

Call for breastfeeding guidance for babies with Down's syndrome

July 9 2015

Despite compelling evidence about the benefits of breastfeeding little is known about the breastfeeding experiences of mothers of infants with Down's syndrome. In the UK, clinical commissioning groups and practitioners have a vital role in empowering and enabling these women to access help and support as soon as the child is born.

Mothers of babies with Down's syndrome need tailored guidance to help them breastfeed and reduce the risk of health inequalities they may otherwise face.

An article in the July edition of Learning Disability Practice states that more research is needed to explore and improve breastfeeding practice in this group to give newborns with Down's syndrome a healthier start in life.

It calls for governments, the NHS, clinical commissioning groups and practitioners to lead on this and warns inaction could lead to [mothers](#) receiving inadequate support.

The author, Rooja Sooben from the Centre for Learning Disability Studies at the University of Hertfordshire, says despite compelling evidence about the health benefits of breastfeeding, little is known about the experiences of mothers of infants with Down's syndrome.

Although there are national strategies to promote breastfeeding and address [health inequalities](#), it is not clear whether these meet the needs

of babies with Down's syndrome and their mothers, Sooben says.

The article concludes that nurses have a valuable role in empowering and enabling these mothers to access 'the help and support they deserve as soon as each child is born.'

More information: (2015) "Breastfeeding of newborns with Down's syndrome." *Learning Disability Practice*. 18, 6, 26-28.

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