



## Code of Conduct– May 2016

This document sets out the standard of conduct expected of all Breastfeeding Network (BfN) Registered Volunteers.

As a BfN Registered Volunteer your role is to:

- Help mothers who wish to breastfeed their babies
- Respect and uphold the right of women to decide how to feed their babies
- Create in parents and the wider public an interest in breastfeeding

**This is achieved by:**

**Being trustworthy: acting openly, honestly and with integrity**

- Behaving in a way that upholds the reputation of BfN.
- Offering all help and support free of charge to parents.
- Clearly identifying yourself and the role in which you are working.
- Being sensitive to alternative viewpoints, and avoiding judgment, when expressing your personal beliefs, in person and on social media (including political, religious or moral beliefs).

See website [www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/governance](http://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/governance) for all policies

For further clarification please contact [CEO@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk](mailto:CEO@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk)

- Treating others fairly and without discrimination [see BfN's Equality and Diversity Policy].
- Protecting confidential information and understanding when confidentiality does not apply (by working within BfN's Information Governance and Safeguarding Policies) and speaking up when you see poor practice (duty of candour).
- Avoiding conflicts of interest with infant feeding companies as explained in the WHO International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes and subsequent relevant World Health Assembly Resolutions.
- Disclosing any other conflicts of interest to families you support and to your supervisor, tutor or volunteer coordinator – see Annex 1.

In essence, this means your BfN role should not be used to reach families for your own personal gain or advantage.

### Being respectful of the families we support

- Respecting and supporting families however they are structured and however they decide to feed or parent their babies.
- Offering a personal and friendly approach.
- Offering information and practical suggestions to help increase a mother's confidence in her own abilities to make informed decisions.
- Helping in a 'hands off' way. If the need arises and a mother gives her permission, you may put your hands over her hands to help guide her in positioning her baby.
- If a mother is unable to lift her baby herself, with her permission, you can lift and pass her baby to her.
- Encouraging families to maintain good and open relationships with their healthcare professionals. Responsibility for the health of the mother and baby remains with the mother and her healthcare professionals.
- Respecting and protecting information a mother shares with you.

### Valuing yourself and understanding your limitations and boundaries

You are responsible for your actions and omissions, regardless of what anyone else asks you to do. Your volunteering is valued and you are not expected to take on anything unless you feel you can cope with it and do it well by:

- Working within the standards set out in this Code of Conduct.

- Maintaining and updating your knowledge, skills and understanding; this includes ensuring you have sufficient supervision as set out in the supervision guidance.
- Keeping your registration up-to-date and wearing your badge at all times when supporting mothers or when representing BfN.
- Being aware of, and abiding by all BfN policies, completing your volunteer induction training, and annual updates.
- Working within your competences and signposting families to colleagues or other agencies for further support or information.
- Sharing any feedback you receive with your supervisor. Should you receive a complaint your supervisor will help you follow BfN's Complaints Policy.

If you need to take a break from your volunteering work, for example because of personal circumstances, illness or bereavement, please speak to your Supervisor who will support you in deciding what to do next. See the sheet on Guidelines for Sabbaticals

### Being respectful of colleagues and treating them fairly

- Colleagues may be within BfN, the local multidisciplinary team, on the National Breastfeeding Helpline or wherever you are volunteering. If local hospitals/ health professionals/ BfN have an unhelpful policy, or unhealthy behaviour please discuss this with your supervisor

### Maintaining personal and professional boundaries to protect good practice and avoid doing harm

- You must not give medical advice or any drug recommendation. You may give clearly labelled evidence based information (including information written by Wendy Jones and the Drugs In Breastmilk (DIBM) team and published by BfN about drugs in Breastmilk) so the mother knows where it comes from and who published it
- You must not recommend any goods or services. You may give information about relevant services which are available free of charge. You may discuss relevant products (eg bras, pumps, creams, formula etc) but you must not recommend or champion any particular brand, model or supplier of such products.
- When appropriate you may signpost mothers to other agencies or independent evidence based information including NHS information for example the Department of Health's bottle feeding leaflet. If you are unsure if a resource is reliable seek support from your Supervisor, volunteer coordinator or line manager
- Before speaking to the media contact the local project lead or BfN media team

