



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

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9<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Deputy Mary Butler,  
TD  
Dail Eireann  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**PQ29090/19:**

**To ask the Minister for Health the percentage of babies breastfed exclusively at first public health nurse visit at the end of June 2019 or the latest date available.**

Dear Deputy Butler,

The above PQ has been sent to me for direct response to you.

The HSE is working to achieve the aims and objectives of the *Breastfeeding in a Healthy Ireland – HSE Action Plan 2016-2021*, through the implementation of initiatives in the following areas:

1. Improved governance and health service structures
2. Breastfeeding training and skills development
3. Health service policies and practices
4. Support at all stages of the breastfeeding continuum through social marketing, support and advocacy.

The group is partnering with key divisions to develop to provide the supports that mothers require at all stages of the breastfeeding continuum through social marketing, support and advocacy.

Our [www.mychild.ie](http://www.mychild.ie) website provides pregnant and new mothers and families with a range of information and supports about infant feeding.

An Ask Our Expert (AOE) on-line service, provided by International Board Certified Lactation Consultants, is available to answer mother's questions and link them to supports in their local area. The webchat facility and HSE breastfeeding Facebook page is also available. These services provide supportive and practical expert information in a friendly, supportive and non-judgemental manner.

The most recent data available on breastfeeding at the first public health nurse visit (within 72 hours of discharge from the maternity hospital/unit) is from 2018.

40.2% of babies were being breastfed exclusively at the first public health nurse visit.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Kelleher', with a horizontal line underneath.

**DR. KEVIN KELLEHER, FFPHM, FFPHMI**  
**ASSISTANT NATIONAL DIRECTOR –PUBLIC HEALTH/CHILD HEALTH – STRATEGIC**  
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