

ACTION CARD

TITLE: Support for Breast Feeding Mothers	B0302 AC4
FOR USE BY: Staff, Line Managers, HR, Staff side representatives	LIAISES WITH: Staff, Line Managers, HR, Staff side representatives

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (GHNHSFT) is dedicated to protecting the health and safety of all its employees, and to providing all possible support and facilities to employees who have returned to work after a period of maternity leave.

Rationale:

The Trust supports and acknowledges that nursing mothers have a right to breastfeed or express milk during the working day. As such the Trust will positively encourage and support mothers returning to work to continue to breastfeed in line with the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) guidance which recommends it is good practice for employers to provide a private, healthy and safe environment for breastfeeding mothers to express and store milk.

SUPPORT AVAILABLE:

- **Flexibility within working hours, where possible, where service provision will not be affected, to schedule time to express milk**
- **Facilities that allow privacy for expressing milk**
- **Access to a clean, safe water source for washing hands**
- **Access to a storage alternative for breast milk**
- **Sterilising facilities**

RISK ASSESSMENT

As long as an employee is breastfeeding, there is a duty to consider whether working conditions are a risk to her health and/or the health of her baby. The employee's line manager will, therefore, be responsible for arranging a risk assessment of the employee's working conditions to be undertaken. Where any risks are identified, steps will be taken to avoid exposure to the risk for as long as the employee continues to breastfeed.

ROLE OF THE LINE MANAGER

When a member of staff returns from Maternity Leave with the intention of continuing to breastfeed, her line manager will:

- discuss any concerns the employee has regarding her conditions of work, or her hours of work and the compatibility of these conditions and/or hours with breastfeeding
- discuss the employee's current job and any adjustments that may be required
- arrange for a risk assessment of the employee's working conditions to be undertaken
- negotiate flexible working and/or extra time for the employee to express milk, or to feed her baby, in the workplace

Managers may wish to involve a member of HR Department in these discussions.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES/ACTIONS

Mothers returning from Maternity Leave and who intend to continue to breastfeed:

- Must make an appointment to see her manager, at least four weeks in advance of the date of her return from maternity leave, in order to discuss her intentions to continue to breastfeed
- Discuss with the manager the facilities for expressing and storing milk in the workplace
- Should consider her current job and any adaptation that is likely to be required in order to allow her to express milk or breastfeed her baby, in the workplace. The mother is expected to negotiate realistically with her line manager in order to explore pragmatic ways to accommodate her wish to express milk, or breastfeed her baby in the workplace.
- Should discuss any concerns regarding her conditions of work, or her hours and their compatibility with breastfeeding with her line manager.
- Is encouraged to consider her child care options, e.g. find out what is available and what best suits her needs.

FURTHER SUPPORT

Further support and guidance can be obtained via the **2020 Staff Advice and Support Hub** who can be contacted on **0300 422 2020** or via email on ghn-tr.2020@nhs.net

[\(Add link to 'New and expectant mothers risk assessment form'\)](#)