



PROCEDURE

**Baby Friendly Health Initiative (BFHI):
Professional development requirements for staff**

This document should be read in conjunction with this [Disclaimer](#)

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Purpose

BFHI step 2 – Ensure that staff have sufficient knowledge, competence and skills to support breastfeeding.¹

To ensure **all** staff providing care to new mothers have the necessary education and understanding to adhere to the Baby Friendly Health Initiative (BFHI) and implement the breastfeeding (BF) guidelines.

Background

BFHI accreditation is KEMH site specific and therefore education requirements for neonatal staff are included.

- Timely and appropriate care for breastfeeding mothers can only be accomplished if personnel have the knowledge, competence and skills to provide it.
- Education of personnel enables them to develop effective skills, give consistent messages and implement policy standards.

- Personnel should update and submit their [mandatory training checklist](#) on an annual basis. This should include evidence of achievement of mandatory BFHI education.
- Personnel who do not have the core skills and knowledge from their undergraduate education, or from education at another facility, will need more comprehensive in-service education than more experienced personnel

Procedure

Group 1 staff

Those who counsel and assist mothers with breastfeeding, or provide education in relation to breastfeeding, in any part of the maternity unit, antenatal clinic and/or neonatal nurseries. For example, lactation consultants, midwives (antenatal, birthing unit, postnatal and domiciliary), registered or enrolled nurses who work permanently or on a casual basis in the maternity unit and/or neonatal nurseries, and paediatric unit personnel who frequently assist mothers with breastfeeding or breast expression.

New staff

Role	Requirement	Comments
All new staff	BFHI introduction	BFHI face to face session at nursing and midwifery orientation – skill code 91070.
Midwife	Attend KEMH Breastfeeding (BF) face to face policy study day + Moodle pre-reading within 6 months of commencement.	Completion recorded in ALESCO following attendance at BF policy study day and Moodle pre-reading. Course code: 00683 Core skills and knowledge assessment for new Group 1 personnel should be commenced as soon as possible. Staff development midwives monitor progress and record skill code: 91250 when completed.
Nurse working with babies (includes GNP's with a rotation to neonates)	Attend BF policy study day + Moodle pre-reading within 6 months of commencement. Recommended to complete KEMH eLearning BF modules.	Completion recorded in ALESCO following attendance at BF policy study day and Moodle pre-reading. Course code: 00683 Core skills and knowledge assessment for new Group 1 personnel should be commenced as soon as possible. Staff development midwives monitor progress and record skill code: 91250

		when completed.
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Continuing staff

Over the previous 3 years, all Group 1 personnel¹ who have been at the facility for six months or more have had a minimum of 8 hours of in-service education or **3 hours annually**, including updates and revision where applicable. It is recommended the updates and revision is spread over the previous 3 years.

The 20 core skills and knowledge¹ are considered essential skills for all personnel who counsel and assist mothers with breastfeeding. Personnel who do not have these core skills and knowledge from their undergraduate education, or from education at another facility, will need more comprehensive in-service education than more experienced personnel.

Role	Requirement	Comments
Midwives + Neonatal Nurses	BFHI update/skills and knowledge BFHI education hours Additional in-service including competency based sessions	BFHI update session at Compulsory in-service annually. This will be recorded using the skill code: 91265 (BFHI re-orientation) 3 hours annually or 8 hours over 3 years. Completion of annual breastfeeding education requirements are recorded <i>on the mandatory training</i> checklist. Manual data entry by staff development nurses/midwives in ALESCO with skill code: 91240 following annual review Recorded in Ascender by staff development

Core skills and knowledge

Counselling skills
1. Use listening skills when counselling a mother;
2. Use skills for building a mother's confidence and giving support;
3. Counsel a pregnant woman about breastfeeding
4. Counsel a mother to make an informed and appropriate decision about infant feeding, suitable to her circumstances
Establishing breastfeeding
5. Help a mother to recognise when her baby is ready to initiate breastfeeding while in skin-to-skin contact after birth
6. Support a mother to position herself and her baby for breastfeeding
7. support a mother to attach her baby to the breast, encouraging baby-led attachment
8. Assess a breastfeed; including teaching a mother how to monitor milk transfer
9. Explain to a mother about feeding cues and the optimal pattern of breastfeeding
10. Using hands-off techniques, assist a mother to express her breast milk
11. Explain to a mother how to know if her baby is getting enough milk
Breastfeeding challenges
12. Counsel a mother who thinks she does not have enough milk
13. Counsel a mother with an unsettled baby
14. Counsel a mother on selecting and using an alternative feeding method

15. Counsel a mother whose baby is refusing to breastfeed
16. Counsel a mother who has flat or inverted nipples
17. Counsel a mother with engorged breasts
18. Counsel a mother with sore or cracked nipples
19. Counsel a mother with mastitis
20. Support a mother to breastfeed a low-birth-weight, preterm or sick baby

Group 2 staff

Those who may provide general breastfeeding advice but do not assist mothers with breastfeeding. For example, obstetricians, paediatricians, other medical personnel, most paediatric unit personnel (unless they frequently assist mothers with breastfeeding or breast expression), registered nurses who care for postnatal mothers and their babies when midwives are not available (e.g. in small facilities), speech pathologists, pharmacists, physiotherapists and dieticians who advise or provide care related to infant feeding or lactation to mothers and/or their babies. At KEMH this also includes some midwives who have non-clinical roles.

For this group of staff, the BFHI Introduction eLearning package is required **3 yearly** and can be accessed at [Course: BFHI group 2 - medical and relevant allied health staff \(elearn.net.au\)](https://elearn.net.au/course/bfhi-group-2-medical-and-relevant-allied-health-staff)

(Course code: 02020)

New RMO's will receive a face to face session during their WNHS Orientation. Attendance at this session will be recorded by PGME.

Group 3 staff

Those who have contact with pregnant women and mothers but do not assist mothers with breastfeeding and do not provide infant feeding advice as part of their role. For example, ward clerks, auxiliary volunteers, some physiotherapists, perioperative and recovery room personnel (unless they assist with skin-to-skin contact and the first breastfeed in which case they are considered to be Group 1).

For this group of staff, the BFHI group 3 package is required 3 yearly and can be accessed at

[Course: BFHI Group 3 \(elearn.net.au\)](https://elearn.net.au/course/bfhi-group-3)

OR

Alternatively departments could contact the Breastfeeding Centre for a face to face session 3 yearly. Completion by face to face will be manually recorded in ALESCO by delegated administrative staff following attendance. (Course code: 01707, 0.75 hours, BFHI G3)

Additional personnel

Education Requirements for New Personnel, Casual Personnel, Agency Personnel, Students, Locums and Others who Assist Mothers with Breastfeeding

The [Hospital Breastfeeding Policy](#) and [clinical guidelines](#) will be available via Healthpoint or hard copy for:

New staff; agency /relieving staff and students who are advising or assisting mothers with breastfeeding

Mother-to-mother support counsellors or peer counsellors who provide education or visit breastfeeding mothers

Other personnel with visiting rights to breastfeeding mothers

. At commencement of their first shift/placement/visit, orientation should include:

- a review of the 'policies for BFHI'
- being shown where the full policy and protocols can be accessed

- being made aware of their role in implementing it
 - being made aware that they are required to work within the facility's policies and protocols
- Orientation for new short-term personnel, students or locums may be less comprehensive than orientation for other new personnel. For example, a brief orientation might be reading a suitable handout and answering a short questionnaire.


Casual or agency personnel who have worked on a regular basis (20 shifts or more over a period of 6 months in the maternity unit, antenatal clinic and/or neonatal nurseries) are considered the same as new personnel.

References

1. BFHI Australia. Maternity Facility Handbook. 2020

Related WNHS policies, procedures and guidelines

- [Hospital Breastfeeding Policy](#)
- Obstetrics & Gynaecology [Clinical guidelines](#): Breastfeeding

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