



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

### 2015/16 Quarter 3 and previous quarter(s) refreshed Statistical Commentary (April 2016 release)

#### Main findings

- The aggregate breastfeeding rate for England for Quarter 3 2015/16 (October to December 2015) is 42.2% (with confidence intervals of 42.0 – 42.5%) This is based on 138 out of 151 reporting local authorities submitting a return and passing initial validation.
- This compares to 42.9% for Quarter 2 (July to September 2015) and 43.1% for Quarter 1 (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 68 local authorities (passing all 3 stages of validation) and percentages range from 17.7% to 79.7%.

This statistical commentary should be considered alongside the 2015/16 Quarter 3 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 3 data (along with refreshed Quarter 1 and 2 data) was 22 February to 18 March 2016.

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](http://www.chimat.org.uk/transfer)). A dedicated mailbox ([interimreporting@phe.gov.uk](mailto: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.

## Joint Submissions

Following the publication of Quarter 2 2015-16 (January release) information was received to confirm that Hackney and City of London would be making a joint submission of the data. Also, any data that had been submitted in previous quarters for Hackney also included City of London residents. The information has been adjusted and the entries within the data release are combined, showing as one row. Any percentages calculated will be based on 151 reporting local authorities.

## Data Quality Findings

The following data relates to Quarter 3 and refreshed data for Quarters 1 and 2.

Out of 151 reporting local authorities (Hackney and City of London make a joint submission) 147 submitted a return for the interim reporting collection for Quarter 3 2015/16 (a response rate of 97.4%).

The four that did not make a submission for Quarter 3 were:

Local Authority	PHE Centre
Barnet	London
Brent	London
Lambeth	London
Isle of Wight	South East

Of the 147 submissions received for Quarter 3 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 147 submissions received for Quarter 3, 138 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 nine local authorities that failed stage 1 validation are listed in the table below.

Local Authority	PHE Centre
Cumbria	North West
Liverpool	North West
Peterborough	East of England
Enfield	London
Haringey	London
Newham	London
Southwark	London
Tower Hamlets	London
Oxfordshire	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 138 submissions that passed stage 1 validation, 131 went on to pass stage 2.

The seven areas that failed are:

Local Authority	PHE Centre
York	Yorkshire and The Humber
Leicestershire	East Midlands
East Sussex	South East
Reading	South East
Slough	South East
Wokingham	South East
Isles of Scilly	South West

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 131 submissions passing stage 1 and stage 2 validation, 68 went on to pass stage 3 validation.

The 63 local authorities that failed stage 3 validation are:

Local Authority	PHE Centre
Hartlepool	North East
South Tyneside	North East
Stockton on Tees	North East
Sunderland	North East
Blackburn with Darwen	North West
Blackpool	North West
Cheshire East	North West
Cheshire West and Chester	North West
Lancashire	North West
Manchester	North West
Trafford	North West
Barnsley	Yorkshire and The Humber
Kingston upon Hull	Yorkshire and The Humber
Kirklees	Yorkshire and The Humber
North Yorkshire	Yorkshire and The Humber
Rotherham	Yorkshire and The Humber
Sheffield	Yorkshire and The Humber
Leicester	East Midlands
Northamptonshire	East Midlands
Rutland	East Midlands
Dudley	West Midlands
Sandwell	West Midlands
Staffordshire	West Midlands
Walsall	West Midlands
Wolverhampton	West Midlands
Hertfordshire	East of England

Local Authority	PHE Centre
Milton Keynes	East of England
Norfolk	East of England
Barking and Dagenham	London
Bexley	London
Camden	London
Ealing	London
Greenwich	London
Hackney and City of London*	London
Hammersmith and Fulham	London
Harrow	London
Havering	London
Hounslow	London
Islington	London
Kensington and Chelsea	London
Kingston upon Thames	London
Merton	London
Redbridge	London
Richmond upon Thames	London
Waltham Forest	London
Wandsworth	London
Westminster	London
Buckinghamshire	South East
Hampshire	South East
Kent	South East
Medway	South East
Portsmouth	South East
Southampton	South East
Surrey	South East
West Sussex	South East
Bath and North East Somerset	South West
Bristol	South West
Cornwall	South West
Dorset	South West
South Gloucestershire	South West
Swindon	South West
Torbay	South West
Wiltshire	South West

*\* Hackney and City of London made a 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-2015-to-2016-quarterly-data>) for 68 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
Bolton	North West
Bury	North West
Halton	North West
Knowsley	North West
Oldham	North West
Rochdale	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
Leeds	Yorkshire and The Humber
North East Lincolnshire	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

Local Authority	PHE Centre
Birmingham	West Midlands
Coventry	West Midlands
Herefordshire	West Midlands
Shropshire	West Midlands
Solihull	West Midlands
Stoke on Trent	West Midlands
Telford and Wrekin	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
Southend on Sea	East of England
Suffolk	East of England
Thurrock	East of England
Bromley	London
Croydon	London
Hillingdon	London
Lewisham	London
Sutton	London
Bracknell Forest	South East
Brighton and Hove	South East
West Berkshire	South East
Windsor and Maidenhead	South East
Bournemouth	South West
Devon	South West
Gloucestershire	South West
North Somerset	South West
Plymouth	South West
Poole	South West
Somerset	South West



## Summary

An aggregate England value can be published for Quarter 3 2015/16 based on 138 reporting local authorities that submitted a return and passed stage 1.

- **The aggregate breastfeeding rate for England for Quarter 3 2015/16 (October to December 2015) is 42.2% with confidence intervals of 42.0 – 42.5%.**
- This compares to 42.9% for Quarter 2 2015/16 (July to September 2015) and 43.1% for Quarter 1 2015/15 (April to 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 68 local authorities (passing all 3 stages of validation) and percentages range from 17.7% to 79.7%.

## 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 Quarter 3 submission comments were received from 62 local authorities, of collective interest:

- 30 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, Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Cheshire West and Chester, Ealing, Greenwich, Haringey, Harrow, Hertfordshire, Hounslow, Islington, Knowsley, Leeds, Leicester, Leicestershire, Medway, Merton, Milton Keynes, North Somerset, Oxfordshire, Redcar and Cleveland, Rutland, Solihull, South Gloucestershire, Southwark, Stoke on Trent, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Wandsworth and Wiltshire). The majority of these areas informed that work is being undertaken at a local level to address this for future submissions.
- 4 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 and Westminster).

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