



4 November 2025

BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Sorca Clarke

Dáil Éireann

Leinster House

Kildare Street

Dublin 2

Re: PQ56519/25 - To ask the Minister for Health the total amount of funding allocated to breastfeeding promotion and support services in 2020 to 2025; the breakdown of funding by regional health authority; and if she will make a statement on the matter. - Sorca Clarke

Dear Deputy Clarke

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question which has been referred by the Minister for Health to the Health Service Executive for direct response.

The HSE provides breastfeeding supports within core maternity, paediatric and primary care services. Midwives and public health nurses support mothers and babies to establish and learn the skills of breastfeeding in the immediate and extended post-natal period. Frenotomy procedures are performed by appropriately trained healthcare professionals, where services are available.

The coordination of ongoing work streams and quality improvement initiatives within maternity, primary care and national campaigns is supported through the following core staff members working on a national basis through Child Health Public Health and in partnership with key colleagues including the National Women and Infants' Health Programme:

- National Breastfeeding Coordinator
- Assistant Director of Midwifery
- Assistant National breastfeeding coordinator (IBCLC)
- Child Health Communications Manager and Communications Officer
- Project officer.

The National Women and Infants' Health Programme have supported 19 maternity services to complete a 3 year self-assessment cycle from 2023 to 2025. During the three-year process, all 19 maternity hospitals and units evaluated their infant feeding services based on the National Standards for Infant Feeding in Maternity Services. This included interviews with mothers, staff and an organisational assessment over the 3 years. National actionable initiatives were progressed each year based on the results of the services self-assessment.

The HSE with the support of the Atlantic Philanthropy funded Nurture Infant Health & Wellbeing Programme funded the development of breastfeeding initiatives between 2017 to 2022. This includes the development of a new website mychild.ie, resources for new parents, new standards for antenatal education and infant feeding, nutrition e learning modules and a suite of breastfeeding training resources. These resources are now mainstreamed and ongoing implementation is funded through the HSE.



A national infant feeding education programme for health care providers was launched in July 2024. Over 430 midwives and nurses have completed the blended learning programme to date.

Throughout 2020 to 2025, the HSE's mychild.ie campaign has provided parents-to-be and parents of young children with trusted and relevant health information to make informed decisions about pregnancy and child health. The mychild.ie website and three free books (My Pregnancy book given in the antenatal period, Mychild0-2 and Mychild 2-5) which embed breastfeeding promotion and support services as part of the suite of information and advice on pregnancy, baby and toddler health. The mychild.ie website and books are supported by a multi-channel media campaign with advertising on TV, radio, out of home and online, as well as dedicated mychild.ie [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) communities. Costs include market research, creative development and media buying.

The site provides the following breastfeeding resources:

- [over 50 multipage online breastfeeding guides:](#)
- [ask our breastfeeding expert service:](#)
- [breastfeeding support group finder:](#)

The breakdown of the allocation of non-pay funding for promotion and support services by the HSE are outlined in table 1 below. As national services and campaigns, these costs are not divisible by region.

BREAKDOWN OF BREASTFEEDING ALLOCATION						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Grants to breastfeeding organisations	€83,925.00	€83,925.00	€82,963.00	€92,500.00	€95,500.00	€95,500.00
Mychild campaign	€487,000.00	€530,000.00	€615,000.00	€720,000.00	€910,000.00	€907,000.00
Online breastfeeding support service	€122,216.00	€118,899.00	€118,899.00	€118,899.00	€113,000.00	€113,000.00
Printing/videos/resources for NBF week	€19,639.00	€10,000.00	€28,580.00	€29,850.00	€44,263.00	€45,214.00
Training	€10,058.00	€11,903.00	€21,614.00	€29,028.00	€44,973.00	€24,226.19
Totals	€722,838.00	€754,727.00	€867,056.00	€990,277.00	1207736.00	1184940.19

Table 1: Breakdown of breastfeeding allocation 2020-2025

The investment in additional infant feeding/lactation staff since 2000 and supports into maternity and community services has significantly improved access to 1:1 breastfeeding support in maternity services when needed and to breastfeeding support groups in community services.

The breakdown of the allocation of funding for new infant feeding/lactation wte's and breast pumps by regional health authority is outlined in table 2 below:



		2020 WTE allocation	2021 WTE allocation	2022 WTE allocation	2025 WTE allocation
	Funding allocation	0.193m	.489m	1.58m	.39m
	Funder	HSE NWIHP	HSE NWIHP	DOH	DOH
Regional Health authority					
	Local Health Office/hospital				
West and North West	Donegal			1	
	Letterkenny Hospital	1			
	Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan			0.5	
	Sligo Hospital		1		
	Galway			1	
	University Hospital Galway		0.5	1	
	Portiuncula Hospital				
	Mayo			1	
	Mayo General Hospital		1		
	Roscommon			0.5	
Mid West	Clare				
	Limerick				
	UMHL			1	
	North Tipperary/ East Limerick				
South West	Kerry			0.5	
	Kerry University Hospital		1		
	North Cork			0.5	
	North Lee				
	CUMH		1	1.5	
	South Lee			0.5	
	West Cork				
Dublin & South East	Carlow/ Kilkenny			0.5	0.5
	St Lukes General Hospital				
	South Tipperary				
	South Tipperary Maternity Unit				
	Waterford	1		0.5	
	Waterford Maternity University Hospital				
	Wexford	1		0.5	
	Wexford General Hospital Maternity unit				
	Dublin South East				
	National Maternity Hospital			1.5	
	Dun Laoghaire			0.5	
	Wicklow				
Dublin & Midlands	Laois/ Offaly			1	
	Midland Regional Hospital Portlaoise				
	Longford/ Westmeath				1
	Midland Regional Hospital Mullingar			0.5	
	Dublin South City			0.5	1
	Dublin South West			0.5	0.5
	Coombe Women and Infant University Hosp		1	0.5	
	Dublin West			0.5	
	CHI			1	1
	Kildare/ West Wicklow			1	
Dublin & North East	Cavan/Monaghan				
	Cavan Maternity Unit			0.5	
	Louth			0.5	
	Our Lady of Lourdes Drogheda		1		
	Meath			1	
	The Rotunda		1	2	
	Dublin North			0.5	0.5
	Dublin North Central			1	
	Dublin North West			0.5	0.5
	Totals	3	7.5	24	5

Table 2: Allocation of new infant feeding/lactation wte by regional health authority since 2020



If you require any further information or clarification, please do contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Dr John Cuddihy

National Director of Public Health

MCRN: 16227