

EIA000946 Breastfeeding Peer Support Service

About your EIA

Reference Number:	EIA000946
Subject of EIA:	Breastfeeding Peer Support Service
Description:	<p>There is extensive evidence to show that breastfeeding helps to give babies the best possible start in life. Breastmilk provides optimal nutrition tailored to a baby's unique needs, vital immunity against infection in the early weeks, helps to promote early bonding and emotional attachment and reduces the risk of common illnesses in infancy. Breastfed babies are less likely to be admitted to hospital due to gastroenteritis or respiratory related conditions. Prevalence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is lower in infants who are breastfed. Being breastfed also has links to improved health and wellbeing later in life including obesity prevalence and reduced maternal health prevalence of ovarian and breast cancer rates. As breastfeeding is a key influence on a child's health status and their later life chances and also a proven way to reduce health inequalities, breast feeding support has both significant health benefits and economic savings. Breastfeeding peer supporters are women from local communities who have lived experience of breastfeeding and have completed training in how to support others. The service offers drop-in services within the community, as well as a variety of support options such as one to one sessions, group sessions, home visits, online or telephone support. There is increasing acknowledgment of the benefits of peer support and volunteer participation in supporting health professionals, especially in circumstances where access to professional services may be limited. A key focus of this service is to improve breastfeeding initiation and sustainment, ensuring the best possible outcomes for all to support families throughout the infant feeding journey.</p>
In support of:	["New service"]
Reviewing Frequency:	Annually
First review date:	31/08/2026

Directorate, Division & Service Area

Directorates:	["Strategy, Equalities and Partnerships"]
Division:	Public Health
Service Area:	Children and Young People Team

Budget Savings

Related to budget savings?:	
Budget proposal reference number:	

Officers

Responsible Officer Email:	kathy.lee@birmingham.gov.uk
Accountable Officer Email:	marion.gibbon@birmingham.gov.uk

Data Sources

Data sources:	["Interviews", "Relevant reports/strategies", "Relevant research", "LMNS, OHID"]
Data sources Details:	Data and references used : 1. Breastfeeding in the 21st century: epidemiology, mechanisms, and lifelong effect (30 January 2016), Victoria, CG et al, The Lancet, Volume 387, Issue 10017, 475-490 2. Infant Feeding Survey 2010 (2012), Fiona McAndrew et al, Health and Social Care Information Centre 3. The Best Start for Life, A Vision for the 1,001 Critical Days. The Early Years Healthy Development. 2021 4. "The Best Start for Life: A Vision for the 1,001 Critical Days" 2003 5. Public Health qualitative research report Seldom Heard Conversations about pregnancy - \\SVWCCG111\PublicHealth\3.0 POPULATION & PROTECTION\3.30 CHILDREN & YP\3.307 CONTRACTS & SERVICE SPECS\Seldom heard pregnancy voices\Seldom_Heard_Conversations_about_Pregnancy_JULY_2022 (3).pdf 6. Data from Birmingham and Solihull Local Neonatal and Maternity System (LMNS) 7. Data from OHID (phe.org.uk)

Initial Assessment

Impact Age:	No
Impact Disability:	No
Impact Sex:	No
Impact Gender Reassignment:	No
Impact Marriage and Civil Partnerships:	No
Impact Pregnancy and Maternity:	No
Impact Race:	No
Impact Religion or Beliefs:	No
Impact Sexual Orientation:	No
Impact Care Experience:	

Initial Assessment Summary

Initial Assessment Summary:	The initial assessment shows a low likelihood of impacts on individuals. Therefore a full EIA is not required. No significant issues have been identified.
Is a full EIA Required?:	No

Protected Characteristic – Age

Impact Age:	Yes
Age Group Impacted:	Young mothers, All parents.
Age Impact Details:	The service provides non-judgemental, peer led support aimed to build confidence and improve knowledge related to infant feeding. Some mothers may experience challenges returning to work, the service offers flexible support options, including virtual consultations and evening/weekend support. By recruiting peer supporters from diverse age groups the service promotes inclusivity and ensures that support groups can be tailored to various life stages and experiences.
Age Impact Mitigation:	Offering different modes of support helps accommodate individual preferences and varying needs.

Protected Characteristic – Disability

Impact Disability:	This service is designed to be inclusive and accessible to all parents including those with physical and mental health conditions.
Disability Impact Details:	Parents with physical disability may benefit from home visits or virtual support. Parents with mental health conditions such as postnatal depression may find peer support beneficial in reducing isolation. There may be venues not accessible to parents with mobility impairments.
Disability Impact Mitigation:	Ensure that all venues used are fully accessible and compliant with disability access. Offer various modes of support, including phone, text and home visits.

Protected Characteristic – Sex

Impact Sex:	yes
Sex Groups Impacted:	Women and men
Sex Impact Details:	The service empowers parents by providing non-judgemental support and increases their confidence feeding and bonding with their babies. There may be a risk of unintentionally excluding non-birthing parents, transgender men
Sex Impact Mitigation:	The use of inclusive language in service materials and communications, for example parents instead of mothers. Training for peer supporters on gender sensitivity. Plus monitor feedback to identify and address any gender related barriers to access.

Protected Characteristic – Gender Reassignment

Impact Gender Reassignment:	Yes
Gender Reassignment Impact Details:	The service will offer inclusive language and being peer led may reduce stigma, but a lack of awareness or training on gender diversity among peer supporters could be a potential barrier.
Gender Reassignment Impact Mitigation:	Provision of mandatory training for all staff and peer supporters on gender identity, inclusive language and being respectful.

Protected Characteristic – Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact Marriage and Civil Partnership:	No
Marriage and Civil Partnership Groups Impacted:	The service supports all families including one parent families
Marriage and Civil Partnership Impact Details:	Train peer supporters to be sensitive to different relationships and avoid assumptions
Marriage and Civil Partnership Impact Mitigation:	Train peer supporters to be sensitive to different relationships and avoid assumptions

Protected Characteristic – Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact Pregnancy and Maternity:	Yes
Pregnancy and Maternity Impact Details:	The service offers antenatal education and postnatal support helping mothers initiate and sustain breastfeeding. Early intervention during pregnancy helps prepare for breastfeeding and postnatal support will improve breastfeeding duration.
Pregnancy and Maternity Impact Mitigation:	Offering flexible support options including home visits, virtual consultations and community based clinics.

Protected Characteristic – Ethnicity and Race

Impact Ethnicity and Race:	Yes
Ethnicity and Race Groups Impacted:	Black or Black British, African, Caribbean. Asian (Pakistani, Bangladeshi or Indian), Eastern European migrants other ethnic groups (Roma, Traveller)
Ethnicity and Race Impact Details:	Recruiting local peer supporters ensures cultural trust. Training all staff to deliver culturally competent and respectful support. Language barriers may prevent some families accessing support.

Ethnicity and Race Impact Mitigation:	Train peer supporters in culturally sensitivity and unconscious bias. Partnering with community and faith leaders will help trust and promote the service. Community based delivery for example Family hubs.
---------------------------------------	--

Protected Characteristic – Religion

Impact Religion:	Yes
Religion Groups Impacted:	Various religious groups
Religion Impact Details:	The service can be tailored to respect religious practices and beliefs around modesty, gender roles and infant care. Recruiting peer supporters from diverse backgrounds can help build trust. Some religious groups may have strict modesty codes or gender interaction rules. The service will acknowledge or accommodate religious practices such as fasting during Ramadam.
Religion Impact Mitigation:	To improve trust and engagement maybe offer female only staff and private spaces and train staff in cultural competence and religious sensitivity.

Protected Characteristic – Sexual Orientation

Impact Sexual Orientation:	
Sexual Orientation Groups Impacted:	No
Sexual Orientation Impact Details:	The service can support all breastfeeding parents including same sex relationships or LGBTQ+ families who may normally face barriers accessing healthcare. Peer supporters may not be trained to understand unique experiences faced by LGBTQ+ parents such as chestfeeding
Sexual Orientation Impact Mitigation:	Recruiting peer supporters from diverse backgrounds including LGBTQ+ can give a sense of belonging and trust. Training peer supporters to include LGBTQ+ awareness and sensitivity training.

Protected Characteristic – Care Experience

Impact Care Experience:	People with care experience may lack traditional family support networks. Access to this service can contribute to better physical and mental health for both parent and child.
Care Experience Impact Details:	
Care Experience Impact Mitigation:	Work with social workers and youth services to promote the service to care experienced parents and create a welcoming environment where parents feel respected and understood.

Other

Any other risks or impacts:	
-----------------------------	--

Full Assessment Summary

Full Assessment Summary:	The service is expected to have a positive impact on all protected groups, particularly women, ethnic minorities and those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. It aligns with Birmingham City Councils strategic objectives to address health disparities and improve early life outcomes. The service is designed to support Birmingham's diverse communities.
--------------------------	---

Monitoring

Monitoring Details:	The provider will submit activity reports two weeks prior to scheduled contract meetings. These reports will include the monitoring of key performance indicators such as breastfeeding initiation rates and 6-8 weeks postpartum, the number of parents supported and volunteer engagement levels.
Monitoring Officer Email:	Kathy Lee

