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**Press Release**

**March 2009**

## **Change in telephone helpline numbers**

In line with Government recommendations, we are changing our helpline telephone numbers as follows:-

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| <b>National Breastfeeding Helpline</b> | <b>0300 100 0212</b> |
| <b>BfN Supporterline</b>               | <b>0300 100 0210</b> |
| <b>Bengali / Sylheti Supporterline</b> | <b>0300 456 2421</b> |

### **Background**

As an organisation the Breastfeeding Network is committed to providing independent, high quality and good value services, widely accessible to those who need them. We strive to follow best practice recommendations, including in relation to call charges. A new range of numbers beginning 0300 has recently been released by Ofcom for the use of public sector bodies and not-for-profit organisations such as registered charities. These numbers will cost callers the same as calls to any phone number starting with 01 or 02, and price plans which offer 'inclusive minutes' will include calls to 0300 numbers. This applies to calls made from mobile phones as well as landlines.

The Government is recommending all NHS related numbers move to 0300 numbers. We feel strongly that the services provided by the Breastfeeding Network should be kept in line with those being offered by the NHS, therefore this change is necessary.

In recent years there has been a lot of discussion and concern over call charges to helpline numbers. BfN have always used phone numbers with fixed rentals so we could budget for the cost of the helpline which includes facilities such as browser control and local routing of calls.

084 numbers cost the caller slightly more and that extra income is used to cover some of the costs of providing the service, BfN has never taken part in revenue sharing. By switching to an 0300 number, it is the helpline provider (e.g. BfN) and not the caller that bears the difference in cost between a standard call and 084 number.

For more information see:-

[www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Recentstories/DH\\_091891](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Recentstories/DH_091891)

and

<http://www.helplines.org.uk/Importand%20changes%20to%20non-geographic%20numbers.htm>

**To find your nearest Breastfeeding Supporter call the Supporterline 0300 100 0210**

*Calls to 0300 numbers cost no more than calls to UK numbers starting 01 and 02 and will be part of any inclusive minutes that apply to your provider and call package*

*The Breastfeeding Network is a Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in Scotland Company No. 330639  
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The Breastfeeding Network is a Registered Scottish Charity No SC027007*

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How soon will these numbers be available?**

These numbers are already active. Our team have been working hard behind the scenes to ensure they are up and running as soon as this press release goes out.

### **Why didn't we go straight to 0300 numbers from the 0870 numbers?**

0300 numbers were not available at the time.

### **Why don't we offer 0800 freephone number?**

Freephone numbers have increased numbers of nuisance callers; we think it unreasonable to expect volunteers answering calls in their own homes to answer these calls.

### **When will the other numbers stop being available?**

At this stage we have no plans to switch off the existing 084 numbers. This means that we can have a long overlap whilst the new numbers are widely publicised and any existing materials in circulation showing the previous numbers are replaced. The 084 number will still provide the same service but the call charges will remain slightly higher than the new 0300 numbers. For this reason we encourage people using our services to switch over to the new numbers as soon as possible. Please publicise the new numbers.

### **Can I still give out any materials I have with the old numbers?**

In stock materials with the 0844 numbers can still be distributed to minimise wastage. All new materials ordered from now on will show the new numbers. Any materials printed before 2007 which show the number 0870 900 8787 should be recycled or thrown away. The 0870 numbers will still be phased out although timings are not clear.

### **Why are there 3 separate 0300 numbers?**

There are 3 numbers all which serve a slightly different purpose.

#### National Breastfeeding Helpline (NBH)

The Department of Health, in recognition of this important service, granted funding for a single number helpline. This involves collaborative working between the voluntary breastfeeding organisations, with the aim of providing women with improved access to breastfeeding support. The BfN provides this service together with the Association of Breastfeeding Mothers (ABM). The funding has been allocated for 3 years. Calls are routed to the nearest volunteer which could be an ABM Counsellor or a BfN Registered Breastfeeding Supporter. All volunteers taking calls are mothers in their own homes and have received extensive training in breastfeeding.

#### BfN Supporterline

The BfN Supporterline was set up in 1998 and continues to run alongside the NBH. Calls are routed to the nearest BfN Registered Breastfeeding Supporter. This number gives continuity to callers who wish to reach BfN Registered Supporters.

#### BfN Supporterline in Bengali / Sylheti

This is a service for Bengali / Sylheti speaking callers and works in the same way as the Supporterline above.

### **What leaflets are available with the new numbers?**

Any reprints of our existing leaflets will contain the new numbers. The *Thrush and Breastfeeding* and *Mastitis and Breastfeeding* leaflets have been revised and will contain the new numbers. We have a new leaflet coming out soon on *How safe is ...? Alcohol, Smoking, Medicines and Breastfeeding* which will also have the new number. Other leaflets will be changed on the next print run. To minimise wastage the leaflets with existing 084 can continue to be distributed to use up any stocks.

### **Will the Drugs in Breastmilk Helpline and the Administration line be moving to an 0300 number?**

The Drugs in Breastmilk Helpline will move over to 0300 in the future. We are planning for this. A decision has not yet been made on the Administration line.