Australian National Breastfeeding Strategy: 2017 and beyond

Fact Sheet 1 - February 2017

At the COAG Health Ministers meeting in September 2016, it was agreed that an enduring Australian National Breastfeeding Strategy (the Strategy) be developed, incorporating two components:

- development of a high level enduring strategy to support breastfeeding in Australia, with no end date; and
- national agreement on how data is collected nationally to measure progress on increasing the number of babies who are breastfed exclusively up to six months

A Project Team has been established in the Australian Government Department of Health in collaboration with the Breastfeeding Jurisdictional Officers Group and the Breastfeeding Expert Reference Group.

Breastfeeding Jurisdictional Officers Group

The Breastfeeding Jurisdictional Officers Group comprises key jurisdictional officers overseeing the development of the Strategy. The Group reports to the Standing Committee on Child and Youth Health, under the auspices of the Community Care and Population Health Principal Committee, a principal committee of the Australian Health Ministers’ Advisory Council.

Listed below are the members of the Breastfeeding Jurisdictional Officers Group:

- Alan Philp (Chair), Director, Preventive Policy (Commonwealth)
- Jennifer Watkins and Maria Luteria (Secretariat), Policy Officers, Preventive Policy (Commonwealth)
- Deborah Matha, Acting Director, Maternity, Child, Youth and Paediatrics (New South Wales)
- Joan Stort, Senior Policy Analyst, Health and Social Policy Branch (New South Wales)
- Dr Jenny Proimos, Senior Medical Advisor, Child and Adolescent Health and Wellbeing Division (Victoria)
- Megan Leuenberger, Principal Maternal Child Health Nurse Advisor, Wellbeing, Health and Engagement Division (Victoria)
- Sally Russel-Hall, Clinical Nurse Consultant, Preventive Health Branch (Queensland)
- Susan Bradshaw, Senior Policy Officer, Maternal and Child Health (Western Australia)
- Julie-Anne McWhinnie, Chief Project Officer – Public Health Nutrition (South Australia)
- Judy Seal, Principal Advisor, Public Health Nutrition (Tasmania)
- Alexander Wetten, Child Health Nutritionist (Northern Territory)
- Jane Pepper, Manager, Women, Youth and Child Health Policy Unit (Australian Capital Territory)
- Denese Griffin, Manager, Aboriginal Maternity Services Support Unit (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Representative)
Breastfeeding Expert Reference Group

The Breastfeeding Expert Reference Group provides advice to the Project Team on breastfeeding. Membership consists of representatives from organisations with an expertise in breastfeeding. The Group is chaired by Debra Thoms, Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer, Australian Government Department of Health.

Organisations represented on the Breastfeeding Expert Reference Group:

- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- National Health and Medical Research Council
- Australian Breastfeeding Association
- Australian College of Midwives
- Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives
- Maternal, Child and Family Health Nurses Australia
- Lactation Consultants of Australia and New Zealand
- Australian Private Hospitals Association
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists
- Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association
- Childbirth and Parenting Educators of Australia
- Australasian Association of Parenting and Child Health
- Murdoch Children’s Research Institute/Centre for Community Child Health
- Telethon Kids Institute
- Women’s Healthcare Australasia
- Dietitians Association of Australia
- Public Health Association of Australia
- Royal Australasian College of Physicians

Consultation

The Project Team has conducted a literature review and will develop a draft Strategy following consultation with the Breastfeeding Expert Reference Group and Breastfeeding Jurisdictional Officers Group.

It is anticipated that face-to-face consultation with key stakeholders in all states and territories will occur from late March to May 2017. These consultations will inform the development of a consultation draft Strategy which will be made available for public consultation on the Department of Health’s website in June 2017.

In the second half of 2017, a final draft will be submitted to the Australian Health Ministers’ Advisory Council and the COAG Health Council for approval.

Further information

If you would like further information on this project, please contact the Project Team by email: Reproductive.Health@health.gov.au.