsequent rounds of funding for additional services for breastfeeding, including working towards Baby Friendly Accreditation granted to 13/17 WM localities from DH central funds in 2 bidding rounds during 2008/9 and 2009/10.

The UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative focuses largely on the consistency and quality of training, knowledge and skills of staff to support women to effectively manage their own feeding choices—regardless of feeding method.

Phase 1 Delivery 2008-9 West Midlands Breastfeeding Management skills Building courses:

The first phase of this suite of training co-ordinated, administered and funded by DHWM breastfeeding training programme was to offer 40 spaces of 'Breastfeeding Management Training' (for registered health Professional grades of staff) and 40 spaces of 'Helping Mothers to Breastfeed' Training (for non-health professional support staff). Incidentally, these two courses have recently been 'merged' by UNICEF UK Baby Friendly as they were so similar.

To gain certification, participants had to attend between 14 and 18 hours of face to face workshop tutorial style training, plus had to evidence the completion of three Practical Skills Reviews on the Topics of:

Observing a full breastfeed (to gain skills in undertaking breastfeeding management assessments with mother and baby dyads)

Teaching mothers how to effectively hand express their breast milk

Practice in Adjusting Positioning and Attachment of mother and baby dyads for optimum breastfeeding and milk transfer

Outcomes of the Breastfeeding Management skills building courses:

UNICEF UK trainers evaluated all participants.

Evaluations:

78/80 spaces were filled

99% recording / evaluation rate

98% Certification rate for participants

Phase 2 2009/10 West Midlands Breastfeeding Strategic Support Courses:

DHWM funded, coordinated and administered a West Midlands based programme UNICEF UK capacity building training for localities in the West Midlands during 2009.

Breastfeeding Education Management Training (Train the Trainer)

The aim of this course is to equip West Midlands locality Infant Feeding Co-ordinators to deliver Baby friendly curriculum approved and standardised training to staff in their localities. The overarching vision of having this consistency of training roll-out is that a huge issue for pregnant and new parents is the inconsistency of advice from health professionals about infant feeding and breastfeeding management practices.

Locality Infant feeding Coordinators who are responsible for coordinating and delivering breastfeeding training in their job descriptions are the target audience for

this 21 hour course. The course includes developing an infant feeding training curriculum plus learning outcomes and also practical sessions on delivering training to other staff. This course enables training delivery to reach a higher standard – remembering that Infant feeding Coordinators tend to come from a clinical rather than training background.

Education Management Training was delivered in December 2009 to 14 West Midlands locality Infant Feeding Leads representing a mixture of Maternity Services and Community Health / PCT service providers.

Evaluations:

100% attendance rate

100% certification rate

Baby Friendly Initiative Project Management Training

UNICEF Training Project Management of Baby Friendly Initiatives (16 regional spaces).

Locality infant feeding strategic leads were the target audience for this two day Baby Friendly Initiative Project Management course. Participants should have the lead responsibility for implementing and maintaining the Baby Friendly Initiative in their job description.

UNICEF UK trainers evaluated all participants.

Evaluations:100% attendance rate

100% evaluation rate.

100% satisfaction rate for the course

Expressions of thanks received as part of the evaluation of the course e.g. “The course was brilliant. I was worried that I couldn’t really afford the time to go, but it was a real investment, I learnt so much and applying it will save time. Thanks to DHWM for organising and funding the course”.

The outcome of the programme overall has been that 108 staff have been trained and certificated – for a range of multi-disciplinary staff ranging from support staff to strategic leads.

A further outcome from the West Midlands Training Programme is that locality leads have – via the project management course – been able to progress quickly in their areas towards implementing Baby Friendly Initiative and its’ standards, as monitored against local commitments by DH.

In addition, of the 14 Infant Feeding Co-ordinators who attended the Education Management Training in 2009, over half have implemented their own training locally during 2010.

This gives autonomy and capacity to increase effective breastfeeding management skills and knowledge in local generic teams who need them.

DHWM estimates that during 2010 up to an additional 300 local staff have been given high quality standardised, up to date training in infant feeding as delivered and locally certificated by their own NHS infant feeding colleagues. This reduces cost: a salaried member of staff delivering equivalent, cascaded training themselves instead of funding an outside organisation to deliver it for them.

The West Midlands was an early adopter of this regionalised approach to coordination, administration and delivery of this training and the programme has proved extremely sustainable.

Many thanks to UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative Staff for working in partnership with us. Well done to all those staff that have supported and attended this programme.

Special thanks to Sandra Farmer, Administrator to the West Midlands Infant Feeding Co-ordinator during 2008 and 2009 for her dedication attending to all of the administrative and certification work that this programme required.

Caroline Mansell
West Midlands Infant Feeding Co-ordinator.
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