Are you in on the Act?
Make your premises ‘Baby Friendly’ and support breastfeeding in the Highlands

Baby Friendly Welcome Sticker Guidelines
Dear Proprietor, Would you like to get ‘In on the Act?’

NHS Highland supports breastfeeding in public places and we (Infant Feeding Advisors) have introduced a Welcome Baby Sticker Scheme. The scheme aims to ensure that mothers are able to breastfeed their babies in comfort and without interruption or embarrassment. As part of the scheme you are invited to display a window sticker in public places to let mothers know that they are welcome to breastfeed there.

Mothers and infants tend to gather together in nursery groups or breastfeeding support groups and are good for business. Knowing they are welcome and supported in their decision to breastfeed in your establishment will encourage them and their friends to come back.

Breastfeeding offers considerable health benefits for both mum and baby and it is important that the community supports her in her decision to give her baby the best start in life. Breastfed babies are fed on demand and it is not always easy for mothers to find a convenient and welcoming place to do so. Many mothers cite restricted feeding, social isolation and embarrassment as their reasons for giving up breastfeeding.

With the implementation of the Breastfeeding etc. (Scotland) Act 2005 it is now an offence to prevent or stop a person feeding a child (under the age of 2) milk in a public place. This means that the person in charge of a child under the age of 2 should be able to feed that child when required without the fear of interruption or criticism. Establishments that are in breach of this Act are liable to be prosecuted.

If you want to get ‘In on the Act’ we encourage you to adopt the scheme. By displaying the breastfeeding welcome sticker in your window, you will be making a contribution to raising the profile and value of breastfeeding in the Highlands. Please sign and return the enclosed form and your ‘welcome to breastfeed’ sticker will be sent out to you and your premises will be registered on our NHS website.

If you have any queries about this scheme please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Infant Feeding Advisors, NHS Highland
Tel: 01463 704843

Janet Kellock
email: janet.kellock@nhs.net

Karen MacKay
karen.mackay3@nhs.net
Why your support is so important

Changing the attitudes to breastfeeding to make it the norm will have huge implications to breastfeeding rates in Highland. Main barriers to breastfeeding are restricted freedom, independence, family issues, return to work, social embarrassment and perceived social isolation.

The longer a mother breastfeeds, the more advantages both she and her baby will receive. Breastfeeding should continue and be supported for as long as a mother wishes to do so. With the introduction of appropriate complementary foods at around 6 months she can continue to breastfeed for up to 2 years and beyond if she so wishes.

Globally, breastfeeding has been acknowledged as being the most important intervention in improving children’s health and is the key to reducing inequalities in health amongst socially disadvantaged groups. Breastfeeding offers protection against numerous childhood illnesses including chest, stomach and ear infections, diabetes and childhood obesity. Mothers who breastfeed gain health benefits, as they lower their risk of breast cancer, ovarian cancer and hip fractures in later life.

NHS Highland has a Scottish Government target to increase the numbers of women who exclusively breastfeed at 6-8 weeks to 33.3% in 2010/2011.

Many mothers report that they would have liked to have breastfed for longer but cite a number of reasons for giving up, these include:

- Feeling embarrassed about breastfeeding in public
- Premises not welcoming breastfeeding
- Premises not being clean enough for them to feel comfortable breastfeeding their baby.
- Premises offering unsuitable rooms to breastfeed eg toilets
- Premises offering bottle warming services as an alternative to breastfeeding thus discouraging breastfeeding.

For breastfeeding to be successfully initiated and established, mothers need the support and expertise of health professionals and the positive encouragement from family and friends. To continue and maintain breastfeeding for longer they also need the support of the workplace and the local community.

You can make a difference!

By adopting the welcome baby sticker scheme you will be raising the profile and value of breastfeeding thus protecting the health of mothers and babies in your community. Participating premises will have their contact details displayed on NHS Highland’s website and mothers can see the choice available. Seeing the sticker identifies which establishments are comfortable, supportive and accepting towards breastfeeding. Your business will be demonstrating that it cares about its customers and they will come back….. and bring their friends!
Aims and Objectives of the Scheme

- To develop and increase the Highland network of quality assured, breastfeeding friendly premises that will offer positive support to breastfeeding mothers in order that they can breastfeed their infants in comfort and with confidence, when they are out and about in the community.

- To raise the public awareness of the importance and benefits of breastfeeding.

- To increase the public awareness of the Baby Welcome Sticker Scheme

- To change the culture and attitudes of the Highland community. To help them to see breastfeeding as the norm and appreciate that it is the most beneficial method of feeding our infants.

- To encourage workplaces to facilitate the necessary support for breastfeeding mums should they wish to return to work.

- Help to reduce health inequalities, particularly with disadvantaged and hard to reach communities.

- Improve the breastfeeding rates for the Highland area and in doing so improve the health of the Highland community as a whole.

- To bring to the attention of all public/voluntary or private premises the importance of the new Breastfeeding etc. (Scotland) Act 2005. Ensure that they are aware that it is an offence to prevent or harass a person in charge of a child from feeding that child milk in a public place. Ensure that they are aware that proprietors who do not comply with the act are liable to prosecution.

Scheme Guidelines

Once you have adopted this scheme, prominently displaying the sticker will indicate to a breastfeeding mother that:

- She will be made welcome; thus giving her the confidence to feed her baby without fear of interruption or criticism.

- Staff will be positive, supportive, non judgemental and familiar with the guidelines of the sticker scheme.

- The premises will provide an acceptable standard of cleanliness, warmth and comfort and there will be some clean, dry, basic facilities for changing her baby.

- If a member of the public complains about her feeding her baby, the complainant rather than the mother will be offered alternative seating.

- The premises will comply with the breastfeeding etc. (Scotland) Act 2005
Are you in on the Act?  
Making your premises  
‘Baby Friendly’ and supporting breastfeeding in the Highlands

Baby Friendly Welcome Sticker  
Application form

I want to be in on the act.  
I am interested in registering for the baby friendly premises sticker scheme.  
I would like to be included on the NHS Highland Website.

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<td>Signature of Manager or Proprietor</td>
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Thank you for supporting breastfeeding mothers in the Highlands!

Please return this form to:

Karen Mackay/ Janet Kellock  
Infant feeding Advisors  
NHS Highland  
Assynt House  
Beechwood Park  
Inverness, IV2 3BW  
Tel. 01463 704842

Working together to promote breastfeeding friendly premises in the Highlands