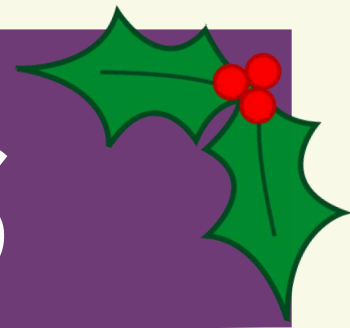


# BfN News



## Mums Supporting Mums

### JOINT STATEMENT TO NEW GOVERNMENT

To protect and support  
breastfeeding

### REMOTE SUPERVISION

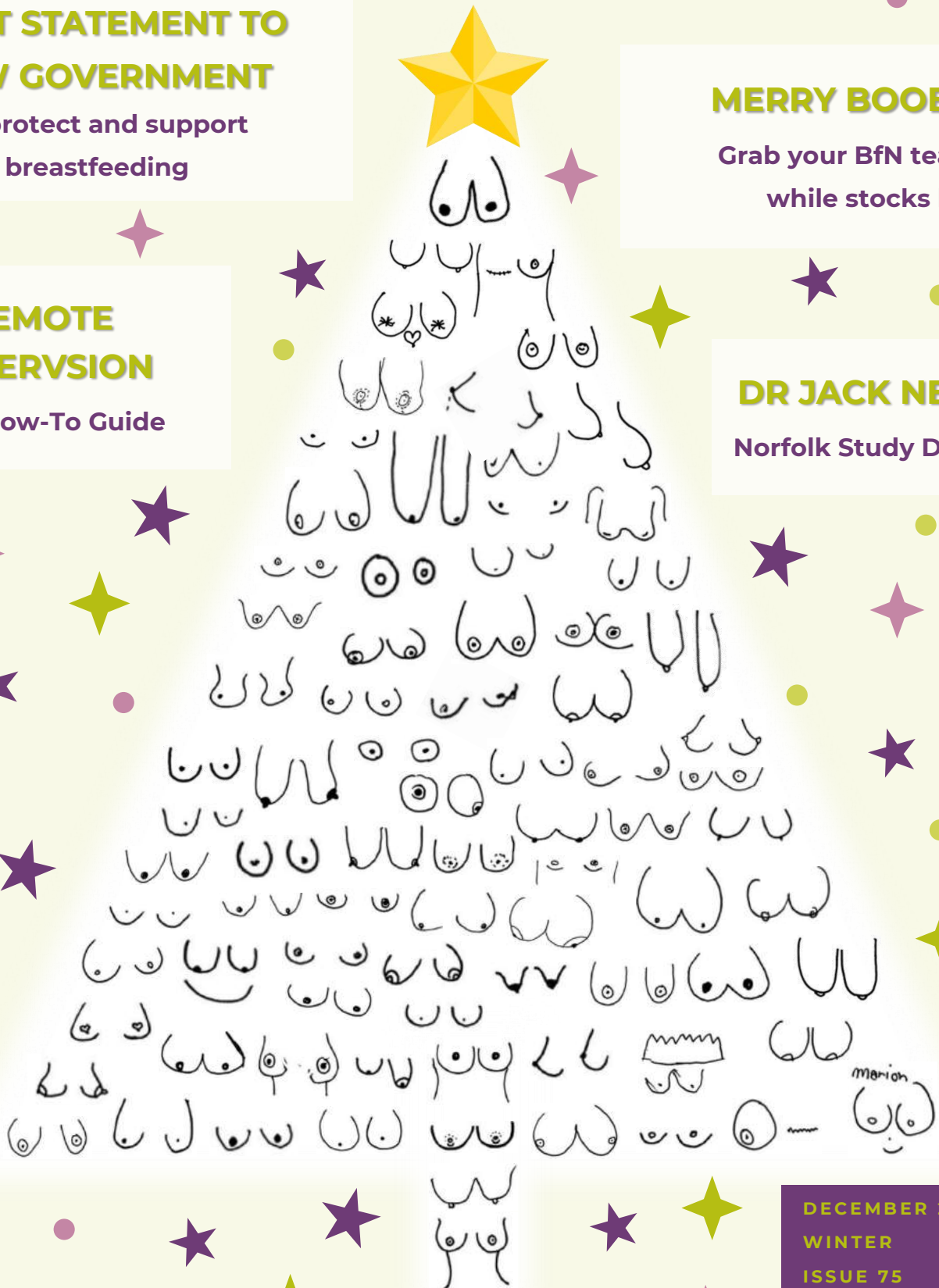
Your How-To Guide

### MERRY BOOBMAS!

Grab your BfN tea towel  
while stocks last

### DR JACK NEWMAN

Norfolk Study Day Review



DECEMBER 2019  
WINTER  
ISSUE 75



# HELLO!

DECEMBER 2019  
WINTER  
ISSUE 75

## Editor's Note



### Welcome to the Winter 2019 edition of BfN News.

On our cover this quarter is a special festive interpretation of our new BfN tea towel! Hand drawn by BfN staff and volunteers at our conference in October, it's available to buy while stocks last - see page 12 for more info.

On this page are images from a recent Family Fun Day in Lambeth, held in partnership with LEAP (Lambeth Early Action Partnership). You can hear more about this on page 11.

In this edition you'll find our joint statement (along with 14 other organisations) calling on new government to support and protect breastfeeding - see page 2. At the time of writing, the nation is going to the polls, so we wait with baited breath to see what happens next! There's also a review of the recent **Jack Newman** study day by NBH Linkworker **Kirsty Cummins** (page 6), as well as all of the usual regular features and updates.

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 [felicity.lambert@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk](mailto:felicity.lambert@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk). We'd love to hear from you.

**Thank you for your ongoing support for the Breastfeeding Network. We hope you have a fantastic Christmas - see you in 2020!**



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# Joint Statement Calling on New Government to Support and Protect Breastfeeding



**We want the new government to invest in the health of women and children by supporting and protecting breastfeeding**

The new government needs to **prioritise the first 1001 days of a child's life**, from conception to age two, to enable children to survive and thrive. How an infant is fed and nurtured strongly influences a **child's future life chances and emotional health**. Importantly, if a woman breastfeeds there are substantial **health benefits** for her - having impacts on **her future long after breastfeeding has stopped**.

**Independent, practical, evidence-based information and support is essential for every family. Supporting women with breastfeeding can go a long way to protecting children and mothers from a wide range of preventable ill health, including obesity and mental health problems.**

This window of opportunity cannot be missed for the future health outcomes of mothers and the next generation. In addition to well documented health outcomes, supporting breastfeeding will also contribute to a **stronger economy** – potential annual savings to the NHS are estimated at about £40 million per year from just a moderate increase in breastfeeding rates.

Support for breastfeeding is also **an environmental imperative** and recognition of the contribution breastfeeding can make to avoiding environmental degradation should be a matter of increasing global and political attention.

In the UK, the majority of women start to breastfeed but breastfeeding rates drop rapidly – **our continuation rates are some of the lowest in the world** and are even lower amongst women living in deprived areas, where increasing rates could make a real difference to health inequalities. Support for all women, parents and families with breastfeeding falls short of what is wanted and needed.

Women tell us they encounter difficulties with the **public perceptions of breastfeeding out of the home**. Families tell us they are still regularly exposed to **conflicting messaging and marketing for formula milks** that drowns out advice from healthcare professionals. Women tell us they receive **little to no help with infant feeding** and that their health visitors, midwives and doctors often have little training or knowledge about breastfeeding and limited time to support them. Recent **cuts in health visitor numbers and breastfeeding peer support services** mean many women may be left without the support they need however they choose to feed their infants.

Despite robust evidence showing that investment in breastfeeding support and protection makes sense, politically breastfeeding has been viewed by governments as a lifestyle choice and so left to parents to work out for themselves. For too many women, trying to breastfeed without support, or stopping before they want to, is deeply upsetting and the situation is made worse by **fragmented care, and poor and often conflicting advice** from those they are seeking to support them. To ensure an increase in breastfeeding rates, to help reverse obesity rates and to reduce widening health inequalities will require significant investment in breastfeeding.

Continued on next page >>>



**It is essential that our new government prioritises breastfeeding and invests in its support and protection.**

**We call on all political parties to commit to the following actions, if elected:-**

- To appoint a **permanent, multi-sectoral infant and young child feeding strategy group** and develop, fund and implement a **national strategy to improve infant and young child feeding practices**.
- To include actions to **promote, protect and support breastfeeding in all policy areas** where breastfeeding has an impact.
- To implement the **Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative** across community and paediatric services, building on the recommendation for maternity services in the **NHS Long Term Plan**.
- To protect babies from harmful commercial interests by bringing the full **International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes** into UK law and enforcing this law.
- To **commission, and sustainably fund**, universal **breastfeeding support programmes** delivered by specialist/lead midwives and health visitors or suitably qualified breastfeeding specialists, such as IBCLC lactation consultants and breastfeeding counsellors, alongside trained peer supporters with accredited qualifications.
- To maintain and expand universal, accessible, affordable and confidential breastfeeding support through the **National Breastfeeding Helpline** and sustaining the **Drugs in Breastmilk Service**.
- To deliver **universal health visiting services and the Healthy Child Programme** by **linking in with local specialist and support services**.
- To establish/re-establish universal **Children's Centres** with a focus on areas of deprivation, offering **breastfeeding peer support**.
- To make it a statutory right of working mothers and those in education **to work flexibly** as required and to access a **private space** and **paid breaks** to breastfeed and/or express breastmilk and manage its safe storage.
- To commit to **resourcing for charitable organisations** who play a **key role within the health agenda** working at a national and local level to support families and communities with infant feeding.
- To support the commitment to undertake an **Infant Feeding Survey** which builds on the data previously collected in the Infant Feeding Survey 2010 (now discontinued). To implement **the recommendations of the Becoming Breastfeeding Friendly (BBF) study**.

## Case for Action

1. **Breastfeeding benefits all babies**, and studies have shown that just a small increase in breastfeeding rates could cut NHS expenditure considerably. It is vital to invest in breastfeeding support in the early months and this will reap rewards in the future that are likely to exceed the initial cash flows associated with putting proper support in place.
2. A UNICEF report states that **"no other health behaviour has such a broad-spectrum and long-lasting impact on public health**. The good foundations and strong emotional bonds provided in the early postnatal period and through breastfeeding can affect a child's subsequent life chances".
3. Evidence has also demonstrated that a child from a low-income background who is breastfed is likely to have better health outcomes than a child from a more affluent background who is formula-fed. **Breastfeeding provides one solution to the long-standing problem of health inequality**.
4. Research into the extent of the burden of disease associated with low breastfeeding rates is **hampered by data collection methods**. This can be addressed by investment in good quality research.

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**For further info, contact**

**[CEO@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk](mailto:CEO@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk)**



# REMOTE SUPERVISION

## A Guide

Hi from Mandy, Naomi & Kirsty

**We were so pleased to get the go ahead to pilot offering remote supervision to everyone in BfN - it's been really well received.** You might have seen some of the overwhelmingly positive feedback - we were particularly happy with a helpfulness rating of over 9.6/10! (if you were the 0.4 please access another of us, if you want) If you have already had support from us, a huge thank you for joining in and please do spread the message!

We don't intend remote supervision to replace face-to-face supervision (unless you want or need it to) it's just another way to access the reflection time and supervision space you might need - you should let your named Supervisor know of your attendance, if you'd like it to count towards your reregistration.

We loved being at the **AGM** with our makeshift 'come say hello' badges - we met people we have supported over the phone for the first time in real life, and got lots of smiles, hello's and a fair few hugs! How good was the content of the day?! Some great presentations and breakout sessions! We did think that some of the subjects covered might have raised an emotional reaction in some of us, and so we'd like to say that you can contact us whenever you feel the need. A comment or phrase can sometimes trigger an emotion or intense thoughts in us, or we might like to explore something further - there also doesn't need to be a 'drama' for you to ask for supervision time.

A common side effect of being involved with a charity or subject that you're passionate about is a feeling of pressure to do more.... What do they say? **"a volunteer doesn't necessarily have the time, but they do have the heart".**

Lots of us give a little bit more than we can, whether it be time, energy, attention... **whatever and how we give, however much or little we give** - it can sometimes leave us feeling pressured, guilty, overwhelmed that we could do more.... even when we understand cognitively that whatever we do is enough and that varied combined efforts 'make' the organisation whole and effective... if that's you - come to us for a good listening to! And that includes volunteers, staff members, central team, directors team - all of us.

We'd also like to call out to those who are breastfeeding whilst supporting others to breastfeed too - or maybe you're pregnant and wondering how it will go. It can sometimes come as a surprise to have different feelings and thoughts, when it is ourselves who are thinking of, or doing some breastfeeding.

Naomi Waters, Kirsty Beck & Mandy Barlow  
BfN Remote Supervisors

### What is it?

Remote supervision is when a volunteer can have supervision anywhere in the country by joining a conference call or online video call. Just like group supervision, it lasts 2 hours, and usually involves 2-6 other volunteers plus the supervisor. Just like face-to-face supervision it's a safe space to share your reflections on your experiences in a supportive environment. The supervisor ensures everyone gets time to reflect. We can also offer one to one supervision over the phone on an ad hoc basis if required.

### When is it?

We offer at least 3 remote supervision sessions a month at varied times/dates. A list of sessions can be requested by emailing [remotesupervisors@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk](mailto:remotesupervisors@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk), talking to your Linkworker or checking the BfN or NBH Facebook groups. If you struggle to access the dates or times on offer, please email us to organise a mutually suitable session.

### Where is it?

Wherever you want to be! You can access the call:

- From your landline for free (it's an 0800 freephone number)
- From your mobile - we have an 0330 local rate call option so this would be free if you have inclusive minutes in your call plan. If not, check with your provider for confirmation of cost and email us to discuss reimbursement or other options
- Via internet for video/skype/messenger calls

If none of these work for you, other options are available, so please email to discuss.

As long as you are somewhere you can talk without being overheard, so best not to join a call from a café! Most volunteers call from the comfort of home (PJs optional!)

### Volunteers who have taken part in remote supervision say:

*"This is so handy for me personally, as I really struggle to get to supervisions as the times are really late and on days I cannot attend. So this was really handy and I felt more engaged on the phone."*

*"I'm very isolated as a BfN volunteer now and this always makes me feel connected again. Thank you"*

*"Really useful as a Supporter also working on a local project to have the chance for supervision away from the local team / volunteers etc."*



# The magic's in the Milky Way



**Hannah West is a BfN Supporter in Lewisham, where she has run a breastfeeding drop-in group called the Milky Way for over nine years.**

I have three daughters whom I breastfed, my first daughter breastfed like a dream! She knew exactly what she was doing and made the breastfeeding experience a very happy and easy one! My second daughter was jaundiced and very sleepy but once established another positive experience. My third daughter... well I often joke with the mums in my group that if I had her first I probably wouldn't be running a breastfeeding group today! Initially she was fussy, had green poos and was unsettled (although putting on lots of weight!). All my experiences were different but I felt very lucky and happy breastfeeding them for as long as I could. My third until over 2 years old.

I also ran at the time a toddler group and it was here I heard many stories/experiences of information or "advice" from other mums and from health professionals which was ill advised, not research based and in lots of cases, showed a complete lack of support for breastfeeding mums. It was then I decided to do something about it and train as a breastfeeding supporter and found my way to register with the Breastfeeding Network and met the most truly amazing and knowledgeable mentor and supervisor - **Zöe Chadderton!**

Zöe has always been on the end of a phone or text when needed and has been an amazing support to me and I could not have achieved what I have without her support. So ... I started my training and after a few years started up the breastfeeding drop in group - "The Milky Way".

The Milky Way has now been running for over 9 years. In the early years it was just me, but then as the group became busier, I have been very lucky to have had Lewisham trained NCT supporters and BfN supporters (depending on who has won the bid in Lewisham at the time!) to help me run the group. I have had amazing support from these women, amongst those our own **Natalie Hickman** and **Becky Lopez del Rincon Troussel** (she is excellent, everything a BfN volunteer should be- very kind, excellent listening and counselling skills, extremely knowledgeable and non judgmental- excellent in every way). I really could not have done this group without them!

I have been told that the Milky Way is one of the busiest groups in Lewisham (I think the other voluntary ones are also incredibly busy too) and I think in our case it is behind the ethos of the group. I have always felt strongly that a lot of mums that come to the group need a lot of reassurance and it is often the transition to motherhood as being one of the main problems and with some breastfeeding support or encouragement, reassurance, kindness and a good old cup of tea, things can feel better in one session! I believe in women supporting women and the ripple effect of one woman being supported, then them going on to support others. I have seen this all the time at the Milky Way - when a mum comes in, in tears and all the other mums rally round!

Obviously we do a lot of basic positioning and attachment support but we also do see increasingly difficult breastfeeding problems. The mums really enjoy coming and often attend until they go back to work! It is helpful new things come up all the time too re: teething, weaning etc at different stages of their breastfeeding journey. The group itself works as it is friendly and inclusive, a lot of mums are isolated and lonely and benefit from this kind of support group rather than "the sit down and wait your turn for breastfeeding help" groups.

I think it's wonderful to be able to support a mum who's having difficulties feeding and on the verge of giving up breastfeeding and then to be able to help her with positioning and attaching, exploring mum's or other family members expectations or beliefs, dispelling those breastfeeding myths or a baby that has lost weight that won't latch or a baby with tongue tie, the list goes on! It has truly been a pleasure for me to watch these mums grow in confidence, to believe in themselves and watch their babies grow and then see the same mums again with new siblings!

It has truly been a privilege and honour for me to be part of a families breastfeeding journey. So if there is anyone out there wondering if they would like to or could start a group, I'd say go for it!



***Due to personal circumstances, Hannah has recently made the incredibly hard decision to close the Milky Way at Easter. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate her on running such a fantastic group for such a long period of time, and thank her for her hard work over the past decade. She will remain a member of BfN and will return to volunteering!***

***If there is anyone in the Lewisham/Bromley area who might be interested in taking on the running of the group, please contact Hannah on [hannah.stuart@talktalk.net](mailto:hannah.stuart@talktalk.net) or 07747 603506***

# "You learn something when you observe." A Day with Dr Jack Newman

Kirsty Cummins  
NBH Linkworker

I was recently able to attend a study day close to home in Norfolk, entitled "A day with Dr Jack Newman". Dr Newman lives in Toronto and as I have never heard of him attending a UK conference before (although I am sure he must have) I was interested to go along to hear what he would be discussing.

Through his efforts to become accessible via the internet, including lots of videos and articles plus several books written throughout his 38 year practise, Dr Newman is well known both with fellow practitioners, volunteers and with breastfeeding families. Dr Newman has worked all over the world and amongst many accolades is the Founder of the International Breastfeeding Centre, from which he runs clinics and provides public information. He has also been a consultant for UNICEF and the Baby Friendly initiative.

The organisers of this event were Breastfeeding Norfolk - made up of **Jan Edye** and **Nikki Adlam** who are both lactation consultants, although I knew Jan from attending study events years ago organised in her days as a BfN volunteer. They opened proceedings before introducing Dr Newman to the stage. Jan explained that it was Nikki's hard work and repeated emails to Dr Newman that had resulted in the study day being arranged. Dr Newman was apparently on his way to Dublin and this was a pre-planned stop that Nikki had engineered. I was surrounded in the main by health professionals and lactation consultants and I feel this may have been mainly due to the high cost of the day, pricing most volunteers out of attending. I also wondered what content (from one individual) could fill a whole day and who it would be aimed at?

*Dr Newman began with a talk entitled "What they didn't teach you about breastfeeding in your training".*

I feel that the main focus of this talk can be summed up in his sentence "you learn something when you observe". We were shown some of his vast collection of videos of babies breastfeeding, Mothers using breast compression to increase milk flow, examples of a good latch and a poor latch. I understood this talk to be about encouraging anyone working with breastfeeding families to ensure that much of the time is spent watching the baby feed and to fully understand the importance of a good flow of breastmilk for continued, successful breastfeeding.

Much of the day was focused on the idea that if

the flow of milk from mother to baby is slowing, issues can arise later that are often misdiagnosed. He stressed that in his opinion the transfer of milk is from the mother and not the baby and highlighted this with the images of breast compression aiding feeding and talking about the issues arising from slow flow – for example fussing and pulling at the breast. He suggested that slow flow issues start very early on in the breastfeeding journey and that those who struggled at the beginning would be very likely to experience issues with milk flow a few weeks down the line, which are then misdiagnosed as other problems. Dr Newman is a tongue tie practitioner and so talked about the need to resolve tongue ties very early on to avoid flow issues and that a procedure at 4 weeks old is too late.

Dr Newman has a kind, soft Canadian accent and his dialogue was dotted with comments to make the audience chuckle which, when added to the technical blunders (you can't have a conference without at least one technical hitch), gave a relaxed ambience in the room. Dr Newman is obviously a witty, confident and highly experienced paediatrician which made for engaging and enjoyable listening. Some of the comments I think were aimed to challenge health professionals and this was especially highlighted in his discussions around the dangers of focusing on what the weighing scales say.

*He explained that the misunderstandings and problems mothers face when they talk to health professionals are just as prevalent in Canada as they are here in the UK.*

The main difference between the two countries he felt being his ability to prescribe domperidone in higher doses – he noted that the amount allowed to be prescribed by GPs in the UK was nowhere near enough to make a difference to milk supply and a member of the audience (a GP) commented at this point to express her frustration at the issues around the drug and its availability to mothers at a useful dose here in the UK. As volunteers this is a difficult topic that we wouldn't really cover in our role but it helped to know that this is an issue that leaves professionals divided and unsure. It helped me to understand that some mothers are being prescribed domperidone but that it may not be at a suitable dose according to Dr Newman's beliefs. There were other comments that felt a little more controversial in terms of UK beliefs and most especially our role as volunteers and what we would be able to discuss, for example that some babies really do need to start on solids earlier than 6 months and perhaps as early as 4 – Dr Newman was clear that he felt that not every baby can wait until the "public health statement" age and that it should be guided by the baby and not the guidelines.

The more serious side to the all three of his talks - the other two being "Norms for the breastfeeding baby /numbers on demand" and "Decreased milk supply, possible not enough milk after the first few months" - focused on dispelling the myths behind breastfeeding and how early issues can lead

Continued on next page >>>



*Dr Newman's examples of good latch (top) vs. poor latch (bottom)*



to the slow flow of milk in later months. It felt as though much of what Dr Newman talked about was how misinformation and errors from those supporting breastfeeding can lead to problems with feeding 3-4 months down the line. He stressed a great deal of the importance of offering both breasts at every feed to maintain good flow of milk.

***He talked at length about how watching feeding is, in most instances, far more important than weighing babies.***

He looked at failures in understanding weight - weight loss (especially in new-borns that may be due to other factors such as IV fluids given to mothers before birth), the myth behind 10% loss ("who came up with that number?") and how some babies that are putting on weight can still be having problems with feeding but this is ignored by health professionals who cannot see the long term effect of what he believes is a slowing of milk flow.

Late onset milk supply was a topic that he returned to many times throughout the day. Dr Newman believes that many issues are, in most but not all cases, due to drop in milk supply and not because of colic, allergy, reflux, fussy babies. He didn't explain this idea in terms of the biological reason behind a slowing of milk but perhaps this was because he assumed that the audience as GPs and lactation consultants would already know but as a volunteer I felt a bit left in the dark. He made several suggestions about signs of slow flow such as babies who chew their hands, who are in fact hungry because of slow flow. He said babies don't stop feeding because they are tired, they stop because the flow of milk is too slow which causes them to fall asleep. He suggested that babies still feeding well at night is almost diagnostic of the issue of late onset milk supply. The afternoon focused on this topic when he explained that he now believes there is no such thing as colic (rather a baby wanting more a faster flow of milk) and he talked about reflux and allergy being much less of an issue than is currently believed, with the real problem again being slow milk flow. He talked about how families are told to give babies formula to combat these issues and of course babies do better because they are getting more milk compared to the undetected slow flow from the mother.

***This gives families a false sense that the diagnosis must be correct and that their baby does indeed have an issue that has nothing to do with milk transfer.***

Dr Newman was interesting to listen to, enjoyable to watch and I feel the day gave me lots to think about. I was aware before attending that some people find him far too brash and hands on with mothers and perhaps dismissive of other ideas and lacking evidence for his own observations and ideas. There didn't seem to be any evidence provided to back his statements during the day – the content seemed to be anecdotal, however perhaps his website would be a good place to visit to try to find evidence based work: <https://ibconline.ca/>

I did see that he is very committed to his ideas and that he seems to feel the frustrations that volunteers can feel when faced with families who have been misinformed. He spent some time 'unravelling' emails that had been sent to him about issues with breastfeeding which showed just how misguided GPs, paediatricians etc can be. The emails showed how confused and misdirected mothers are and the devastating results of interactions with health professionals

lacking knowledge and experience. These reflections are obviously something that as volunteers we can relate to as a lot of our supporting is based around dealing with misinformation and unhelpful, uneducated health professionals.

***It was actually really comforting to hear someone so experienced working within the medical profession sounding as frustrated as perhaps we often can feel.***

He was very passionate about how useless he thinks nipple shields are – how they can ruin milk flow and do not stimulate milk ejection reflex. He felt they "should be banned". He did suggest that a few of his own ideas and beliefs have changed over the years which was nice to hear. I believe we are always learning and should be open to new suggestions that challenge our thoughts.

I did feel that just having one speaker all day was a little too much. It seemed from a few comments he made that the 3 talks would usually have been separate and much longer and it did appear to be a little repetitive and at times unprepared and confusing. The videos and photographs were hard to see on screen and he seemed to be picking them at random, although all were very interesting to watch/look at. I am sure after a long journey from Canada anyone would feel exhausted and that a whole day of talking would be a challenge for the sharpest of minds in that instance.

Much of what he said made me think about the issues we face when supporting families and what mothers can sometimes focus on (weight, fussing). He left me wanting to know more which I think is always a good sign that I have been engaged in the dialogue. I did also leave wondering what the health professionals in attendance thought of his ideas, when in their own settings weight and numbers seem very important.

***I think if nothing else there was a strong message of going back to basics and understanding breastfeeding from a visual and audio (mothers explaining what is happening) perspective, whilst keeping an understanding of milk transfer at the helm of supporting.***

The day was made even brighter by a quick talk and video from **Dr Natalie Shenker**, co-founder of Hearts Milk Bank. This most wonderful charity that I have enjoyed watching grow aims to bring a "new approach to the provision of milk bank services, to provide the opportunity of being fed with human milk to every baby who could benefit". It was a real treat to hear Natalie speak again at the BfN conference more recently and I listen with awe and amazement as each time I hear her she tells us something new and amazing about human milk. The video shown at the Jack Newman study day, showing the rise to brilliantness of the charity and some of the families that it has supported left many of the audience with a teary eye!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-y4oZrAFFVo>

A raffle was held for HMB and raised over £500 which was such a lovely addition to proceedings and of course caused great excitement in its calling!

I would like to thank Dr Newman for coming to our corner of the UK and sharing his experience and knowledge and to Breastfeeding Norfolk for enabling me to do so. Overall an informative day that happened to be on my doorstep (I wasn't planning a trip to Canada anytime soon!) although perhaps if it were to happen again it could be available to us volunteers at a price that made it far more accessible.





# UNICEF Baby Friendly Conference 2019

**Floss Lambert**  
NBH Manager

This year the Unicef Baby Friendly conference was held in Glasgow and it was the biggest one they've ever had. This is probably partly down to the investment the Scottish Government has made in breastfeeding support over recent years and it was great to see the difference this has made.

There were some excellent speakers this year including **Dr Chris Van Tulleken** who spoke about the influence of industry in infant nutrition (and also took selfies and videos with lots of BfN staff – **Shereen** included – during the breaks!); **Prof Amy Brown** spoke about her work around changing the conversation for mothers who don't meet their breastfeeding goals; and **Hannah Dalgety**, who is a peer support co-ordinator for Breast Buddies in Perth. Day two kicked off with a very inspirational talk from **Kimberly Seals Allers** who talked about the lived experience of black and minority ethnic women in birth and breastfeeding – her focus was on talking with communities, finding out what they know will work for them, and empowering them to achieve this. Her talk warranted a standing ovation from the delegates. She was followed by **Prof Anthony Costello** whose



*The BfN team*

mysterious sounding session entitled 'an ancient method to change the culture of breastfeeding' turned out to be basically talking about how important peer support is – he spoke about how when women support each other, when they talk and listen, and share knowledge and experience – it has been proven to make a difference in health

outcomes. There were also insightful talks from **Dr Natalie Shenker** (who also got a standing ovation!) and **Justine Baines**, Infant Feeding Lead in Manchester, as well as many others. The full line up of speakers and some of the slides can be viewed on the Baby Friendly site: <https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/training/conferences/annual-conference/>

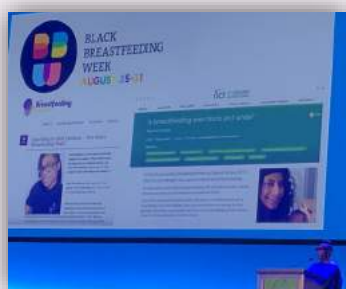


*Tiny boobies and boobles!*

BfN were delighted to have been selected to make three poster presentations this year – one about the importance of person centred support on the NBH, one focusing on the Drugs in Breastmilk evaluation study and another looking at the work Ayrshire BfN are doing with children and young people. All three posters stood out and were very well received. All the poster presentations will soon be available on the Unicef site as well.

As ever, BfN had one of the busiest stands at the conference, where we did a roaring trade in boobies, diary covers, drug info packs and boob tea towels! Few delegates left without at least one of our amazing tea towels, thanks mainly to Project Manager **Nina White** who turned out to be a very persuasive sales person! We also spoke to healthcare professionals from all across the country (and even the world) who were interested in finding out more about what BfN does, how we work and how we may be able to support them in different areas.

Overall it was an excellent conference (despite the travel problems many experienced on the way there!) – lots of inspiring content and great networking opportunities. Already looking forward to next year when it will be held in Harrogate.



*The BfN blog on the big screen as part of Kimberly Seals Allers' talk*



*Nina channels her inner Apprentice*



# What BfN means to me...

**Sarah Bolland**  
**BfN Peer Supporter**  
**NBH Helpline**  
**Supporter**  
**Student Midwife**  
**UWS**



In 2017 I had my third child, Isaac. I had breast fed both of my older children, Aiden (9) and Damon (7), both with problems and not a lot of support therefore ending my breastfeeding journey probably sooner than I would have preferred. My very lovely midwives from the home birth team in Glasgow supported me wonderfully, and then my Health Visitor continued the same support and also recommended I take up a training course on breastfeeding peer support in North East Glasgow, through the Breastfeeding Network.

I met a group of beautiful mums and babies through this training, gained amazing insight and knowledge into the wonders of breastfeeding, and therefore my passion was ignited. I wanted to be there for other mothers and families who had struggled in the same way as me, I wanted to have the knowledge and techniques to assist them and most of all, I wanted to make breastfeeding the norm in our city.

Since my training in 2017 I have since done further training to allow me to volunteer on the National Breastfeeding Helpline as well as taken on a degree to become a midwife. I am now a second year student midwife and use the skills I have learned through my peer support training every day that I work with women and families as well as continuing to volunteer at breastfeeding groups, events and on the helpline.

# Central Support Updates

## Social Media Maternity Cover

As you may be aware, BfN's social media officer **Alyson Spicer** will be on maternity leave from January to November 2020 (she's looking forward to having another go at breastfeeding now she "officially" knows what she's doing...!)



New recruit **Leanne Rayner** will be taking the reins in her absence. Leanne has a great background working in the charity sector, and has even worked on social media for a breastfeeding charity in Australia - so BfN's social feeds will be in capable hands! Please contact Leanne for anything that you'd usually send to Alyson - email [leanne.rayner@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk](mailto:leanne.rayner@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk) - with the exception of newsletter contributions, which should be sent to [felicity.lambert@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk](mailto:felicity.lambert@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk)

Welcome, Leanne!

## Resources for Schools

During 2018-19 we were funded for a specific project working with two schools via a Catalysts for Change grant from The Queen's Nursing Institute Scotland (QNIS). The project plan included development and delivery of short interactive learning sessions about breastfeeding and early nutrition for children and young people between the ages of 3 and 16. During the year, sessions relating to breastfeeding were presented to over 1000 pupils of all ages.

This work showed that a short and relatively low cost intervention can help shift attitudes among children and young people and help them to become more positive towards breastfeeding.

Lesson plans from the project are now available to order for free download from our shop:

[www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/shop/school-lesson-plans](http://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/shop/school-lesson-plans)

More information on the project is available here:

[www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/breastfeeding-information-for-children-and-young-people](http://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/breastfeeding-information-for-children-and-young-people)

## Step Count Challenge

Some of the Central Support Team took part in the [Paths For All Step Count Challenge](#) during November. Their team "The Milky Wayfarers" challenged itself to move a little more and employed a number of tactics to do so - including Zumba, walks on the beach, and using the ground floor loo at work! As well as the walks they also tracked a couple of swims and bike rides, too. Mega-mover, Emilia, even won a runner-up prize in the Step Count Champion competition and will feature in an upcoming "Meet the Walkers" blog post.



**Could you be our little helper this Christmas?**

Nominate BfN for Ecclesiastical's 12 days of giving and you could help us win £1000 to support breastfeeding families.

Head to [ecclesiastical.com/12days](http://ecclesiastical.com/12days) and use charity number SC027007

**Thank you!**





# NBH Update

Fliss Lambert, NBH Manager



2019 has been a great year on the helpline and thanks to the amazing commitment from our wonderful volunteers, we have seen big increases in numbers of calls answered and levels of talk time. We have also received record numbers of calls so it's clear that there is still huge demand for telephone support.

Remote supervision has gone from strength to strength, so much so that now it's going to be available for Helpers as well as Helpline volunteers. We have secured funding from the Scottish Government and Public Health England so we know we can continue to provide

the service until 2021 at least. We've trialled offering social media support via messenger and it's massively popular so will be rolling out training for volunteers interested in this next year.

Currently we're gearing up for the busy holiday period on the helpline and have various incentives and activities to keep volunteers involved when we know there are a million other demands on their time. Link Worker **Kirsty Cummins** has come up with a December 'mini goals' chart with a tiny helpline related goal for every day of the month. Join in if you want to!

December mini goals							SUNDAY
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY		
2 Read how remote supervision works	3 Log in and look around VCC (no need to set yourself to available)	4 Take a later evening call.	5 Join a remote supervision 18:30 - 20:30	6 Find a buddy (local or through FB + pledge to go on VCC together)	7 Have a takeaway and take a call instead of cooking 5-7 pm.	8 Have a Sunday call/webchat.	Listen to a recorded webinar.
9 Read some of our FB posts for info/inspiration	10 Tell someone about NBH	11 Join a remote supervision 19:30 - 21:30	12 Have an evening logged into webchat.	13 LOG IN Take 2 calls.	14 look out for BF mums when shopping + show them they are amazing	15 Reflect - write down your fears about helpline volunteering	
16 Read about whatsapp group + ask linkworkers about joining if helpful.	17 Get a BF book from library (hide the dreadful ones!!)	18 Join a remote supervision 10:30 - 12:30	19 Follow one of conference 2019 or Unicef conf speakers on social media.	20 Kids are off! Log in early for webchat (can be open anytime)	21 Listen to BFN Meditation	22 Reflect - write down positives you get from Helpline Volunteering	
23 Kids are off! Bury an xmas film and log in.	24 Not able to go out? log in whilst wrapping.	25 HAPPY CHRISTMAS! log in if you can.	26 Log in at some point today	27 Snuggle up + tell your children about your BF journey with them. Even grown up kids!	28 Read a passage from your fave BF BOOK.	29 Have a look @ childcare policy - perhaps it could help you log in?	
30 Think of New Year ways to fundraise for NBH.	31 Take a New Years Eve call/chat + help to change a family journey for 2020!	1st HAPPY 2020! Make a tiny NBH pledge with your Linkworker		Linkworkers@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk or for ABM vols: ABMBFCC@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk			

We have an optional rota in place from 20th December – 3rd Jan so volunteers can select a slot which suits them, and we're offering little treats for any volunteer who answers more than 25 calls during December... If you're a helpline volunteer, get involved if you can!

Looking forward to 2020, we have a bumper study day planned for 24th Jan in Sandwell, West Midlands. Speakers include **Dr Helen Crawley** from First Steps Nutrition and **Emma Pickett**, chair of ABM. Should be a brilliant day, [click here for more info and to book](#) (it's free if you're a helpline volunteer, and only £10 if you're not). Thank you to all our fabulous volunteers for making 2019 such a success and here's to an even better 2020!



# Lambeth Family Fun Day

**Carla Agulhas**  
Deputy Coordinator & Peer Supporter, BfN Lambeth

The Lambeth team was given the opportunity to organise a photoshoot, in part to capture the multicultural range of families the BfN supports. In an amazing show of team work, myself and **Laura Harding** teamed up with **Claire** and **Silvia** from Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP - part of the wider team that the Lambeth BfN team work with) along with **Fliss Lambert** and **Alyson Spicer**. The weekly LEAP Family Fun Friday event took on a little BfN magic, in a shape of an entertainer for the little ones and pampering for the grown ups! The event was an absolute success, lots of smiles and happy families. One of our goals is to normalise breastfeeding in the community and we can safely say mission accomplished!



More pics on page 1!

## #MakingItWork - progress report

Are you planning your return to work or study after having a baby?

Got questions about how breastfeeding might fit?

the  
**Breastfeeding**  
network

**#MAKINGITWORK**

WWW.BREASTFEEDINGNETWORK.ORG.UK/  
MAKINGITWORK

Shared parental leave - Your legal rights - Expressing & storing breastmilk  
Shift work - Talking to your employer or childcare provider - Travelling for work

**Alyson Spicer**  
Social Media Officer

We have had an absolutely overwhelming response to our appeal for case studies for our #MakingItWork campaign, supporting breastfeeding mums returning to work or study. More than 230 people got in touch, with stories ranging from incredibly supportive employers, to being told they could express breastmilk in the ladies' toilet. The responses came from a huge range of professions and industries, from restaurant staff, to teachers, to members of the armed forces.

We have shared some of the stories on our social media pages, tied in with various related aspects of returning to work - e.g. how to discuss breastfeeding breaks with your employer, employee rights as a breastfeeding mother and how shared parental leave can impact on breastfeeding. You can read all of these stories and more by searching **#MakingItWork** on any of our social media platforms (details on page 1).

To date, these stories have been seen by over **61,000 people** on Facebook alone - testament to the number people who feel, as we do, that this information is of crucial importance, and have shared the posts far and wide.

**We have also updated our expressing and storing guidelines as part of the campaign - take a look and familiarise yourself with them here:**

<https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/breastfeeding-help/expressing-storing>

We plan to share more stories in the coming weeks and months, and are particularly interested to see how the new government supports and protects breastfeeding among the workforce, following the general election. Watch this space!



## Christmas Gifts - get in quick!



Check out BfN's online shop for some great gift options, including our new [boob tea towel](#) (hand drawn by BfN staff and volunteers at our conference) and BfN and NBH branded [reusable coffee cups](#).



Only available while stocks last! BfN Christmas elves **Marion** and **Melanie** are beavering away in the office sending out orders as fast as humanly possible - they will do their best to get them to you by Christmas, but please **order by 16th December at the very latest**.

Click here to see the whole shop:  
[www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/shop/](http://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/shop/)

**Merry Boobmas!**

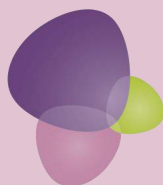
## Winning Magazine Cover

We're thrilled to report that this cover of Crohn's and Colitis UK's Connect magazine was voted Cover of the Year in the [PPA Scotland Magazine Awards 2019](#)! It's great to see such a beautiful image of someone not only breastfeeding with a chronic condition, but also "extended" breastfeeding an older child.

This was down to a public vote, that we publicised via our social media channels - thank you so much to everyone who voted! Our resident pharmacist **Dr Wendy Jones** was involved in writing the article that went with the cover, she said, "I was interviewed about drugs in breastmilk, and several mums told their stories and included term breastfeeding. The charity were very brave in using a photograph of a mum feeding her toddler in the beautiful image on the cover. They deserve to win this prize and are really excited and proud to have been nominated."



To read Wendy's factsheet on breastfeeding with IBD, click here:  
<http://bit.ly/IBDandBF>



# CONGRATULATIONS TO...



## — HELPERS —

**Emma Dubberley**  
and her tutor  
**Anne-Marie Thomas**

**Emily Le Page**  
**Lucy Leaver**  
and their tutor  
**Esther Pierce**

**Gilly Crawford**  
and her tutors  
**Anne-Marie Thomas**  
and **Esther Pierce**

**Danielle Langridge**  
**Rebecca Wilkinson**  
and their tutor  
**Kate Gray**

**Jenny Cotton**  
and her tutor  
**Aurore Arnould**

## — SUPERVISORS —

**Donna Ebanks**  
and her tutors  
**Carolanne Lamont, Joy Jones and Mandy Barlow**

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.

Wishing you a peaceful Christmas and a very happy new year!

