

Breastfeeding Initiation

Rationale

The Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) is a voluntary evidence-based behaviour change programme built around the attachment, human ecology and self efficacy theories. Offered throughout Scotland to all first time mothers aged nineteen or under, it is shown to improve outcomes for women and their infants (Karoly, 2005)¹.

Breastfeeding is recognised as the best nutrition for babies and infants. However the breastfeeding rate in Scotland is one of the lowest in Europe (ISD 2018)².

Younger women living in the most deprived areas are less likely to breastfeed compared to older women living in the least deprived areas (ISD 2018)².

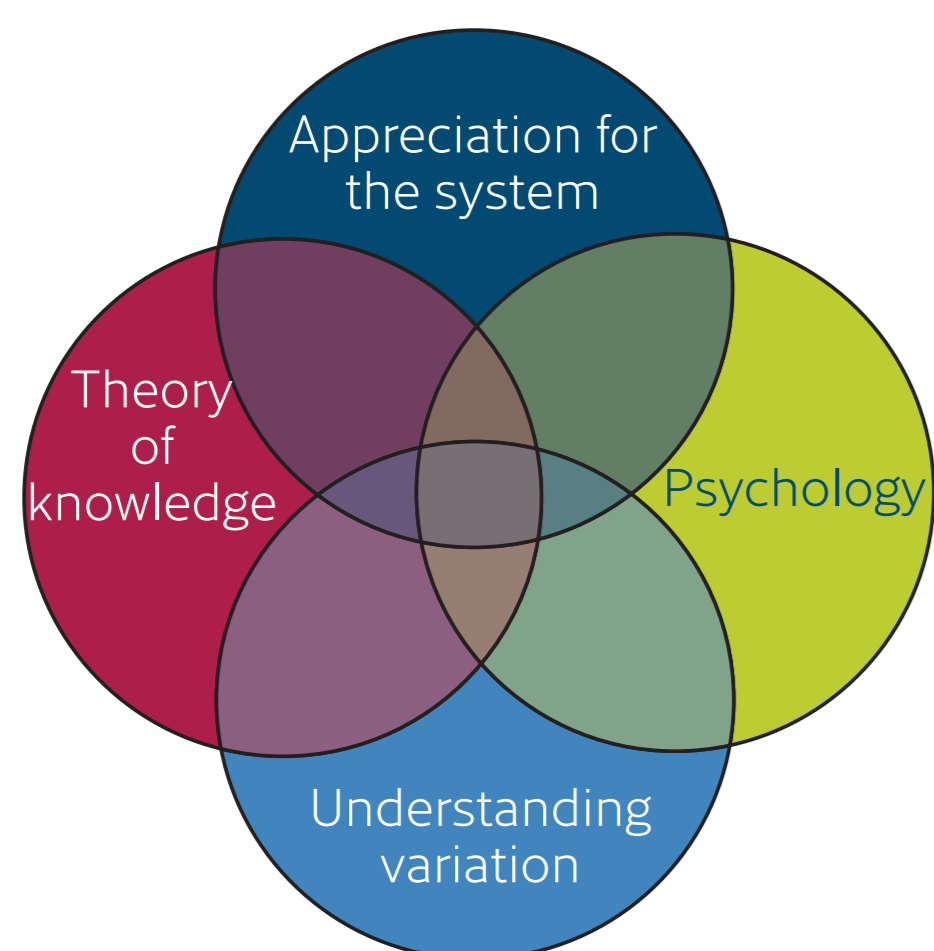
The decision to initiate and continue to breastfeed is complex and depends on numerous factors (Gua et al, 2016)³.

With this in mind, we hope to further improve the health outcomes for FNP clients and their infants by enabling more young women to breastfeed.

Project Aim

To increase by 10% the number of FNP clients in Fife who initiate breastfeeding, from 49% in Cohort 2 (2016) to 59% in Cohort 3 (2018).

Appreciation For The System



Family Nurse Training

All Family Nurses attend Unicef Baby Friendly Training

All Family Nurses attend FNP Breastfeeding and Motivational Interviewing Training

Client Experience

Infant Feeding Questionnaire

How did you plan to feed your baby? (Breast or formula)
10 Clients: Breastfeed
1 Client: Breast and Formula Feed
4 Clients: Formula Feed

Where you able to keep to your plan?
7 Clients who planned to breastfeed: "No"
"I was too sore after the operation"
"No, I changed my mind at the last minute"
"My baby wouldn't fix despite help"
All other clients: "Yes"
1x yes

Did you have skin to skin contact with your baby at birth?
14 Clients: "Yes"
1 Client: "I can't remember"

Did you feel supported in your choice?
15 Clients: "Yes"
"Yeah the Midwives helped"
"When I was in hospital they didn't show me how to breastfeed"

How were you supported in feeding your baby in the first few hours after birth?
"I had skin to skin contact and left to have time with my baby. My mum helped get him latched on"
"The Midwives helped me with positioning and he attached straight away"

When did your baby first have formula milk and why?
"He had an ounce after a few hours because I thought he wasn't getting enough"
"An hour and a half after she was born"
"First born, she didn't latch on"
"Just after birth, it was my choice"
"Twelve hours after birth, she wasn't latching on"
"In first few hours, I didn't have any milk"
"The second day because he was jaundiced"
"Two days, I was worried that he wasn't getting enough"

When did your baby stop having breast milk?
"She is one year old and we are still breastfeeding"
"A few hours after birth. My breasts were cracked and sore and expressing to feed from a bottle was time consuming"
"The next day after she was born"
"One week"
"Six weeks"
"Day two"; "She is still having breast milk (2 years old)"
"She is 1 year old and we are still breastfeeding"

Was there anything that could have been done differently in the first few days to support your feeding choice?
"Maybe having more information at the hospital. It would be nice if a Breastfeeding Support Lady comes on the first visit at home with the midwife"
"The Breastfeeding Support Worker was good, but only saw her once a day in hospital"
"I felt that my age was an issue because they kept saying my age. Sometimes praise but often "with her only being 17"

Over a two week period Family Nurses shared an Infant Feeding Questionnaire with clients to understand their infant feeding experience during the first few days following birth. The questionnaire indicated that clients were often unsuccessful in achieving their desired feeding choice.

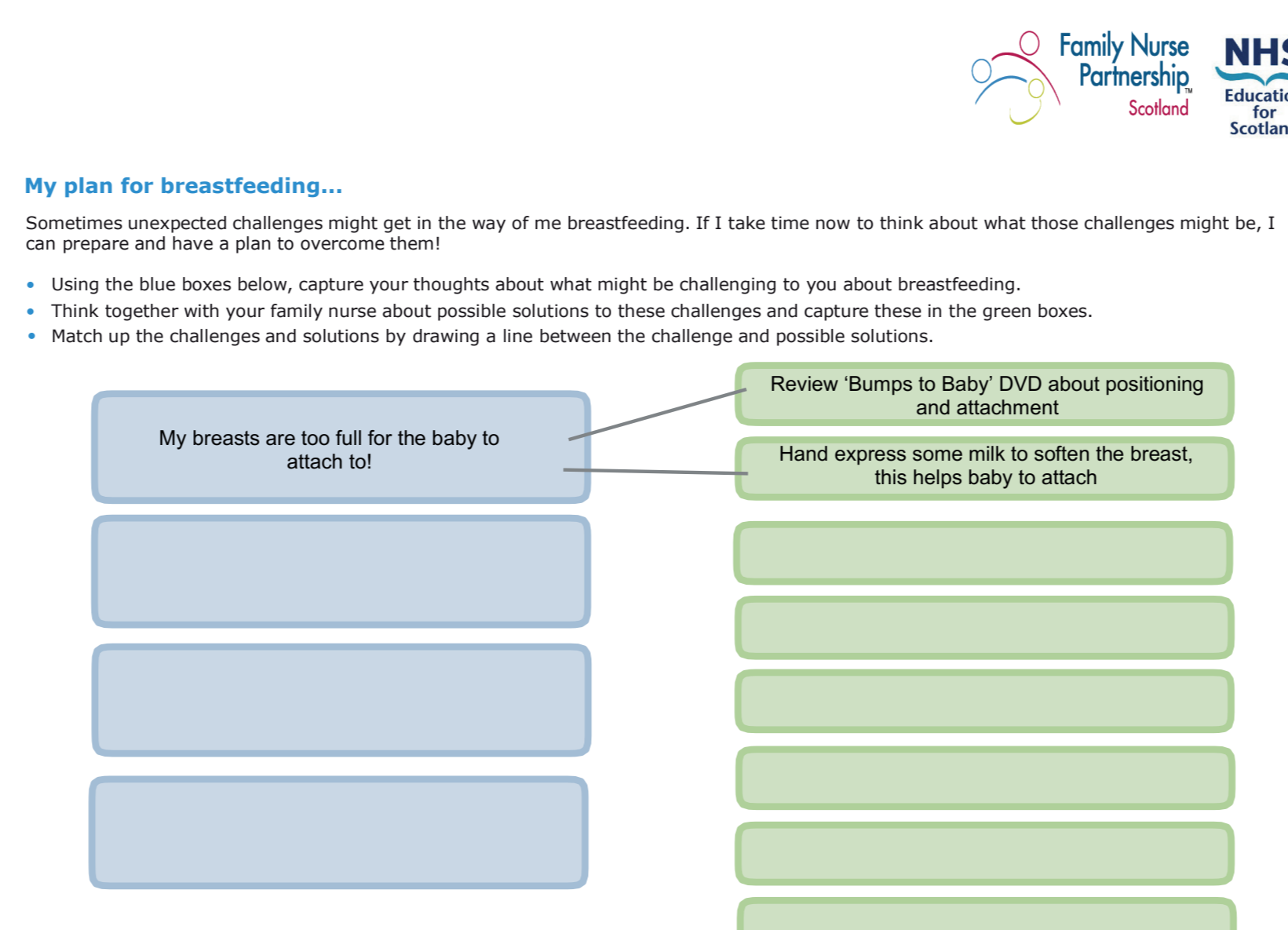
Process Map

The FNP includes materials used with clients to facilitate strength based conversations around infant feeding at key stages throughout the pregnancy. A Process Map identified that there are fewer materials that facilitate infant feeding conversations at around 36 weeks of pregnancy.

Methodology

Based on our findings from the Infant Feeding Questionnaire and Process Map we decided to introduce the use of a breastfeeding Volitional Help Sheet (VHS). This would enable clients to anticipate any potential obstacles to breastfeeding based on their own knowledge, experience and human ecology. Clients then created a plan to help overcome any identified challenges, thus increasing their self efficacy.

Volitional Help Sheet



Two PDSA Cycles were undertaken to help identify any challenges or inconsistencies in the use of the VHS.

We then began to share a VHS with all FNP clients who expressed a desire to breastfeed at 36 weeks of pregnancy.



Results and Outcomes

To understand whether the introduction of the VHS was beginning to make a difference to the number of clients who initiated breastfeeding we looked at the data during the same four month period for both Cohort 2 (2016) and Cohort 3 (2018).

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We were delighted to find that during this time period more clients initiated breastfeeding in Cohort 3 compared to Cohort 2.

	Number of Clients who gave birth between Sept and Dec	Number of clients who initiated breastfeeding between Sept and Dec
Cohort 2 (2016)	31	17 (54%)
Cohort 3 (2018)	12	6 (66%)

Based on this evidence the VHS became established in our practice and is now routinely used with all FNP clients who express a desire to breastfeed at 36 weeks of pregnancy.

	Total number of clients in the Cohort	Total number of clients in the Cohort who breastfed
Cohort 2	120	59 (49%)
Cohort 3	79	43 (54%)

All 78 clients enrolled on Cohort 3 have now delivered their babies, 43 of whom initiated breastfeeding at birth. This equates to 54% of the Cohort. Therefore the overall number of clients who initiated breastfeeding in Cohort 3 compared to Cohort 2 has increased by 5%.

Conclusion

Although we haven't quite achieved our initial project aim, with an overall increase of 5%, the routine use of a Volitional Help Sheet (VHS) at 36 weeks of pregnancy has had a positive impact on the breastfeeding initiation rate for FNP clients in Fife, thereby working towards further improving the health outcomes for young mothers and their infants.

Next Steps

Our learning has been shared with the wider FNP community at the 2019 Annual Conference in Scotland.

We now look forward to working alongside our local Breastfeeding Support Team who, utilising quality improvement methodology, aim to share the VHS with mothers out with FNP.

Following feedback from our infant feeding questionnaire, and with the aim of increasing the number of FNP clients who continue to breastfeed for longer, we also plan to embark on further quality improvement projects alongside the local Breastfeeding Support Team.

References

- Karoly, L., Kilburn, M., Cannon, J., Early childhood interventions: Proven results, future promise, RAND Corporation, 2005.
- Information Services Division, Infant Feeding Statistics Scotland 2017/18, 2018
- Gua, J., Wang, T., Liao, J., Huang, C., Efficacy of the theory of planned behaviour in predicting breastfeeding: Meta-analysis and structural equation modeling, Applied Nursing Research, 29, pp37-42, 2016

With thanks to Marion McPhillips (Principal Educator WCYPF, Family Nurse Partnership Education Lead) who created the Volitional Help Sheet based on the work published by Arden, M., Armitage, C., A Volitional help Sheet to reduce binge drinking in students: A randomized exploratory trial, Alcohol and Alcoholism, DOI:10.1093/alcalc/agn164, 2012