



Official Statistics Breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks after birth (Experimental Statistics)

2016/17 annual data Statistical Commentary (November 2017 release)

Main findings

- The aggregate breastfeeding rate for England for 2016/17 is 44.4% (with confidence intervals of 44.3– 44.6%) This is based on 142 out of 150 reporting local authorities who provided sufficient quarterly data for annual figures to be calculated. This compares to 43.1% in 2015/16.
- Breastfeeding prevalence at a PHE centre level can be published for the North East and East of England. All other areas fail to meet validation at stage 3 (known breastfeeding status for infants age 6-8 weeks is lower than the 95% quality standard).
- Breastfeeding prevalence can be published for 69 local authorities (passing all 3 stages of validation) and percentages range from 19.3% to 75.6%.

This statistical commentary should be considered alongside the 2016/17 Annual Breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks after birth statistical release, which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/breastfeeding-statistics>.

Please treat the figures with caution. Where totals are presented for England and PHE centres, these are aggregate totals of the areas that submitted information and passed initial validation. Any reference to previous quarters' data relates to 'refreshed' figures provided in the latest reporting quarter. Where no reference to a particular quarter is mentioned it should be assumed that the data refers to the most recent quarter's data.

Background

In October 2015, the responsibility for commissioning children's public health for the 0-5 years' population transferred from NHS England to local authorities. To support this transfer Public Health England established an interim data collection for a number of key performance indicators associated with these services which it is critical to monitor and report. The strategic reporting solution hosted by NHS Digital, the Community Services Dataset (formerly the Children and Young People's Health Services Dataset), is collecting relevant data items directly from providers' systems and in time will take on reporting of these indicators.

The breastfeeding information within this publication has been obtained via the interim reporting system to collect health visiting activity at a local authority resident level. Quarter 1 of 2015/16 was the first reporting period and the information contained within this report was submitted to Public Health England by local authorities on a voluntary basis. The full data publication can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/breastfeeding-statistics>.

The decision has been taken to publish this information as 'experimental statistics' on the basis that there has been a significant change to the reporting methods since NHS England stopped their reporting, both in units of collection and the mandatory/voluntary nature.

Data Collection Method

An interim reporting system is hosted on the Local Government Association (LGA) website to collect the data on health visiting indicators and related outcomes. The reporting window for revisions of Quarter 1-4 2016/17 data was 11 September to 20 October 2017.

To support local authorities in submitting data, detailed guidance was circulated to explain how analysts and commissioners in local authorities should submit health-visiting indicators. A dedicated mailbox (interimreporting@phe.gov.uk) was also in place to respond to questions and comments.

Once the collection window closed, the data received was centrally collated, validated and reported.

Joint Submissions

Following publication of Quarter 2, 2015/16 (January release), it was confirmed that Hackney and City of London would be submitting data jointly and that any data submitted in previous quarters for Hackney also included City of London residents.

As the data submitted for the Isles of Scilly showed very small numbers, which in some cases would have needed to be suppressed, these have been combined with Cornwall.

Data Quality Findings

The following data relates the whole of 2016/17 based on refreshed data for Quarters 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Prior to validation, a process of estimation was applied to any local authority data where numerical data were submitted for only 3 quarters in 2016/17. An annual numerator and denominator were estimated from 'scaling up' the three supplied numerators and denominators.

Out of 150 reporting local authorities, all submitted a return for the interim reporting collection for at least 3 quarters in 2016/17; however 8 local authorities did not submit sufficient numerical data for estimation to take place, and therefore annual values were not published:

Local Authority	PHE Centre
Cumbria	North West
Barnsley	Yorkshire and The Humber
Enfield	London
Hounslow	London
Lambeth	London

Newham	London
Southwark	London
Waltham Forest	London

Further validation was then performed on annual data for the remaining 142 local authorities.
Stage 1 Validation

Definition: Local authorities to submit integers for the ‘number of infants totally breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks’ and/or the ‘number of infants partially breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks’ and the combined total must be lower than or equal to the integer for the ‘number of infants due a 6-8 week check’. If there are DK “Don’t Knows” in the combined total or the denominator the area will automatically fail validation.

Stage 1 validation was not applied to annual data as annual numerators and denominators had only been calculated for those areas with sufficient quarterly data, as previously described.

Stage 2 Validation

Definition: The value submitted for infants due a 6-8 week review must to be within 20% of the resident population of babies aged zero for that local authority. This is based on the 2016 mid-year ONS population estimates by local authority for babies aged zero. Any values within 20% tolerance of the mid-year population figure for the quarter will pass this check.

Of the 142 submissions, 137 went on to pass stage 2.

The local authorities that failed stage 2 validation are:

Local Authority	PHE Centre
Barnet	London
Hammersmith and Fulham	London
Kensington and Chelsea	London
Tower Hamlets	London
Westminster	London

Please see the section ‘Data Quality Notes’ towards the end of this commentary which provides further details.

Stage 3 Validation

Definition: The percentage of infants whose breastfeeding status was recorded must meet the data quality standard of 95%, being between 95% and 100%. This means the sum of those infants totally breastfed, partially breastfeed and not breastfed should be greater than or equal to 95% of the number of infants due a 6-8 week review.

The threshold of 95% coverage applies to local authorities and PHE centres, but for the aggregated England value the threshold is 85%.

Of the 137 submissions passing stage 2 validation, 69 went on to pass stage 3 validation.

The 68 local authorities that failed stage 3 validation are:

Local Authority	PHE Centre
Hartlepool	North East
Stockton on Tees	North East
Blackburn with Darwen	North West
Blackpool	North West
Cheshire West and Chester	North West
Lancashire	North West
Rochdale	North West
Trafford	North West
Kirklees	Yorkshire and The Humber
North Yorkshire	Yorkshire and The Humber
Rotherham	Yorkshire and The Humber
York	Yorkshire and The Humber
Leicestershire	East Midlands
Lincolnshire	East Midlands
Northamptonshire	East Midlands
Nottinghamshire	East Midlands
Rutland	East Midlands
Birmingham	West Midlands
Dudley	West Midlands
Herefordshire	West Midlands
Shropshire	West Midlands
Solihull	West Midlands
Staffordshire	West Midlands
Telford and Wrekin	West Midlands
Walsall	West Midlands
Wolverhampton	West Midlands
Hertfordshire	East of England
Milton Keynes	East of England
Southend on Sea	East of England
Barking and Dagenham	London
Bexley	London
Brent	London
Bromley	London
Camden	London
Croydon	London
Ealing	London
Greenwich	London
Hackney and City of London*	London
Haringey	London

Harrow	London
Havering	London
Hillingdon	London
Islington	London
Kingston upon Thames	London
Merton	London
Redbridge	London
Richmond upon Thames	London
Sutton	London
Wandsworth	London
Brighton and Hove	South East
Buckinghamshire	South East
East Sussex	South East
Hampshire	South East
Kent	South East
Medway	South East
Portsmouth	South East
Southampton	South East
Surrey	South East
West Sussex	South East
Windsor and Maidenhead	South East
Bath and North East Somerset	South West
Bristol	South West
Dorset	South West
North Somerset	South West
Somerset	South West
South Gloucestershire	South West
Swindon	South West
Wiltshire	South West

** joint submission*

Each local authority has to pass all three stages of validation in order for its values to be shown.

Full information is published in the statistical release (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/breastfeeding-at-6-to-8-weeks-after-birth-annual-data>) for 69 local authorities that passed all validation:

Local Authority	PHE Centre
County Durham	North East
Darlington	North East
Gateshead	North East
Middlesbrough	North East

Newcastle upon Tyne	North East
North Tyneside	North East
Northumberland	North East
Redcar and Cleveland	North East
South Tyneside	North East
Sunderland	North East
Bolton	North West
Bury	North West
Cheshire East	North West
Halton	North West
Knowsley	North West
Liverpool	North West
Manchester	North West
Oldham	North West
Salford	North West
Sefton	North West
St Helens	North West
Stockport	North West
Tameside	North West
Warrington	North West
Wigan	North West
Wirral	North West
Bradford	Yorkshire and The Humber
Calderdale	Yorkshire and The Humber
Doncaster	Yorkshire and The Humber
East Riding of Yorkshire	Yorkshire and The Humber
Kingston upon Hull	Yorkshire and The Humber
Leeds	Yorkshire and The Humber
North East Lincolnshire	Yorkshire and The Humber
North Lincolnshire	Yorkshire and The Humber
Sheffield	Yorkshire and The Humber
Wakefield	Yorkshire and The Humber
Derby	East Midlands
Derbyshire	East Midlands
Leicester	East Midlands
Nottingham	East Midlands
Coventry	West Midlands
Sandwell	West Midlands
Stoke on Trent	West Midlands
Warwickshire	West Midlands
Worcestershire	West Midlands
Bedford	East of England
Cambridgeshire	East of England
Central Bedfordshire	East of England

Essex	East of England
Luton	East of England
Norfolk	East of England
Peterborough	East of England
Suffolk	East of England
Thurrock	East of England
Lewisham	London
Bracknell Forest	South East
Isle of Wight	South East
Oxfordshire	South East
Reading	South East
Slough	South East
West Berkshire	South East
Wokingham	South East
Bournemouth	South West
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	South West
Devon	South West
Gloucestershire	South West
Plymouth	South West
Poole	South West
Torbay	South West

Summary

An aggregate England value can be published for 2016/17 based on 142 reporting local authorities that submitted valid quarterly data which was combined into annual data.

- The aggregate breastfeeding rate for England for 2016/17 is 44.4% with confidence intervals of 44.3 – 44.6%.
- This compares to 43.1% in 2015/16.
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Data Quality Notes

When making a submission local authorities have the opportunity to enter comments in a free text box to explain any issues with reporting. During the submission of revised Quarter 1-4 2016/17 data comments were received from 4 local authorities, of collective interest:

- 3 local authorities reported they had made an incomplete submission. This may include receiving confirmation of nil returns from neighbouring authorities. The majority of these areas informed that work is being undertaken at a local level to address this for future submissions.
- 1 local authority reported that they were unable to provide separate figures for totally and partially breastfed infants.

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