

EPSOM & ST HELIER UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS TRUST

ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY: MAINTAINING AND PROGRESSING THE STANDARDS



The Baby Friendly Achieving Sustainability standards (the Gold Award) are designed

to help services to embed Baby Friendly care in their workplace for the long term.

The new standards aim to embed sustainable leadership, a positive culture, ongoing monitoring and continued progression across services. These standards provide a solid foundation on which services can sustain and progress the Baby Friendly standards into the future, helping them continue to promote, protect and support breastfeeding and to support all mothers to build a close and loving relationship with their baby.

Services that are already accredited as Baby Friendly can now be assessed against the new Achieving Sustainability standards, becoming re-accredited as 'Baby Friendly with Sustainability' and receiving a Gold Award if successful.

Working towards the Gold Award acts as an incentive for services to properly embed the Achieving Sustainability standards and so consolidate and protect all the hard work that has gone into achieving Baby Friendly accreditation. The Award is a recognition that the service is not only implementing the Baby Friendly Initiative standards, but that they also have the leadership, culture and systems to maintain this over the long term.

THE ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

LEADERSHIP

Develop a leadership team that promotes the Baby Friendly standards

CULTURE

Foster an organisational culture that protects the Baby Friendly standards

MONITORING

Construct robust monitoring processes to support the Baby Friendly standards

PROGRESSION

Continue to develop the service in order to sustain the Baby Friendly standards

IMPLEMENTING THE ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust maternity services received the Gold Award in September 2018. Infant feeding lead Sue Taylor has been part of the Trust's Baby Friendly journey for the past 11 years, and here tells us about the services' experiences, looking at each standard in turn.

"When I joined Epsom and St Helier, the services had just undergone an amalgamation and were looking to restart their Baby Friendly journey. Over the last decade we've worked hard to take a more holistic approach and

really embed the standards into care – something that has really been made possible with the Achieving Sustainability standards.

LEADERSHIP

"Having an engaged management team is really important to help champion and protect the work of our maternity staff, from maternity support workers to midwives. The leadership team is headed by our Director of Midwifery, Marion Louki, who focuses on taking a more strategic approach to improving care. The Baby Friendly manager training pack was

brilliant – the team absolutely embraced the package, as it gave them a sense of ownership and understanding of what their strategic role was. They realised that it wasn't just the infant feeding team that needed to be involved in this, the leadership team also had responsibility to protect and promote the standards.

"The training's messaging was really useful in that it demonstrated that this is a holistic approach to improving care – yes it's about breastfeeding but it's also a wider public health issue which needs strategic action across the board, looking at everything from staff culture to cross-team working. They loved the Baby Friendly Call to Action video, and really understood that this is everyone's responsibility. This training meant that it was actually the managers who were encouraging us to go for Gold!



"Bringing managers on board has had a really big impact, most strikingly in the role of our Guardian, who is our Chief Nurse, Arlene Wellman. Her influence has meant that the standards are being cascaded across the Trust. For example, when a mother was recently due to be admitted to ICU for surgery, our Guardian worked with the surgical and ICU teams to ensure that the patient's six week old son could be brought into the ICU to continue exclusive breastfeeding in a private room.

"Our Guardian has also engaged with our Emergency Departments (EDs) to help them support breastfeeding – ED will shortly be getting two breastpumps, and staff will be trained to help breastfeeding mothers to continue expressing rather than being

BACKGROUND TO EPSOM AND ST HELIER

- **Births per year:** 4,688 (2017/18)
- **Facilities:** Two maternity units over two sites. Obstetric labour ward and birth centres on each site. Postnatal/antenatal ward per site. St Helier has a Level 2 Neonatal Unit (NNU), Epsom Level 1 Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU).
- **Local demographics:** Epsom and St Helier provide maternity care to a socially and culturally diverse population across two sites, covering Sutton, Merton, Epsom, Cobham, Banstead and Ewell. The majority of the mothers we care for are white British at 51.5%, any other ethnic group 13.19%, any other white 11%, and the remaining mothers are of Asian and African origin. The demographics have remained fairly consistent.
- **Baby Friendly accreditation:** Stage 1 2007, Stage 2 2010, Stage 3 2014 (as separate services), Re-accreditation 2017, Gold 2018.

routinely given formula. Now we have paediatricians ringing us for feeding advice, and we're working on a breastfeeding policy for staff across the whole Trust. Without support from a high level, the infant feeding team would have struggled to achieve these changes. Now all communications from the Chief Nurse include 'Baby Friendly Guardian' in her title, which encourages staff from across the Trust to ask about it and find out more.

CULTURE

"You can never underestimate the importance of culture. Results from our staff survey reflected the impact that wider pressures in the NHS were having on culture, so we've worked hard to improve things, not just in the maternity unit but throughout the hospital.

"Our Chief Executive has made a firm commitment to improve the mood and culture of our hospitals, and has launched a programme called 'Your Voice, Your Values – let's make Epsom and St Helier Outstanding' to do just that. The programme is designed to help us understand what is and isn't working

in our hospitals through a cultural survey and series of workshops with staff (as well as some with patients), and to help us develop a new set of values and behaviours.

“In maternity, we developed a ‘Shaping our Future’ engagement programme of 1-2-1 staff dialogues with a focus on wellbeing, managing inclusion, teamwork, system performance, inclusive leadership and transformation of services. A series of semi-structured interviews were conducted with staff at all levels, with an ‘all voices must be heard’ approach. Feedback from our launch event and interviews is being used to create an action plan for change which links firmly with the Trust’s commitment to “Your Voice, Your Values’.

BREASTFEEDING INITIATION RATES

2007

77.6%

2018

84.56%

MONITORING

“Monitoring makes you focus and realise that whatever you set up, you need to check whether it’s having a positive or negative impact. We’re working to ensure that staff carry out at least two audits a month including feeding supplementation. The standard has helped us formalise this process and think carefully about who does the audits, sample sizes, etc., and to ensure we are continuously aware of our strengths and weaknesses. Examples of how we’ve improved our monitoring include making amendments to our ongoing supplement audit to capture whether mothers have been supported to learn to express antenatally, and reviewing care provided when mothers offer infant formula once at home. A baby readmission audit enables effective investigation of the situation.

PROGRESSION

“This standard helped us appreciate that it’s not just about getting accredited and then staying still – we need to continually improve and innovate for the families we care for.

“A key innovation has been establishing a process for early identification of any mothers who might need extra support. For example if a mother has previously had mastitis, lactation issues or a baby who is small for gestational age, we identify this early during her subsequent pregnancy, mindful of the impact that previous issues can have on current pregnancy and feelings about feeding. Pregnant women have the opportunity for sensitive conversations about what happened last time, and the feedback has been incredible; they feel much more confident and prepared, and really value the personalised discussion.

“Now we think much more about mothers’ mental health during pregnancy, it’s not just about checking their measurements and physical health. For mothers who have had gestational diabetes in the past, we support them with colostrum harvesting, which gives them a sense of empowerment and achievement. The majority of mothers said this made a huge difference to the way they approached pregnancy and their feelings about feeding, and many are now exclusively breastfeeding thanks to this.



TOP TIPS FROM EPSOM AND ST HELIER

- Don't just focus on the Award. Look at making sure your Trust, Board and whole leadership team have a real understanding and pride of Baby Friendly care, so that they are motivated to protect it beyond the assessment. It's so important for leadership to feel a sense of ownership.
- The thing which sets the sustainability standards apart is that it's not just about the maternity unit; look at how you can involve departments across the Trust.
- You will always have some challenges, and not everyone will be on board. It's difficult to change established practice, and it's important to be understanding and acknowledge that change is frightening.
- Don't underestimate the importance of demonstrating the standards in practice. If a staff member has never seen a baby self-attach, for example, they need to see it for themselves to really understand.
- Use the Baby Friendly team! They're small but they do the most amazing job, taking an evidence based strategic approach and helping us get back on track when we need it. We get such a lot of support – infant feeding leads starting out will really value this.



FEEDBACK FROM MOTHERS

"Fantastic advice and empowerment. I managed to hand express 10ml of colostrum with support."

"Such a useful session. Very thorough. I feel so much more confident about colostrum harvesting and breast feeding. Very pleased."

"Both midwives who looked after me and my baby were very helpful. I would like to say a huge thank you to my midwife. She has been amazing. She showed me how to breastfeed and now everything is good."

FIND OUT MORE

- Visit unicef.uk/sustainability for information on:
 - Achieving Sustainability Standards and Guidance
 - Achieving Sustainability course, including materials for training senior staff
 - The role of the Baby Friendly Guardian
- Contact us for support:
 - **EMAIL:** bfi@unicef.org.uk
 - **TEL:** 020 7375 6144
 - **WEB:** babyfriendly.org.uk
 - **TWITTER:** [@babyfriendly](https://twitter.com/babyfriendly)