



November 19th, 2014

Mums supporting mums to breastfeed

The first graduates of a new breastfeeding peer support training programme are ready to help South Tyneside mums to breastfeed for longer.

The course was developed by South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust health visitor Jen Menzies and public health midwife Jane Harker. They based it in line with the standards of the UK Baby Friendly initiative, which aims to support breastfeeding and parent-infant relationships by working with public services to improve standards of care.

A dozen mums successfully completed the training, which included communication and support skills, and they will now work with the Trust's health professionals in ante-natal infant feeding workshops and the various breastfeeding support groups, which are run by the Trust's recently established breastfeeding support worker team at Children's Centres within the borough.

Mrs Menzies said: "Our graduates had all had a positive breastfeeding experience themselves. Now, they can give other mums and mums-to-be the benefit of that experience and, hopefully, encourage them not only to breastfeed at birth but to continue to do so, as breastfeeding reduces the risk of babies becoming ill and is associated with a reduced risk of later childhood disease, as well as with protecting the mother's health."

ends

Pictured above: The new breastfeeding peer support counsellors

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan

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