



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

2015/16 Quarter 2 and previous quarter(s) refreshed Statistical Commentary (January 2016 release)

Main findings

- The aggregate breastfeeding rate for England for Quarter 2 2015/16 (July to September 2015) is 43.8% (with confidence intervals of 43.5 – 44.0%) This is based on 125 out of 152 local authorities submitting a return and passing initial validation.
- This compares to 43.3% for Quarter 1 2015/16 (April to June 2015) based on refreshed figures in this publication.
- Breastfeeding prevalence at a PHE centre level cannot be published as they all 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 67 local authorities (passing all 3 stages of validation) and percentages range from 22.9% to 84.2%.

This statistical commentary should be considered alongside the 2015/16 Quarter 2 Breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks after birth statistical release, which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/breastfeeding-at-6-to-8-weeks-after-birth-2015-to-2016-quarterly-data>.

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. There are a number of key performance indicators associated with these services which it is critical to monitor and report. In the longer term the Health and Social Care Information Centre will collect data on these performance indicators as part of the Maternity and Children's Dataset (MCDS).

The MCDS infrastructure will support the flow of standardised information on children's health from local IT systems to the HSCIC on a monthly basis. The Children and Young People's Health Services data set infrastructure (which is part of the MCDS) was made available in October and data has just begun to flow, however it is expected to take some time for all providers of children's and young people's services to flow complete and accurate data.

Until such time as the MCDS has reached full coverage and maturity, possibly even until 2017, an interim reporting system is required.

The breastfeeding information within this publication has therefore been obtained via the new 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/statistics/breastfeeding-at-6-to-8-weeks-after-birth-2015-to-2016-quarterly-data>.

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 method, both in units of collection and the mandatory/voluntary nature. This will be reviewed after one year.

Data Collection Method

An interim reporting system is hosted on the Local Government Association (LGA) website to collect the data on health visiting indicators. The reporting window for Quarter 2 data and refreshed Quarter 1 data was 16 November – 11 December 2015.

To support local authorities to submit data, detailed full guidance was published to explain what analysts and commissioners in local authorities needed to do to submit health visiting indicators (this can be found at www.chimat.org.uk/transfer). A dedicated mailbox (interimreporting@phe.gov.uk) is also in place to respond to questions and comments.

Once the collection window closes the data received is centrally collated, validated and reported. This process will be repeated quarterly. Local authorities have the option to revise previous quarters' data up to the end of the reporting period for Quarter 4 and refreshed statistics will be published.

Validation rules applied may be subject to change in future quarters.

Data Quality Findings

The following data relates to Quarter 2 and refreshed data for Quarter 1.

Out of 152 local authorities 139 submitted a return for the interim reporting collection for Quarter 2 2015/16 (a response rate of 91.4%).

The 13 that did not make a submission for Quarter 2 were:

Local Authority	PHE Centre
Northamptonshire*	East Midlands
Bedford	East of England
Central Bedfordshire	East of England
Barnet	London
Bexley*	London
Brent	London
City of London*	London
Ealing*	London
Greenwich*	London
Harrow	London
Cornwall	South West
Isles of Scilly	South West
North Somerset*	South West

7 in the list above did make a submission in Quarter 1 but there are six local authorities yet to make any submission to the interim reporting collection (either in Quarter 1 or Quarter 2). These are highlighted above with an asterisk.

Of the 139 local authorities that made a submission for Quarter 2 a set of three validation rules was applied in order to calculate the breastfeeding measure.

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.

Out of 139 local authorities that made a submission for Quarter 2, 125 successfully passed stage 1 validation by providing information on the number of infants recorded as being totally or partially breastfed at 6-8 weeks after birth.

The 14 local authorities that failed stage 1 validation are listed in the table below.

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
Cumbria	North West
Lancashire	North West
Enfield	London
Hounslow	London
Newham	London
Tower Hamlets	London
Waltham Forest	London
Kent	South East
Medway	South East

The values for areas that did not pass stage 1 validation are excluded from their respective PHE centre and the England aggregated calculations.

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 2014 mid-year ONS population estimates by local authority for babies aged zero. The annual figure is divided by four to provide a quarterly estimate. Any values within 20% tolerance of the mid-year population figure for the quarter will pass this check.

Of the 125 local authorities that passed stage 1 validation, 121 went on to pass stage 2.

The four areas that failed are:

Local Authority	PHE Centre
North East Lincolnshire	Yorkshire and The Humber
Leicestershire	East Midlands
Bromley	London
Kingston upon Thames	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 121 local authorities passing stage 1 and stage 2 validation, 67 went on to pass stage 3 validation.

The 54 local authorities that failed stage 3 validation are:

Local Authority	PHE Centre
Gateshead	North East
South Tyneside	North East
Sunderland	North East
Halton	North West
Knowsley	North West
Manchester	North West
St Helens	North West
Trafford	North West
Kirklees	Yorkshire and The Humber
Leeds	Yorkshire and The Humber
North Yorkshire	Yorkshire and The Humber
Rotherham	Yorkshire and The Humber
Sheffield	Yorkshire and The Humber
York	Yorkshire and The Humber
Leicester	East Midlands
Coventry	West Midlands
Dudley	West Midlands
Sandwell	West Midlands
Staffordshire	West Midlands
Telford and Wrekin	West Midlands
Warwickshire	West Midlands
Wolverhampton	West Midlands
Cambridgeshire	East of England
Hertfordshire	East of England
Milton Keynes	East of England

Local Authority	PHE Centre
Barking and Dagenham	London
Camden	London
Hackney	London
Hammersmith and Fulham	London
Havering	London
Islington	London
Kensington and Chelsea	London
Lambeth	London
Merton	London
Redbridge	London
Richmond upon Thames	London
Wandsworth	London
Westminster	London
Buckinghamshire	South East
East Sussex	South East
Hampshire	South East
Isle of Wight	South East
Portsmouth	South East
Southampton	South East
Surrey	South East
West Berkshire	South East
West Sussex	South East
Bath and North East Somerset	South West
Bristol	South West
Devon	South West
Dorset	South West
Gloucestershire	South West
South Gloucestershire	South West
Wiltshire	South West

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-2015-to-2016-quarterly-data>) for 67 local authorities that passed all validation:

Local Authority	PHE Centre
County Durham	North East
Darlington	North East
Middlesbrough	North East
Newcastle upon Tyne	North East
North Tyneside	North East
Northumberland	North East
Redcar and Cleveland	North East
Bolton	North West
Bury	North West
Cheshire East	North West
Liverpool	North West
Oldham	North West
Rochdale	North West
Salford	North West
Sefton	North West
Stockport	North West
Tameside	North West
Warrington	North West
Wigan	North West
Wirral	North West
Barnsley	Yorkshire and The Humber
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
North Lincolnshire	Yorkshire and The Humber
Wakefield	Yorkshire and The Humber
Derby	East Midlands
Derbyshire	East Midlands
Lincolnshire	East Midlands
Nottingham	East Midlands
Nottinghamshire	East Midlands
Rutland	East Midlands

Local Authority	PHE Centre
Birmingham	West Midlands
Herefordshire	West Midlands
Shropshire	West Midlands
Solihull	West Midlands
Stoke on Trent	West Midlands
Walsall	West Midlands
Worcestershire	West Midlands
Essex	East of England
Luton	East of England
Norfolk	East of England
Peterborough	East of England
Southend on Sea	East of England
Suffolk	East of England
Thurrock	East of England
Croydon	London
Haringey	London
Hillingdon	London
Lewisham	London
Southwark	London
Sutton	London
Bracknell Forest	South East
Brighton and Hove	South East
Oxfordshire	South East
Reading	South East
Slough	South East
Windsor and Maidenhead	South East
Wokingham	South East
Bournemouth	South West
Plymouth	South West
Poole	South West
Somerset	South West
Swindon	South West
Torbay	South West

Summary

An aggregate England value can be published for Quarter 2 2015/16 based on 125 local authorities that submitted a return and passed stage 1.

- **The aggregate breastfeeding rate for England for Quarter 2 2015/16 (July – September 2015) is 43.8% with confidence intervals of 43.5 – 44.0%.**
- This compares to 43.3% for Quarter 1 2015/16 (April – June 2015) based on refreshed figures.
- Breastfeeding prevalence at a PHE centre level cannot be published as all areas fail to meet validation at stage 3 (95% coverage).
- Breastfeeding prevalence can be published for 67 local authorities (passing all 3 stages of validation) and percentages range from 22.9% to 84.2%.

Data Quality Notes

From Quarter 2 onwards local authorities were able to submit comments in a free text box with the return to explain any issues with reporting. The following summarises the comments received:

- 25 local authorities reported they had made an incomplete submission. This may include receiving confirmation of nil returns from neighbouring authorities. (Bath and North East Somerset, Blackburn with Darwen, Bristol, Bury, Cheshire West and Chester, Enfield, Gateshead, Haringey, Hertfordshire, Hounslow, Isle of Wight, Kirklees, Knowsley, Leeds, Leicester, Leicestershire, Milton Keynes, Nottinghamshire, Redcar and Cleveland, Rutland, Salford, South Gloucestershire, Stoke on Trent, Waltham Forest and Wiltshire). The majority of these areas informed that work is being undertaken at a local level to address this for future submissions.
- 5 local authorities reported that recent migration to a new Child Health Information System had impacted on the short-term reliability of the figures (Bromley, Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, West Sussex and Westminster).

A comparison of how the data received through the interim process compares to NHS England's publication and hospital delivery data for Quarter 1 (refreshed data) has also been published. This can be found at www.chimat.org.uk/transfer. The aim of this one-off analysis was to establish how successful each local authority has been in establishing the new processes and therefore able to submit reliable data.

The analysis focused on the number of babies due a 6-8 week review in the quarter April to June 2015 (ie. the denominator for indicator C8ii) and compared the figure received through the interim reporting process (reported in the January 2016 statistics) to figures published by NHS England for activity in the same quarter, and to hospital delivery data. The analysis was a standalone exercise and did not inform the operational process of publication of PHE's official statistics in January 2016.

It is worth noting however that 3 local authorities passed all 3 stages of validation within this collection but were considered to be submitting 'unreliable' data when compared with the above data sets. On further investigation these had been judged as unreliable as they were only just outside the thresholds applied. The three local authorities were:

- Doncaster
- North East Lincolnshire
- Wirral.

Responsible statistician/product lead: Helen Duncan

For queries relating to this document, please contact: Interimreporting@phe.gov.uk

First published: January 2016

© Crown copyright 2016

Re-use of Crown copyright material (excluding logos) is allowed under the terms of the Open Government Licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/> for terms and conditions.