Job Description: Chief Executive Officer

# Background of post

Founded in Scotland in 1997, the Breastfeeding Network (BfN) aims to be an *independent* source of support and information for all breastfeeding women, parents and others in the UK.

Our vision is a society where all mothers, parents and families are able to make informed decisions about breastfeeding, to access help when and how they need it and to become confident in their choices. Crucially, this also means all help and support offered to parents by BfN volunteers and employees is offered free from commercial interests and free of charge.

Following a decade of effective leadership, advocacy and professionalisation within the charity leading to a Good Governance Award in 2021, the charity now employs over 140 part-time staff and involves around 700 volunteer members.

BfN supports more mothers, parents and families than ever through an expanded portfolio of well-evaluated peer support commissions including accredited training across England and Scotland and a strengthened national helpline offering online support. The charity also runs a unique service providing online support to mothers and parents on the safety of medication and medical treatments and breastfeeding – the Drugs in Breastmilk Service.

With an annual turnover of £1.2 million, numerous expanded partnerships across Government agencies, academics and the voluntary sector as well as a remit for supporting families online, the Board of Trustees are keen to see this growth sustained, supported and developed with this continuing appointment.

The Chief Executive role is supported by a Personal Assistant and is expected to regularly visit the charity’s administration office in Paisley, Scotland. The role also works closely with a Financial Consultant.

# Purpose of the job

The role of the CEO is to lead the organisation to deliver its charitable objects which are to:

1. To inform, educate and support families in feeding and nurturing babies and young children;
2. To enable communities to support breastfeeding through sharing information, training and volunteering;
3. To contribute to evidence based policymaking for government, healthcare providers and educators;
4. To promote the mental and physical wellbeing of mothers and babies through supporting breastfeeding.

# Accountability

The Chief Executive reports to the Chair and Vice-Chair on a regular basis and is accountable to the Board of Trustees for all aspects of the leadership and management of BfN. The role is also a staff member on the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (FAR).

The Chief Executive will work in accordance with BfN’s constitution, ethos, and code of conduct in leading BfN. The Chief Executive is charged with delivering the strategic aims of the organisation under best governance principles whilst ensuring the organisation continues to retain and expand its work as well as develop in new areas that generate income and profile while also upholding standards and quality.

# Communication

Internally the CEO will communicate with the Board of Trustees, the management team, staff and volunteers. Externally they will communicate directly with key partners and stakeholders in parliament, government, the NHS, key charities, professional bodies and researchers.

# Main Duties and Responsibilities

The Chief Executive is responsible for the strategic direction of BfN and the development of annual business plans, meeting annual targets and that funding and contractual agreements are fully complied with and regulatory framework and internal controls are adhered to. The Chief Executive will lead on ensuring an organisational risk register and that all relevant policies are current and reviewed. Also, the Chief Executive will be an advocate for the charity representing and communicating with key stakeholders on infant feeding and peer support. The Chief Executive will also be an active lead / change agent in furthering the charity’s work on inclusion and diversity.

# Leadership

1. Working with the Board, prepare the organisation’s strategic and business plans and ensure that BfN’s charitable objectives are achieved through embedding short, medium and long term objectives into the work of staff and volunteers.
2. To provide the Board with appropriate information to allow them to carry out their duties effectively at quarterly meetings and to support the smooth running of the Annual General Meeting.
3. To support the Board and the appointed Board Champion for Diversity to ensure that the charity promotes a positive, inclusive and diverse culture across its membership, services and training. All of which should be accessible to all parents that need them, through the ongoing review and implementation of the inclusion and diversity plans.
4. To ensure the Board and BfN meet all their obligations, governance and legal responsibilities under Scottish Charity and Company Law.
5. To lead BfN in developing appropriate organisational structures to meet business needs for the short and longer term.
6. To raise awareness of the evidence for breastfeeding and promote the evidence and impact of peer support through varied professional and public networks including the NHS, the Department of Health, devolved administrations and local government, within the Charity Sector and within society as a whole.

# Organisational Management

1. To effectively manage & motivate staff and volunteers including specific line management for a senior management team covering Programme management, Human Resource, Finance and Central Support, working across remote teams and locations and with finance specialists.
2. To oversee the delivery of BfN’s products and services in Scotland, England and Wales. Currently these include:
   1. Peer support projects and commissions
   2. Training services
   3. Information provision (online)
   4. National helplines and social media presence / Drugs in Breastmilk Service
3. To Lead the planning, forecasting, control, and reporting of the organisation's finances and resources, ensuring they are managed effectively.
4. To liaise with the Board in formulating income generation strategies, identifying risks, and taking appropriate action.
5. To oversee the production of the annual budget, management accounts, statutory accounts and annual reports, audits and OSCR reporting.
6. To manage the charity effectively, ensuring contractual obligations are met, that financial security is maintained and that all expenditure is consistent and within agreed budgets.
7. To ensure BfN’s work is monitored and evaluated in line with evidence, the business plan and funders’ requirements and to ensure the quality assurance of all BfN’s services.
8. To ensure that all BfN’s Policies and procedures are up to date, compliance audited, and consistently applied throughout the organisation including Trustees and volunteers, in a fair and transparent manner.
9. The CEO will oversee internal and external communications and be the key media spokesperson for BfN. To this end the CEO will need to be confident in public speaking and possess excellent communication, presentation and negotiation skills.
10. The duties above do not form an exhaustive list and the CEO may be required to carry out additional tasks, under the direction of the Chair and Board of Trustees.

Person Specification:

**Please refer to this document carefully when completing your application form and preparing for your interview. You must demonstrate how you meet the criteria on your application form.**

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| **Qualifications** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Educated to undergraduate degree level, preferably with a relevant master’s degree (relevant to the focus of the charity such as public health or the voluntary sector)  Undergraduate degree  Master’s Degree |    |  |
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| **Leadership** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Experience (3-5 years minimum) at senior level of organisational management, preferably with experience of working in the health, social or charity sectors  Experience of leading on vision and setting strategy and experience of leading an organisation during a period of change.  Ability to build rapport with people and harness the commitment of staff and volunteers in delivering the organisation’s strategy.  Values diversity, respecting and drawing on colleagues’ different perspectives, skills, experience and knowledge.  Experience of engaging and building strong working relationships with internal and external stakeholders including partner agencies, NHS, public health, government regulators and commissioning bodies. |          |  |
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| **Management and Planning** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Experience of developing and implementing strategic and business plans.  Experience of all aspects of service delivery including commissioning and evaluation of services preferably services that effectively support mothers, parents and families both in person and online.  Experience and knowledge of governance, preferably within the charity sector, and experience of working with Trustee Boards.  Knowledge of the law and regulations affecting charities.  Evidence of effective decision making and delegation skills.  Ability to assimilate and process complex information quickly.  Ability to ensure a robust financial management system including annual external audit of accounts and to regularly review management accounts prepared by finance and oversee budgets  Experience line managing a senior team, building trust within teams and managing, motivating and supporting teams remotely |                |  |
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| **Communications** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Experience of handling challenging conversations empathically when discussing difficult topics related to infant feeding and breastfeeding support.  Ability to communicate effectively at every level of the organisation and externally.  Ability to build rapport with a diverse range of individuals at different levels.  Understanding and experience of a broad range of methods of communication in particular social media.  Excellent and proven presentation skills  Experience of Microsoft Office including Word and Excel |            |  |
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| **Personal Qualities** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Understanding of and commitment to the core values of the Breastfeeding Network.  Empathy with the needs of the charity’s beneficiaries, volunteers and staff.  Understanding of the needs of new parents especially as this links with supporting breastfeeding and infant feeding across a variety of methods including remote and digital channels  Ability to work independently, maintaining self-motivation and resilience under pressure  Self-awareness and the ability to recognise own development needs.  Ability to be able to travel throughout the UK especially within England and Scotland.  Willingness and flexibility with working hours including some weekend and evening work |              |  |
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| **Knowledge and Understanding** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Up to date knowledge of the issues and challenges affecting infant feeding and support as it is delivered and commissioned across the NHS, local authorities and health boards (in Scotland).  Ability to critically analyse complex issues including scientific research and the economic, political and societal context in which the Breastfeeding Network operates |    |  |
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