



**UNICEF UK BABY FRIENDLY INITIATIVE INFOSHEET**  
**JOINT NEONATAL PROJECTS**

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### Introduction

This information sheet is intended for those considering how best to support neonatal units in the UK to implement the Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative neonatal programme. Although not the only option, supporting groups of neonatal units to move forward as a joint project is proving to be an enabling and cost effective choice.

### Overview

The Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative is based on a global accreditation programme of Unicef and the World Health Organization. It is designed to support breastfeeding and parent-infant relationships by working with public services to improve standards of care. The programme is well-established in maternity and health visiting services throughout the UK, and recently launched bespoke standards for neonatal units to work towards independently.

These standards cover:

- Supporting parents to have a close and loving relationship with their baby
- Enabling babies to receive breastmilk and to breastfeed when possible
- Valuing parents as partners in their baby's care.

When fully implemented, the Unicef UK Baby Friendly neonatal standards empower neonatal staff with knowledge and skills (using standards, training, audit, action planning and external assessment) to support breastfeeding / breastmilk use and parent-infant relationships, delivering a transformational cultural shift which brings parents and

staff together in partnership to care for the baby. See appendix 1 for a flow diagram of the stages towards Baby Friendly accreditation.

More information can be found in the [Guide to the Baby Friendly standards \(unicef.uk/babyfriendly-standards\)](https://www.unicef.uk/babyfriendly-standards), and detailed [Guidance for neonatal units \(unicef.uk/neonatalguidance\)](https://www.unicef.uk/neonatalguidance).

*“The Baby Friendly neonatal programme represents the gold standard of how I would like neonatal care to evolve over the next decade. It ensures that we look at care beyond the immediate neonatal period to the ongoing effect it will have on that baby and their family.”*

Dr Laura De Rooy, Consultant Neonatologist, St George’s Hospital, part of the Burdett Neonatal project

## Joint projects

Unicef UK has recently supported the development of three joint projects designed to encourage collaborative working and shared endeavour among neonatal units:

- **Burdett project** – six neonatal units from across England, recruited via a competitive process and supported to achieve Baby Friendly accreditation through a grant from the Burdett Trust for Nursing.
- **South West project** – 12 neonatal units that make up the South West regional network supported by the network to achieve Baby Friendly accreditation.
- **The Scottish project** – 17 neonatal units in Scotland supported by the Scottish Government to achieve Baby Friendly accreditation.

While each of these projects has differences, they have all enabled nominated Baby Friendly leads from each unit to come together for joint training in:

- Implementing the Baby Friendly neonatal standards
- Training the trainer so that they can cascade the knowledge
- Project management
- Audit processes to collect data and monitor progression

Relevant teaching and audit materials have been provided as part of this training.

The projects have also supported the leads from each unit to meet regularly in a central location to receive updates, share experiences and provide ongoing support.

Whilst units have received some support with the cost of assessments, all projects have the expectation that the individual neonatal units will meet some of these costs. Please see Appendix 2 for more details.

## The benefits of creating a joint project

- It is cost effective to provide joint training in the local area compared with individual members of staff attending open courses, both in terms of price per student and travel and accommodation costs.
- Baby Friendly leads are able to access a bespoke, full package of required training and materials. In doing so they gain the skills to effectively and efficiently implement the Baby Friendly standards.

- The mutual support and learning that results from being part of a group is reported to be highly valued and motivating.
- There is emerging evidence to suggest that UK neonatal units involved in a project are making faster progress towards Baby Friendly accreditation than those not part of a project.
- It is possible to co-ordinate a consistent evaluation of effectiveness across all units involved.

*“It’s given us a great deal of structure and vision of what we need to do at each stage of the Baby Friendly journey.”*

Helen James, Matron, Singleton Hospital Neonatal Unit

### How to set up a joint project

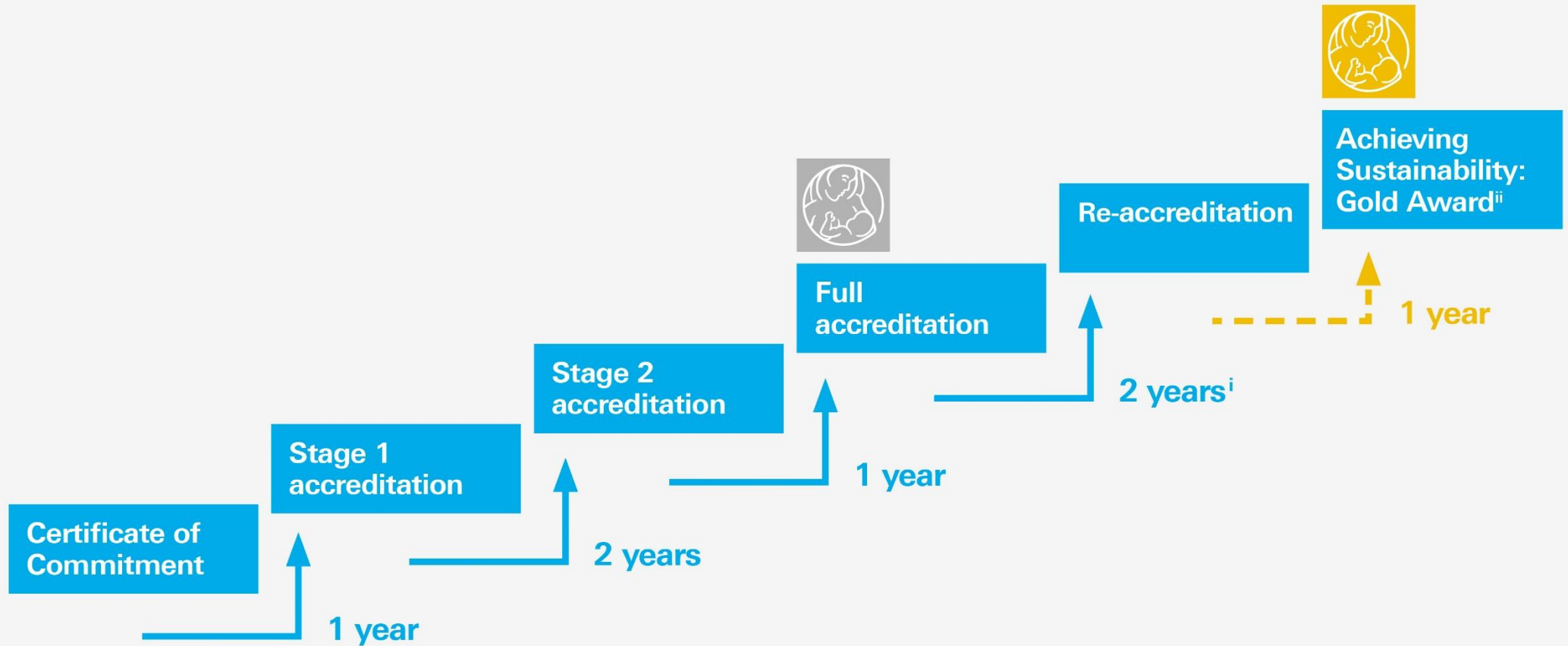
- Contact Unicef UK ([bfi@unicef.org.uk](mailto:bfi@unicef.org.uk)) to explore options. An individual package of support can be created depending on need and budget. As an example of possible costs:
  - A 3-day bespoke course on the Baby Friendly standards and training the trainer is approximately £6,800 for 12 participants.
  - A 2-day project management and audit course is approximately £5,800 for 12 participants.

Neonatal units can have a designated contact person within the Baby Friendly Initiative team to support their progress and to visit the unit where needed. Unicef UK can assist with evaluation, regular meetings for the Baby Friendly leads and links to the [Neonatal National Infant Feeding Network \(unicef.uk/neonatalnifn\)](https://unicef.uk/neonatalnifn).

- Arrange an initial meeting with selected units to discuss the offer and to draft a Service Level Agreement.
- Work with Unicef UK to arrange each event according to need.

**See Appendix 2 for an example of what a project could look like.**

## ACCREDITATION PROCESS



i Initial re-assessment within two years. Continued re-assessments every three to five years or at a timing decided by the Designation Committee, if not going for the Gold Award.

ii Services can discuss their readiness to go for the Gold Award with the Baby Friendly team.

## Appendix 2: Example package for a joint project

Example of a bespoke package for a group of six neonatal units progressing towards Baby Friendly over three years, with ongoing proactive support from the Baby Friendly team.

<b>Education &amp; Training</b>				
<b>A comprehensive package of teaching materials for staff training will be provided on the course</b>				
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Project funding</b>	<b>Individual unit funding</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Two staff places on 3-day bespoke neonatal Breastfeeding and Relationship Building and Train The Trainer course	Approx. 12 participants = £6,800	£6,800	Units could be asked to match fund one place (e.g. buy one get one free) - £566 per unit	£6,800
2. Two staff places on 2-day Project Management and Audit course	Approx. 12 participants = £5,800	£5,800	As above £483 per unit	£5,800
3. Extra neonatal workbooks for staff not attending core training days – numbers will vary for each unit (optional)	£10 each for 10 or more copies.	Approx. 20 copies for each unit = £200 per unit x 6	Units could be asked to match fund or to fund this themselves. Match funding = £100 per unit	£1,200
4. <i>You and your baby: Supporting love and care on the neonatal unit</i> leaflet for parents (optional)	£15 per pack (1-9 packs) or £11 per pack (10 or more packs) (50 leaflets per pack, price includes P&P within UK)	Order per number of admissions to unit Example: 10 packs = £110 per unit x 6	As above. Match funding = £55 per unit	£660
<b>Baby Friendly assessment process (cost may vary on size of unit)</b>				
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Project funding</b>	<b>Individual unit funding</b>	<b>Total</b>
5. Implementation visit or bespoke support visit	£990 x 6	£5,940	Suggest this is funded as part of the project as it is the foundation for lasting change	£5,940
6. Stage 1 assessment	£950 X 6	£5,700	As above	£5,700
7. Stage 2 assessment	£3,600 X 6	£21,600	Units could be asked to provide half the cost of this assessment - £1,800 per unit	£21,600
<b>Total cost</b>			<b>£3,004 per unit over three years</b>	<b>£47,700 over three years or £29,676 when match funding is provided by each unit</b>

Packages would be modified according to number and size of units and actual requirements and budgets. This package does not include Stage 3 assessment as it is expected that the majority of units would reach this stage in the fourth or fifth year. The model could be adjusted for units making good progress or continued beyond the third year as required.