

## Best Possible Start

METHODS	ACTIONS
PROVIDING SUPPORT	Long term funding and investment in the voluntary sector (who have a key influence on peers) to deliver support
	<b>Voluntary sector – sustainable funding for breastfeeding, weaning, cookery support etc</b>
	More people (staff/volunteers) to help new mums ie within maternity wards
	Mechanisms to support women in the first year (stay at home, breastfeeding) as in other countries and to pay for longer maternity leave
	Need to identify and provide training for key groups who will deliver weaning support NB Voluntary sector
NUTRITION	Look into providing guidelines on vitamins and nutrients for new mums (distribution issues)
	<b>Nutrition, breastfeeding and cooking as part of the school curriculum and pre-school</b>
GOVERNMENT	Adopt and enforce an infant feeding strategy in Scotland
	Regulate baby food labelling
	<b>Leadership, co-ordination and communication strategies to be put in place plus a central information and advice point for initiatives</b>
EDUCATION AND TRAINING	Education & training to support guidelines
	Education and training to support guidelines. Should be available for the wider workforce, population and community nurses
IN THE WORKPLACE	Protected time in the workplace for breastfeeding
	<b>Extended maternity leave and full pay and breastfeeding support on return to work</b>
SOCIAL MARKETING	Involve and engage with consumers (public)
	Stress the importance of parents and carers in cooking skills development
	<b>Look at media campaigns and social marketing</b>
	Include mental health issues (Post-natal depression, nutrition etc)

Please note that the text in bold are the prioritised actions.

## **1. Is the vision or 'direction of travel' correct?**

On the whole the group did not have any major disagreement with the vision.

The group felt that weaning should also be included within the vision. Food prices have also risen and this needs to be considered.

The breastfeeding statement from the previous conference of 'breastfeeding to be considered the norm' was considered very aspirational and questions were raised as to how this would actually be achieved. It was also felt that it is important to ensure that breast milk substitutes are correctly marketed and that formula feeding women are not stigmatised. Need to ensure that women who didn't breastfeed don't feel guilty. However the group did go onto discuss how formula can never substitute for breast milk. Breastfeeding should be what is considered as the norm. Baby Friendly works against itself as seen as something you achieve, something special rather than the norm. Staff levels in hospitals were seen as a real issue.

Learning about food and nutrition from an early age is needed across the population however government initiatives mainly focus on those in low incomes. It is more important to focus on those at risk rather than the lowest income. The group felt the best place to start is in the middle class population who can afford fruit and vegetables and generate demand. With mental health issues, it was felt that self-esteem may be missing.

## **2. Do you agree with the proposed actions in the discussion document?**

The group felt there was a need to involve supermarkets/retailers and get them to provide useful information as some are still incorrectly labelling, as still communicate about 4-6months for weaning.

Also discussed was the need to engage with consumers.

Endorsed need for an Infant Feeding Strategy and appointment of a National Infant Nutrition Co-ordinator.

Health visitors are the only people currently focused on this advice therefore a wider education and training programme is needed for the wider workforce working with children. CPD also needs to include updates on infant nutrition for information. Pre-registration training or curriculum standards required for nursery staff. Community nurses review – generic community nurse is likely to focus on care in the community rather than health promotion. This will place a lot more reliance on nursery staff. Woman and families loss touch with professionals between children ages 1-3 years old.

The voluntary sector is also seen as an untapped resource with lots of passion however lack of long term funding means that it cannot be sustained and used effectively.

There is a need for protected time in the workplace to encourage breastfeeding and returning to work and fully paid maternity leave in the first year needs to be increase and extended.

Staffing levels in maternity wards are too low. Peers and volunteers could be used with staff leading the volunteers to promote breastfeeding as normal. There needs to be better care for women in the first stages of raising a child.

Healthy Start – is it giving out a mixed message? Is vitamin supplementation the way to go? There are some definite sub-groups who will need them. Good data that only iron and folate show positive pregnancy outcomes. Need to plan a very clear system for distribution. Community pharmacists are key to this; it is in the contract of the Community Pharmacists in Tayside and Fife. Will this be rolled out across Scotland? There needs to be clear guidelines on nutrition at a national level with a clear system of distribution.

The school curriculum should respect healthy eating and cooking. Breastfeeding should also be on the curriculum although many teachers are embarrassed to discuss it. Health promoting schools could pick this up.

Important to support and encourage childcare staff and nurseries to provide home cooked food. Nutritional Guidance for the Early Years is not making enough of an impact. There needs to be discussions with the Care Commission on how to drive this harder as not adequate at present. A possible solution could be through an inspection programme.

Current advertising needs to be looked at to ensure that unhealthy food is not being advertised to children and a social marketing campaign with positive images should be encouraged.

The impact of drinking alcohol during pregnancy and the affects of the foetal alcohol syndrome should be considered.

### **3. How do we get there/ how do we do this?**

See table above and question two.