

BfN News

Mums Supporting Mums

FEELING GOOD ABOUT FEEDING BABIES

How can we have better
conversations about infant feeding?

BOOK REVIEW

Breastfeeding Uncovered,
Amy Brown

DRUGS IN BREASTMILK EVALUATION

Dr Wendy Jones discusses
the key findings

JULY 2019
SUMMER
ISSUE 73



HELLO!

JULY 2019
SUMMER
ISSUE 73

Editor's Note

Welcome to the Summer 2019 edition of BfN News.

On our cover this quarter are Lambeth peer supporter **Sarah** and her beautiful twins, who arrived just in time to beautifully demonstrate skin to skin contact for #CelebrateBreastfeeding week. Congratulations Sarah and family! And thank you so much for sharing this photo.

The images on this page are from a project called Holding Time, by artist **Lisa Creagh**. She will be holding a breakout session at our conference in October (early bird tickets still available - see page 4 for details).

In this edition you'll find a round-up of the recent evaluation of the Drugs in Breastmilk Service (page 2), by our resident pharmacist **Dr Wendy Jones**. It makes for fascinating reading. There's also a piece by **Professor Fiona Woollard** and **Dr Heather Trickey**, on the new Feeling Good About Feeding Babies website, developed together with BfN and NCT (page 6).

Please do let us know what you think of this edition of BfN News and get in touch if you have suggestions for articles for future newsletters. Email alyson.spicer@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk. We'd love to hear from you.

Thank you for your ongoing support for the Breastfeeding Network.



“A LIFELINE WHEN NO ONE ELSE WANTS TO GIVE YOU AN ANSWER.”

An evaluation of the Breastfeeding Network Drugs in Breastmilk Service



Dr Wendy Jones, PhD MRPharmS

Dr Wendy Jones, BfN pharmacist, discusses the findings of the recent evaluation of BfN's Drugs in Breastmilk Service. The evaluation was carried out by: Professor Amy Brown; Dr Gretel Finch, Research officer, Swansea University; Dr Heather Trickey, Research Fellow, DECIPHER, Cardiff University; Dr Ruth Hopkins and colleagues, Swansea University.

It's almost exactly a year ago that Amy began collecting data to evaluate the BfN Drugs in Breastmilk Service. I won't hide the fact that I was anxious – having no control over the comments made about what you do every day is challenging at least. Everyone kept reassuring me it would be ok but I knew I would focus on the negatives rather than the positives – because that's what I do. :)

The evaluation sought to explore who is using the service, why they are accessing it, what information they are receiving and their views of the service. It also explored the impact the service upon maternal wellbeing, professional practice and decisions to continue breastfeeding.

Comments were collected from mothers and their families, from professionals, from volunteer breastfeeding people and 16 leads of breastfeeding organisations or key individuals responsible for breastfeeding in their role, all based in the UK. Most importantly cases studies were collected from 3 mothers who used the service. Evaluations included emails, the facebook messages and the fact sheets on the website.

The report is one of the most extensive documents I have ever seen and worthy of a Masters Dissertation at least. The key findings were that:

“The service was held in high esteem by organisation leads, mothers, health professionals, and mother supporters. It was used by a wide variety of individuals, for a wide variety of reasons; most common usage included information regarding antibiotics, antidepressants, antihistamines, anaesthetics and surgical procedures. Most common queries for the factsheets tended to be for milder illnesses or enquiries such as cold remedies and decongestants, while those accessing the one to one contact tended to often be for more complex cases, suggesting each arm of the service is meeting a different kind of need “

I was very proud to read that:

The service was evaluated as efficient, accurate and trustworthy. It was viewed as highly evidence based and a

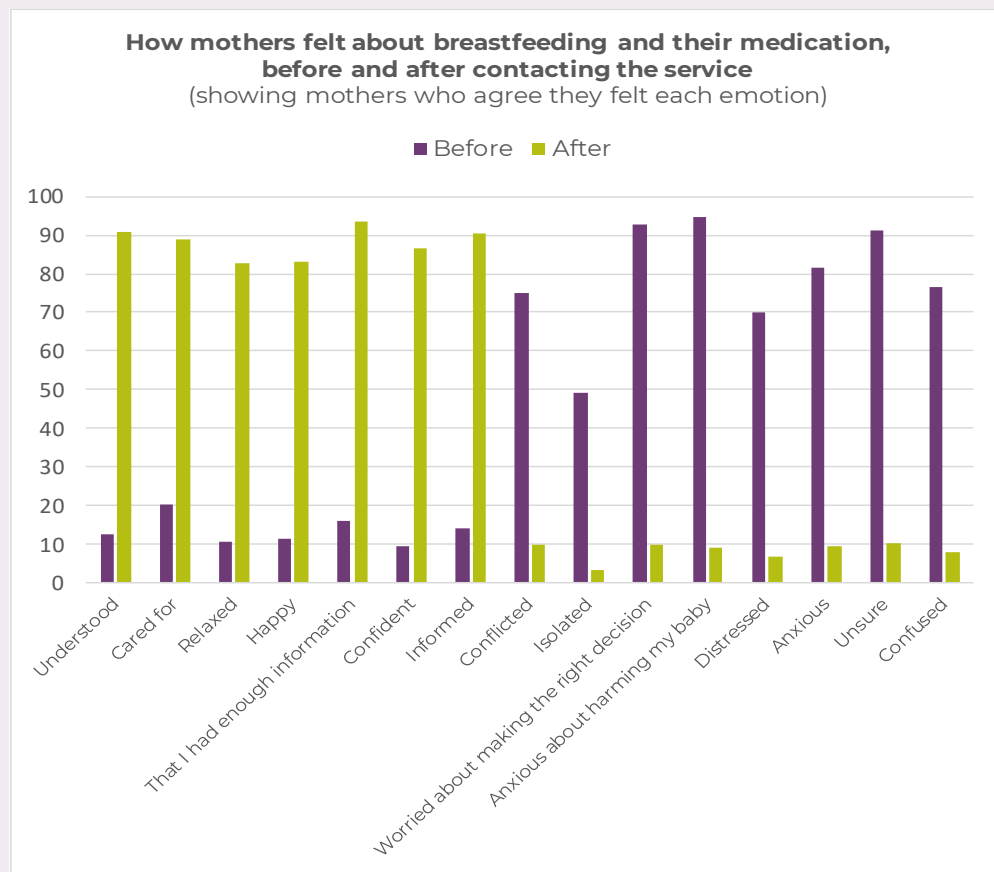


Professor Amy Brown presents the evaluation at the APPG for Infant Feeding & Inequalities

Continued on next page >>>

professional source of information. All groups highlighted that the information was something that could not be found at the same level of accuracy elsewhere. Without the service mothers would go without this information – there would be no alternate acceptable source to pick up the slack. The factsheets were highly valued as a quick and easy to use source of information available within a few clicks, around the clock. Factsheets were typically used for more day to day illnesses and remedies, and around 60% of participants found all the information they needed from them. The remainder went on to contact the one to one service with further questions, typically for more complex or multiple medications or illnesses.

One area which I found to blow my mind was the way that the information changed the attitudes before and after the contact with respect to confidence in continuing to breastfeed. Amy's comment was that she had never seen such a positive response to an intervention.



Emotion	Before		After	
	N	%	N	%
Understood	34	12.6	245	90.7
Cared for	54	20.1	240	88.9
Relaxed	29	10.7	223	82.6
Happy	30	11.2	225	83.3
That I had enough information	43	15.9	253	93.7
Confident	25	9.3	234	86.7
Informed	38	14.2	244	90.4
Conflicted	203	75.2	26	9.6
Isolated	132	49.1	9	3.3
Worried about making the right decision	250	92.6	26	9.6
Anxious about harming my baby	256	94.8	24	8.9
Distressed	188	69.9	18	6.7
Anxious	221	81.6	25	9.3
Unsure	245	91.1	27	10
Confused	205	76.5	21	7.8

How mothers felt about breastfeeding and their medication, before and after contacting the service (showing mothers who agree they felt each emotion)

Key Conclusions

- The gap in service, that was identified in 2007, remains. BfN continues to fill this gap by providing a service to mothers seeking advice around breastfeeding and medications.
- The service is highly valued by breastfeeding organisations, mothers, professionals, and mother supporters as giving accurate, reassuring, evidence-based information. It enables mothers to make an informed choice about continuing to breastfeed, and also look after their own health and that of their baby, as if forced to choose many women would prioritise their baby and breastfeeding rather than take prescribed medication.
- As well as protecting physical health, the service has an invaluable impact on maternal wellbeing.
- In its present format the service is not sustainable. Further long-term funding is necessary to secure and expand the service so that more mothers can benefit.

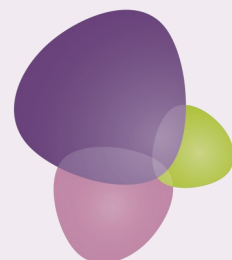
The executive summary can be read at:

<https://breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/pdfs/BfN%20Executive%20summary.pdf>

And the full report:

<https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/a-lifeline-when-no-one-else-gives-you-an-answer-evaluation-of-drugs-in-breastmilk-service-launched-today/>

I would like to thank all those who responded to Amy – mothers, families, peer supporters and professionals. I still ponder the negatives but have taken on board the positives. Thank you BfN for continuing to support the Drugs in Breastmilk Helpline and a huge thank you to fellow pharmacist **Amanda Dacosta**, without whose support I would now be drowning.





Supporting families with infant feeding?

Then join us for networking, interactive workshops and an exceptional line up of speakers at BfN's annual conference & AGM

Saturday 12th October | Woburn House, London
Conference: 9.30am - 4pm
AGM: 4 - 5pm (BfN members only)



Key Note Speakers

Anxiety & Depression in pregnancy, breastfeeding & effects on the child

Prof. Vivette Glover, Perinatal Psychobiology, Imperial College London

Supporting black women who breastfeed

Ruth Dennison, Doula & Director of 1-2-1 Doula & Breastfeeding Support Ltd

What's in Human milk? Why does it matter?

Dr Natalie Shenker, Co-founder Human Milk Foundation

Breastfeeding & maternal mental health

Prof. Amy Brown, Professor Health, Policy & Social Sciences, Swansea University

Becoming Breastfeeding Friendly study

Prof. Sally Kendall, Community Nursing & Public Health, University of Kent

breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/conference | agm@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk | 08444 120 995

Conference Costs - Early bird prices available until August 31st
 Babes in arms welcome

- £15 Current registered BfN Member early bird price (£20 after 31/08)
- £35 Other Volunteer Peer Supporter (offering support to women for free) and Friends of BfN/Drugs in Breastmilk (£40 after 31/08)
- £40 Health Professional/Doula/Lactation Consultant etc. (receiving payment in their role) (£50 after 31/08)



The Breastfeeding Network aims to be an independent source of support and information for breastfeeding women and for those involved in their care. The Breastfeeding Network is a Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in Scotland. Company No. 330639, Registered Charity No SC027007. Registered Office: Whitelaw Wells, 9 Ainslie Place, Edinburgh, EH3 6AT

What BfN means to me...



Jenny Luff
BfN Peer
Helper,
Wolverhampton

I finished my training in 2015 and now volunteer at New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton. I originally applied to the training course as something to do, because I had been a stay at home mum for 5 years and thought I would give it a go. Initially I wasn't able to get a place on the training course, but some of the other ladies dropped out, so I was given a second chance.

I breastfed all 3 of my children, for differing lengths of time, my eldest who is 19.5 it was 6 weeks, as I had no real support apart from my Mum and Grandmothers. My 2nd child was born in New Forest area in 2010, and I breastfed him for over 6 months. I had the most amazing health visitor assistant, she talked me through positions and how to adapt to his changing shape. Then my daughter, born 2011 in Banbury, I had no support and only managed a couple of weeks as my nipples cracked and peeled. All my health visitor said was, "you'd better start her on a bottle then."

I now try to support new mums on the maternity ward, at least twice a month, more if family life will allow, and I LOVE it.... I love the fact that we just go in and listen to sometimes some quite horrific birth stories, but we accept and never judge we just listen. I also have made some very good friends with the other volunteers as we have a common connection.

I also run a toddler group and now mums will come up to me and say, "You're the booby lady, can I ask you a question?"

My favourite visits are to the mums who have decided to give it a go, just to see what's the hype about, and they are naturals, and you can see the awe in their faces that their bodies are feeding their baby. I love the energy change in these mums, as they are "just trying" and haven't fully committed to it, but once their baby has latched effectively and is feeding, the change in the atmosphere is amazing, you now have a committed breastfeeding mum who will go out and be a positive advocate for breastfeeding.

It's amazing!

If you'd like to write about what BfN means to you for future editions, we'd love to hear from you! Please email alyson.spicer@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

Project Leads Meeting

Anthea Tennant-Eyles
BfN Programme Manager

In June, the national meeting for commissioned services across the UK was held in Birmingham. 18 people attended representing 12 areas where services are commissioned, alongside Programme Managers and **Shereen Fisher**, BfN CEO.

The meeting provides an invaluable networking opportunity for project leads to meet in person, when our communication is at other times remote. Agenda items included an update on BfN training courses, national evaluation survey results, and a presentation from Islington on their new survey to health care professionals. Shereen also discussed BfN's future 3 year strategy and different models of support across commissioned areas.

Training at Windsor Castle



Rebecca Reeves
Project Coordinator, BfN Windsor, Ascot & Maidenhead

In January, I was approached by the Royal Collection Trust to provide some training on breastfeeding and issues that surround it, to their wardens based at Windsor Castle.

Both myself and **Marcelle Benneyworth** attended what was a two day training session for all members of the warden team. We discussed the benefits of breastfeeding and support that was available within the area and nationally, however the main focus was with regards to breastfeeding in public and how better to assist mothers and families when breastfeeding within Windsor Castle grounds. We considered suitable places, environments and positions for breastfeeding as well as highlighting challenges that mothers may face when breastfeeding in public, how it may make them feel, and how could the Wardens support them.

The training was very well received and there were a lot of good questions and discussion around it from all the wardens, young and old. We hope that this may be something we can gradually roll out throughout all the Royal Collection.



Feeling Good About Feeding Babies Website Launch

Professor Fiona Woollard, Southampton University and Dr Heather Trickey, Cardiff University

We were delighted to invite you explore the Feeling Good About Feeding Babies website, which we have developed together with colleagues from BfN and NCT.

The site was first launched at the All Party Parliamentary Group on Infant Feeding and Inequalities in May and has now received over 13,000 hits – with the feedback overwhelmingly positive.

feelingsaboutfeedingbabies.co.uk

This website sets out to help parents and family members, friends, health professionals and others who provide support with feeding to have better conversations about how we feed our babies. The website is intended to help us think about our feelings, bust some unhelpful ideas and to start supportive conversations.

Feeding babies can often be a joyful and satisfying experience. But things don't always feel so good. Many women suffer from shame and embarrassment, whether they are breastfeeding directly or feeding expressed breastmilk or infant formula in a bottle or tube. Many women feel unsupported. Sometimes we feel like we must justify our decisions to others. This can have serious effects on the wellbeing.

The website has been co-produced, working with parents, breastfeeding counsellors and health professionals. Prototype evaluation showed that mothers, health professionals and breastfeeding counsellors rated the site as useful – most would use personally, recommend on, or use as part of their own practice.

"[It helped me to] Stop feeling guilt and shame"

"I think the resource is lovely, allowing us to think about our own response to our own choices about feeding as well as our responses to others' choices/lack of choice..."

"Can help to change the narrative of shame and guilt against mothers and certainly will make a difference to our already stressful journey."

"Finally, someone understands."

Funding for development of the site came from an ESRC grant. The site is continually improving and we welcome feedback.

NBH Update



Fliss Lambert
NBH Manager

We were delighted to find out this month that funding from Public Health England for the National Breastfeeding Helpline has now been confirmed until July 2021. At a time when many areas of breastfeeding support are seeing cuts, we're so pleased the helpline will be able to continue to offer consistency and support to families across the country for another two years at least. Thank you to all the volunteers who work so hard to make the helpline what it is.

The first week of June each year is Volunteers Week and the NBH team decided to try and mark this in style with a record breaking attempt over Friday and Saturday 7th and 8th June. We attempted to get as many volunteers logged in during those two days as possible. An amazing effort was made by all and unbelievably we managed to get more than 90 volunteers active over the two days! At one point on the Saturday we had 14 volunteers all logged in at the same time - it was fabulous. We topped it off with a virtual celebration event on the Saturday evening, with volunteers from across the country all coming together online via webcams to say hello and pat each other on the back. It was lovely to see everyone and we even had a few guest appearances from partners, babies, children and pets!

We know the summer holidays can be difficult for many volunteers to be able to find time for the helpline, so we have a few initiatives to say thank you to those that can - this year we have a weekly draw throughout July and August to win some special boob socks (pictured) plus our usual chocolate draws, and we're attempting to find holiday cover for anyone who has a regular slot. If you're an NBH volunteer, contact your Link Worker to find out more.



We also attended the ABM's 40th anniversary conference in June - there was a fantastic celebratory atmosphere this year and a great range of speakers, and we were delighted that an NBH volunteer won the [Pamela Lacey Award](#) this year - **Sally Longstaff**. Find out more about the day by searching for #ABMConf19 on Twitter.

Finally we're really pleased with how our remote supervision project is going - the NBH supervisor team is now made up of **Mandy Barlow, Naomi Waters** and **Kirsty Beck** and there are several opportunities each month for volunteers to take part in group supervision online or by conference call. Want to get involved? Contact felicity.lambert@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk for more details.

Thank you so much to all our helpline volunteers for an amazing effort so far in 2019 - we're currently exceeding 2018's 'calls answered' and 'talk time' totals - let's keep up the great work for the rest of the year!

Congratulations - Moreton Helpers Group, Wolverhampton

Diana West
Supporter, Supervisor & Tutor, West Midlands

Congratulations to the Moreton Helpers group in Wolverhampton, who finished their training in December, tutored by Diana West.

Trainees pictured are (from left to right) **Elaine, Ellen, Alex, Natalie, Dani, Lucy, Aimee, Natalee, Melissa, Bobbie** and **Sky**.

The group included mothers and a health professional, who are all now keen to go out into their local hospital and out into the community to put what they've learned into practice, to provide breastfeeding information and support to the families of Wolverhampton and surrounding areas.



Well done everyone for a wonderful achievement!

National Breastfeeding Celebration Weeks



We had a great time during England's #CelebrateBreastfeeding week, and Scottish Breastfeeding Week, back in June.

Among other things, BfN...

- ...were involved with the launch of a new integrated infant feeding team in Ayrshire & Arran.



ROMA WOMEN TALK ABOUT BREASTFEEDING

ROMSKÉ ŽENY HOVORIA O KOJENIU



- ...promoted a film exploring the breastfeeding experiences of women from the Roma community.

- ...appeared on BBC Scotland's The Nine news programme (that's **Sarah Edwards** in the pic!)



- ...promoted UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative guidelines for skin to skin after birth, in line with the theme for #CelebrateBreastfeeding week.



Want to see more? Search **#CelebrateBreastfeeding** and **#ScottishBreastfeedingAwarenessWeek** online.

Membership Fees Update



Clare Farquhar
BfN Central Support Manager

We have recently updated the information on our website regarding membership fees - here's a summary of the key information:

- All volunteers become members when they begin training, and their first two years' membership are complimentary.
- After the initial two-year period, members are asked to pay their own fees - £20 (or £1 for low-income/unwaged) for 12 months.
- Being a member entitles you to attend the AGM, as well as giving you various other voting and decision making rights.
- In addition, all members should have access to a range of other benefits and services.
- Membership fees make a valuable contribution to BfN's core costs, including aspects such as:
 - Insurance for volunteers.
 - Delivery of our annual conference.
 - Training and continuous professional development for staff.
 - Provision and maintenance of BfN's website.
 - Continuation and development of the Drugs in Breastmilk Service.
 - Maintenance and development of our charity, enabling us to increase support offered and stay up to date with relevant laws, issues and policies.
- Payment can be made via:
 - recurring annual PayPal payment
 - one-off online payments via our web shop
 - cheque sent to our Paisley office
 - cash, by prior arrangement
- If you are a UK taxpayer, BfN can reclaim 25% of your membership fee from HMRC, at no cost to you, as long as you complete a Gift Aid form.

For full details and a list of FAQs, please visit the membership page of our website:

<https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/become-a-member>

Alternatively, please email centralsupport@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk if you need further information.

★ CONGRATULATIONS TO... ★

HELPERS

Rebecca Greensmith
Sarah Pallis
Jane De Lozey
Agnès Léger
Sonja Wittenberg
Charlie Tighe
Imogen Bhattacharya-
Wade
Jade Elhadi
Sophie Albert-
Needham
Zeynab Sharif
Kate Hawkesworth
Khadija Sharif
and their tutor
Joy Jones

Gemma Major
Rachel Green
Rosie Hannaby
and their tutors
Esther Pierce & Anne-
Marie Thomas

Tanya Sweeney
Sabina Ahad
Jennifer Ajayi
Kathryn Mullins
Jennifer Evans
Elizabeth Stirk-
Williams
Felicity Pretsell
Amy Greaves
Leila Dawson
Corrinne Grist
Becky Rimmer
and their tutor
Kate Gray

Carol Woodcock
Christine Small
Rachel Bradbury
Hannah Bailey
Emma Loftus
Marira Birchalli
and their tutor
Shruti Arora

Ali Butcher
Jade Clarkson
Pamela Jamieson
Katie Graham
Elaine Kennedy
Linzi Paxton
Sarah Smith
Emma Turner Mac-
Donald
Amy Van der Walt
and their tutor
Aurore Arnould

Lisa Armstrong
Hannah Stevenson
Anne Mitchell
and their tutor
Anne-Marie Thomas

Sally Rickard
and her tutor
Grace Edghill

Caroline Wilmott
Stephanie Sayers
Steph Kirchin
Emma Hughes
Charlotte Cook
Louise James
Laura Taylor
Natasha Bennett
Rosie Carter-Suso
Sarah Best
and their tutor
Jane Neesam

Amy Wilkes
and her tutor
Anthea Tennant-Eyles

Forida Khatun
Lisa Sayers
and their tutor
Sarah Twite

Amanda Brookes
Hannah Stevens
Jessica Day
Kate Archer
Natalie Owen
Pauline Genevet
Rachel Knight
Sophie Clifford
Sarah Foster
Stephanie Losh
Lauren Young
Jodie Newell
Amanda Brookes
Jess Day
Kate Archer
Sophie Clifford
and their tutor
Eleanor Johnson

Vanessa Smith
and her tutor
Susy Gilvin

Natalie Martin and her tutor Jane Neesam, for gaining a certificate of completion of the helper course

HELPLINE SUPPORTERS

Caroline Furey
Katrona Templeton
Lynsey McLuckie
Rachel Murray
Rosa Finucane
Rebecca Verlander
and their tutor
Carolanne Lamont

SUPERVISORS

Nicola Blanch
Lydia Murtagh
Shona Peacock
Melanie Woodward
Crystal Golding-Smith
Sarah Sehgal
Barbara Bond
and their tutors
Carolanne Lamont, Mandy
Barlow & Joy Jones

PROBATIONARY SUPPORTERS

Karen Lindsay-Smith
Sophie Brigstocke
and their tutors
Mandy Barlow & Sukie
Woodhouse

TUTOR/SUPERVISORS

Kirstin Worseley
Francesca Elver-Fiddimore
and their tutors
Carolanne Lamont, Mandy
Barlow & Joy Jones



A huge thank you to everyone who makes BfN what it is—helpers, supporters, tutors, supervisors, staff members, friends and fundraisers—you all make a difference to families across the UK.

