Breastfeeding and Returning to Work Policy

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<th>Head of HR – Policy &amp; Governance</th>
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<td>Responsible Lead Executive Director:</td>
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<td>Endorsing Body:</td>
<td>Human Resources Forum</td>
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<td>Governance or Assurance Committee</td>
<td>Staff Governance Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation Date:</td>
<td>June 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Version Number:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Date:</td>
<td>April 2022</td>
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# Breastfeeding and Returning to Work Policy

## CONSULTATION AND DISTRIBUTION RECORD

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### Distribution:
- NHSL Intranet: Firstport

## CHANGE RECORD

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<th>Author</th>
<th>Change</th>
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<tr>
<td>May `18</td>
<td>Deputy HRD</td>
<td>General Data Protection Regulations statement added into section 3 and updated name of Data Protection Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>April `19</td>
<td>Head of HR – Policy &amp; Governance</td>
<td>Change of review date</td>
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1. **INTRODUCTION**

NHS Lanarkshire recognises the enormous short and long term health advantages of breastfeeding for both mother and baby and recommends breastfeeding as the optimal infant feeding choice for all parents. The World Health Organisation and the UK Government recommend breastfeeding alone for the first six months of life as it provides all the nutrients that a baby will need.

Breastfed babies have a reduced risk of: chest infections, diarrhoea, gastro-enteritis and tummy upsets, ear infections, urinary infections, juvenile onset of diabetes, eczema and other allergies. The long-term benefits include: lower blood pressure into adulthood. Mothers who breastfeed are less likely to have: breast cancer, ovarian cancer and hip fractures later in life. Breastfeeding in the second year of life will enhance a mother's protection against breast cancer.

This policy should be read in conjunction with NHS Lanarkshire’s policy on Infant Feeding, which is available on Firstport.

2. **AIM, PURPOSE AND OUTCOMES**

NHS Lanarkshire seeks to encourage and support staff to continue breastfeeding on their return to work from maternity leave to maximise the full benefits (short and long term) of breastfeeding. NHS Lanarkshire is legally bound to ensure that there is no unfair discrimination in the application of its policies, and that all legal obligations are met.

3. **SCOPE**

The policy applies to all staff irrespective of age, sex, disability, ethnicity/race, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity or gender reassignment.

NHS Lanarkshire takes care to ensure your personal information is only accessible to authorised people. Our staff have a legal and contractual duty to keep personal health information secure and confidential. In order to find out more about current data protection legislation and how we process your information, please visit the Data Protection Notice on our website at www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk or ask a member of staff for a copy of our Data Protection Notice.

3.1 **Who are the Stakeholders**

All directly employed staff of NHS Lanarkshire

4. **PRINCIPAL CONTENT**

*Breastfeeding or Expressing Milk During Working Hours*
Breastfeeding and Returning to Work Policy

Employers are required to undertake a risk assessment and to provide breastfeeding women with suitable private rest facilities.

Flexibility in working patterns should be granted, where possible, to breastfeeding mothers. This may mean temporarily changing working hours or patterns to allow mothers to breastfeed, for example an employee should not be required to work excessively long hours or attend courses which would negatively affect breastfeeding.

Where practicable, managers must allow time off during working hours to breastfeed, if the baby is cared for nearby. Appropriate breaks will be permitted per day to allow for this. If the baby is being cared for outwith reasonable travelling distance then time will be allowed during working hours to express milk.

Facilities Available for Breastfeeding Mothers

Where possible the following facilities will be provided:

A clean, warm room with a comfortable chair and where necessary the facility to lie down. This area will be lockable to allow privacy. There will be access to hand washing facilities and an electric point for an electric pump.

Facilities for Storing Breast Milk

Where possible NHSL will provide a clean area where sterilising equipment may be stored and a dedicated refrigerator for storing expressed milk at 2-4°C until it is taken home. Staff should adhere to local guidelines for the storage of expressed breast milk.

Notification

Employees must notify the Head of Department of their intention to breastfeed before returning to work to ensure that appropriate support measures are put in place. The Head of Department should advise staff of the possibility of changes to working patterns to facilitate breastfeeding on return to work.

Advice

Should employees wish further advice on breastfeeding, then contact should be made with their midwife, public health nurse, Occupational Health or log onto www.lanarkshirebreastfeeding.org.uk.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees must

- Ensure they are familiar with the policy and procedures
- Comply with the policy
- Attend training as necessary

Managers must

- Ensure they communicate with staff about the policy
Breastfeeding and Returning to Work Policy

- Consistently implement the policy at their local level
- Keep accurate records

Staff Side Representatives must
- Support the principles and procedures in the policy
- Act in accordance with NHS Lanarkshire’s Partnership Agreement
- Undertake training as appropriate

Human Resources Staff must
- Provide awareness training as appropriate
- Provide expert advice and support on the application of the policy
- Monitor and review the policy

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None identified

7. COMMUNICATION PLAN

This policy will be launched using the weekly staff briefing and it will be available on Firstport.

This policy will also be discussed at the appropriate management team meetings and local partnership fora.

8. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT – Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Joint Policy Forum.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This policy meets NHS Lanarkshire’s EDIA

(tick box)

10. SUMMARY OF POLICY/FAQs

The policy outlines the benefits of breastfeeding and the support available for women who wish to continue to breastfeed after having returned to work.

11. REFERENCES

- Policy on Infant Feeding
- Breastfeeding and returning to work
- Information for pregnant women and new mothers – NHS Health Scotland
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018