



The transformed health visiting service – the story so far

Transforming the service

The Health Visitor Programme set out in 2011 to **improve access to services, improve families' experience, improve health outcomes and contribute to reducing inequalities**. The workforce has undergone rapid growth and service transformation, and has focused on impacting the crucial first few years of a child's life.

From regional variation to a universal service, the expansion and transformation of the Health Visitor workforce has been rapid and successful.

The role of health visitors and family nurses

Health visitors and family nurses deliver the Healthy Child Programme (HCP) for 0-5 year olds and their families.

Health visitors are qualified nurses or midwives with additional specialist training in public health. They work collaboratively with individuals, families, communities and other agencies to identify and address local need. They improve population health through early intervention and changes to lifestyle behaviours, and link families to further services.

The **Family Nurse Partnership** is an optional targeted programme of support for first time mothers (and fathers) aged 19 and under. They work with parents to promote the healthiest possible pregnancy and support in the early years.

The transformed service is described as the **4-5-6 model** (outlined below). Health visitors and family nurses deliver this service and are a vital link between primary care and early years.



4

levels of service:

Your community
Universal
Universal plus
Universal partnership plus

5

universal health reviews*:

Antenatal
New baby
6 – 8 weeks
1 year
2 – 2 ½ years
*mandated for 18 months

6

high impact areas:

Transition to parenthood
Maternal mental health
Breastfeeding
Healthy weight
Managing minor illness & accident prevention
Healthy 2 year olds & school readiness



The role of local authorities

On 1st October 2015 the commissioning for health visiting services and the Family Nurse Partnership will transfer from NHS England to local authorities. LAs and NHS England have been working together to make sure these vital services transfer safely and are embedded in existing arrangements to transform services in the longer term. The universal health reviews need to be delivered in a standard way and will be mandated for 18 months.

This presents opportunities for local authorities to:

- improve short and long term health outcomes to meet the needs of local children and families
- prevent or intervene early to reduce adversity which can lead to poor educational attainment, youth offending rates, adult mental illness, unemployment and difficulties in future parental capacity
- have an impact on key development points in a child's life
- integrate services for 0-5s
- offer locally sensitive commissioning, working with CCGs for wider services
- deliver joined-up services for children aged between 0 and 19
- reduce health inequalities

Further resources

[Department of Health website](#)
[Local Government Association website](#)
[Public Health Outcomes Framework](#)
[NHS Outcomes Framework](#)