

## MEDIA RELEASE / INVITATION

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### **Celebrating our breastfeeding peer supporters in Market Harborough**

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT)'s Healthy Together team in Market Harborough will be celebrating the graduation of the latest cohort of trained volunteer breastfeeding peer supporters at a special event on Tuesday 8 August from 7pm – 8.30pm at Market Harborough Children's Centre.

#### **Media Invitation/Photo opportunity: Tuesday 8 August**

You are welcome to join us for the graduation event at Market Harborough Children's Centre, Coventry Road, Market Harborough, LE16 9BX from 7pm – 8.30pm. The event will bring together peer supporters, staff from the Market Harborough Children's Centre, public health nursing (health visiting) teams from LPT, and local breastfeeding mums past and present. If you would like to attend, please contact LPT's infant feeding lead, Carole Fishwick: [carole.fishwick@leicspart.nhs.uk](mailto:carole.fishwick@leicspart.nhs.uk) / 07717 803188



LPT holds the prestigious international 'Baby Friendly' accreditation for the high quality infant feeding support provided through its 0-19 Healthy Together service. Public health nurses (health visitors) from LPT train a number of mums each year to become

breastfeeding peer supporters: volunteers who can provide new mothers in the local community with valuable help in relation to breastfeeding, including on-the-spot advice over

the phone or at breastfeeding support groups, as well as a virtual 'shoulder to cry on' via social media.

16 ladies will be graduating on 8 August after successfully completing the rigorous training programme at Market Harborough Children's Centre, which is run by Leicestershire County Council. The programme which ensures they are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to support new mums in the Market Harborough district as they embark on their breastfeeding journeys. They join three other breastfeeding peer supporters who have already been trained. As breastfeeding mothers themselves, all these women already have considerable experience to share, including around issues such as reflux, mastitis and feeding premature babies, twins and older babies. Working closely with public health nurses (health visitors) and children's centre staff, the new peer supporters will help to champion breastfeeding as the best choice where possible for parents and babies.

Carole Fishwick, LPT's Infant Feeding lead, explains: "All of our peer supporters are trained in everything from how to latch a baby on to the breast to the emotional impact that breastfeeding can have on women. They do such an important job because breast feeding can sometimes be a challenge, and without their help many new mums would give up."

Public health nurse (health visitor) Penny Ely adds: "The Babies and Bosoms (BABs) breastfeeding group in Market Harborough where the new peer supporters will be based is a very popular group, and also covers Broughton, Lutterworth and Kibworth. Through my work with new and expectant mums, I know how important it is that mums receive the right guidance around breastfeeding and how easily they can lose confidence and give up. Being able to talk to someone who has recently been through the experience can be a lifeline."



Breastfeeding provides a range of health benefits for both mothers and babies. Breastfed babies are less likely to suffer from gastro-intestinal, respiratory, urinary tract and ear infections. They are less likely to have asthma, eczema, food allergies and diabetes. The danger of obesity in later childhood is also lessened by

breastfeeding. At the same time, mothers who breastfeed may find it easier to return to their pre-pregnancy weight and are less likely to develop breast and ovarian cancers.

Additional breastfeeding resources and information for new parents are available on LPT's website [www.leicspart.nhs.uk/infantfeeding](http://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/infantfeeding), and will also be included in LPT's new Health for Under 5s website due to launch at the end of September.

**ENDS**

## NOTES TO EDITORS

- Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) provides community health, mental health and learning disabilities services for the one million people living in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. We have a budget in excess of £275 million and employ approximately 5,500 staff. For more information visit: [www.leicspart.nhs.uk](http://www.leicspart.nhs.uk). Our registered charity is called Raising Health (charity number 1057361). The charity fundraises to support excellent care initiatives, equipment and innovations which go above and beyond core NHS provision to enhance the experience of our patients, service users and staff. See [www.raisinghealth.org.uk](http://www.raisinghealth.org.uk)
- **For further information contact:** Rosie Huckle, Communications Manager for Families, Young People and Children's Services, Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, Tel: 0116 295 0802, Email: [rosie.huckle@leicspart.nhs.uk](mailto:rosie.huckle@leicspart.nhs.uk)
- **For information about the** Harborough-based Babies and Bosoms breastfeeding support group (BABs), please contact the local health visiting team on 01858 411521. As well as offering new mums a welcoming, supportive and friendly environment where they can share tips and experiences, practise feeding their babies in public and access trusted advice, the group provides a structured programme of games, quizzes, discussions and visiting speakers.