



# Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council

## Australian National Breastfeeding Strategy: 2017 and beyond

### *Fact Sheet 2 – May 2017*

#### **Stakeholder consultation workshops**

##### *Dates and locations*

In April and May 2017, the Australian Government Department of Health, in collaboration with the Breastfeeding Jurisdictional Officers Group, organised 12 workshops across Australia. Workshops were held in all capital cities and Alice Springs. Over 200 stakeholders attended the workshops, including experts in midwifery, lactation, maternal, child and family health, population health, nutrition and dietetics, and Indigenous health.

##### *Workshop process*

Prior to each workshop, all participants received a copy of the *Australian National Breastfeeding Strategy: 2017 and Beyond (the Strategy) Discussion Guide*. The Guide provided background information and proposed a vision, objectives, principles, enablers and strategic priorities. Participants provided feedback on the principles, enablers and strategic priorities through a series of small group exercises. At the end of each workshop, participants chose their most important points that they thought should be included in the Strategy.

##### *Key themes*

Workshop participants highlighted the following key themes:

- There should be a national marketing campaign to promote breastfeeding as the biological and social norm. This should focus more broadly than just the mother. It is a shared responsibility between mothers, partners, families, the health system, governments and the community at large.
- Strengthen implementation of the WHO International Code on the Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes and subsequent resolutions.
- The government should provide increased support and funding for:
  - the Baby Friendly Health Initiative (BFHI) and make it a requirement for accreditation;
  - breastfeeding specialist support, such as funding for lactation consultants through the Medicare Benefits Schedule, peer support groups, drop-in centres or clinics;
  - research to understand the barriers experienced by priority groups and to allow better targeting/tailoring of activities/strategies;
  - standardised national data collection and reporting to allow for appropriate monitoring and evaluation of health outcomes from breastfeeding; and
  - resources, tools and training on breastfeeding for all health care providers.



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- Promote increased access to breast milk and breast milk banks.
- A national leadership group needs to promote and champion the Final Strategy and monitor its implementation.

### **Next steps**

The Department of Health is currently consolidating feedback from the stakeholder consultation workshops, written submissions, and stakeholder meetings and finalising the literature review.

The Department of Health is reworking the Strategy based on this feedback and will conduct an online consultation process in June/July 2017 through the Department of Health's Consultations Hub at <https://consultations.health.gov.au/>.

### **Further information**

If you would like further information on this project, please email: [Reproductive.Health@health.gov.au](mailto:Reproductive.Health@health.gov.au).