

Supporting families/carers with infants under 12 months experiencing food insecurity

(ie. not being able to maintain a steady supply of milk/food for under 12-month-old)

Context

UNICEF in partnership with the nation infant feeding network and first steps nutrition produced guidance specifically relating to infants who were at risk of experiencing food poverty 'A *guide for local authorities and health boards supporting families with infants under 12 months experiencing food insecurity*, (2022). [UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Guide for Local Authorities and Health Boards](#)

The key principles from the above guidance are:

- 1. A duty of care for the safeguarding of all infants under 12 months of age affected by family hardship, however they are fed.*
- 2. Provision of infant feeding support during financial hardship or food crisis that conforms to the World Health Assembly International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent resolutions (the Code).*
- 3. The development of pathways of wrap-around care which enable families to access additional services to meet ongoing needs.*

In response to the above principles and additional guidance for local authorities Bury's Breastfeeding Strategy Group co-produced the following pathway to capture existing good practice and to ensure consistency of approach. The breastfeeding strategy group has the following representation: health visiting (Infant Feeding Coordinator), hospital and community midwifery teams, Bury Live Well service, family hub/children's centres, and two Public Health Practitioners (Start Well and Food and Health). In addition, Bury children's social care, revenues and benefits and the citizens advice bureau were consulted and provided additional information as applicable.

Local implementation

The guidance raises concerns about incidents where incorrect formulas have been provided for infants. We have not had any reported incidents of this in Bury and have every confidence in the foodbanks/pantries and various teams within Bury that this has not and would not occur.

However, to implement the guidance and ensure a consistent approach to the safe provision of baby formula across all sectors the following flow chart has been devised to enable individuals supporting families to follow three steps:

Step 1: Are they currently receiving support from the Early Help Team or Children's Social Care?

Step 2: The range of support opportunities available to them, both for emergency support and longer-term financial stability.

Step 3: Ensuring that if the family are not receiving support via step 1 of this process that health visiting is informed to ensure families receive a holistic assessment to support them to reduce future crisis management.

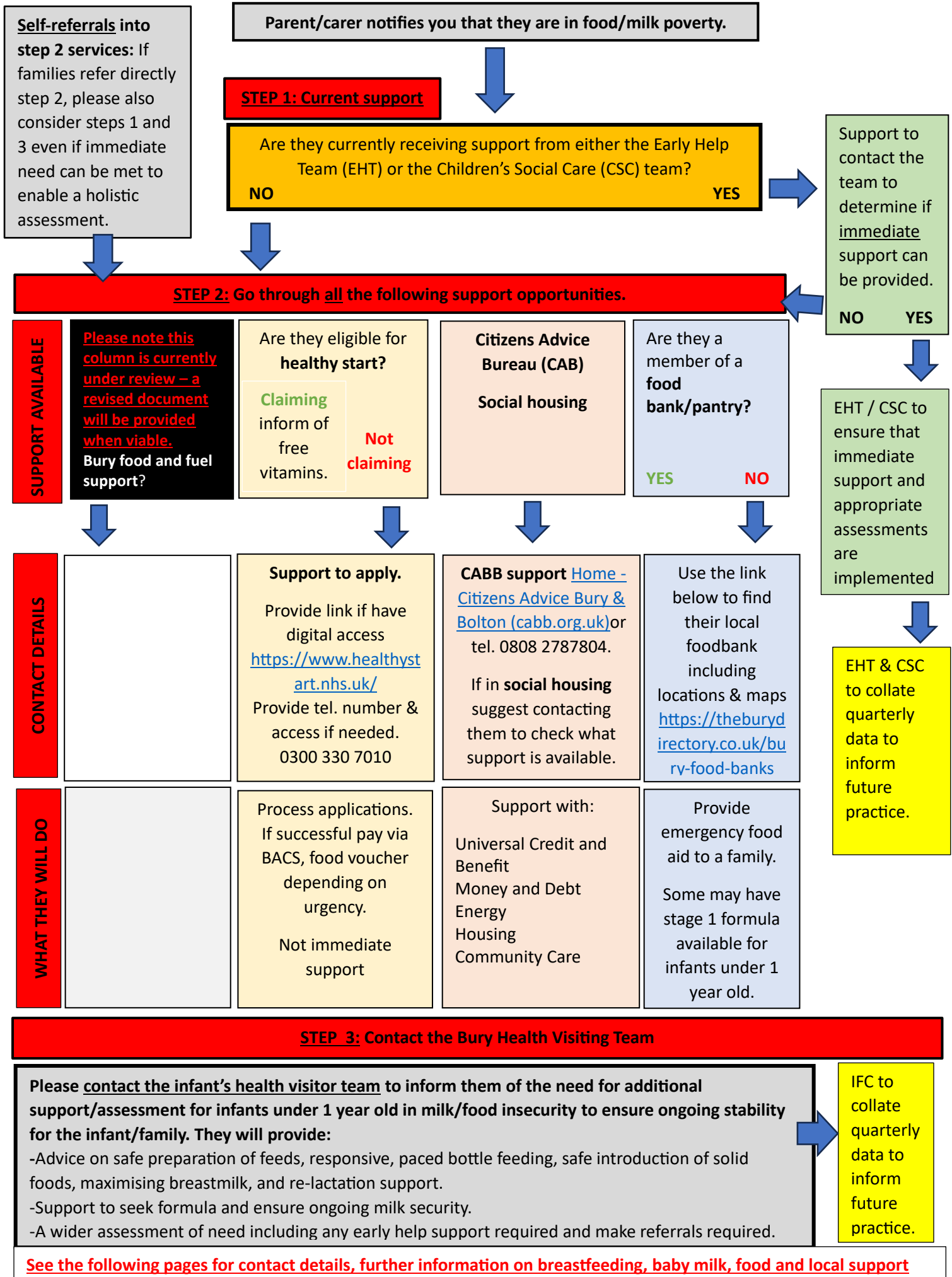
The pathway/flowchart will be shared across the system to ensure organisations/teams from all sectors who are supporting families in the community, are able to seek the appropriate support for families who report that they have an infant under 12 months and are experiencing food insecurity.

Data collection

It is vital that data is collated centrally moving forwards to ensure that infants and families receive the most effective and appropriate support possible. Therefore, systems will be put in place to enable this to be captured quarterly by the early help, social care, and health visiting teams. This data will then be reviewed and considered at the Breastfeeding Strategy group meeting.

Supporting families/carers with infants under 12 months experiencing food insecurity

(without reliable access to enough affordable, nutritious, healthy food)



Children's Social Care

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 0161 253 5678
(outside office hours 0161 253 6606)

Early Help Team

Bury East Locality Team (also cover North Bury) Tel: 0161 253 5200
Whitefield Locality Team (also cover Prestwich) Tel: 0161 253 5077
Radcliffe Locality Team Tel: 0161 253 7465/7468

Bury Health Visiting Teams

Bury Central: 0161 762 3291
Prestwich: 0161 798 2721
Radcliffe: 0161 724 2086
Ramsbottom: 01706 282933
Whitefield: 0161 762 3748

Bury food and fuel support (immediate support available)

Please note this information currently under review – a revised document will be provided when viable.

Healthy Start (not immediate support - increased financial security)

- Is the family eligible for Healthy Start? If so, are they in receipt of this?
- Healthy Start eligibility can be found on the link below, the basis is that families are eligible if the family unit earn less than £408 per month.
- There are new guidelines on eligibility for people with no recourse to public funds.
- Under 18-year-old parents are automatically eligible.
- Applications are ordinarily done on line - all details can be found via this link [How to apply – Get help to buy food and milk \(Healthy Start\)](#)
- If you would like to find out more about Healthy Start and applying, you can view an excellent video (13 mins) made by GMCA (May 2023), which gives vital information and insights needed to help promote Healthy Start, to ensure everyone in Greater Manchester who is entitled is claiming it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCPP-xdi0Jg>

Citizens Advice Bury and Bolton (not immediate support - increased financial security)

Provide free, confidential, independent, and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities.

Available freephone Monday-Friday 10am-4pm **0808 278 7804**.

For advice about **claiming universal credit** **Freephone** Monday-Friday 8am-6pm **0800 144 8444**. Refer yourself or someone else via our website <https://www.cabb.org.uk/make-a-referral/>

Food banks/pantries (immediate support may be available)

Bury foodbanks/pantries are a life line for many families who turn to them for support in the first instance.

Food bank/pantry volunteers have good knowledge of the services available to support families with a wide range of issues, and regularly signpost families for additional support. This is vital in reducing the potential risk of families being delayed from being referred for further support they require and are eligible for.

Please be aware:

Nationally there have been reports of families receiving **inappropriate formula for their babies**, for example, if the baby is under six months old, a follow-on formula would be inappropriate and could cause harm.

- Babies require stage 1 formula for the first 12 months.
- Children over 1 do not need formula milk and can have water or full fat cow's / plant-based milk to drink.
- Where a baby is formula fed it isn't necessary to provide the same formula brand, however **ONLY** first stage formula should be offered. (Least expensive brands are similar to the most expensive as all brands have to comply with regulations).
- Bottles should be made up one at a time with water that is freshly boiled and 70 degrees or hotter to kill any bacteria which may be in powder (powdered milk is not a sterile substance).
- Discussions around paced, responsive bottle feeding can be provided by health visitors and via this UNICEF *Infant formula and responsive bottle feeding links* <https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/>
<https://www.firststepsnutrition.org/infant-milks-overview>

Baby food

Babies do not need specialist baby food and can be given minimally processed family foods.

If baby food is given always check that it is in date and pouches and jars are sealed and present no risk to infant health. Food marked suitable for babies from 4 months of age should not be distributed as this contradicts UK health policy. Baby snacks aren't needed and can undermine the development of good eating habits for infants and young children.

Useful links



Essential parent

Essential parent is an online digital library which enables professionals to send evidence-based health and care information directly to parents/carers. E-training has been provided to a wide range of professionals in Bury and continues to be rolled out. Once a practitioner has trained, they are able to cascade the training to their team members.

To find out more about essential parent please contact t.coatman@bury.gov.uk

The following links are some of the ones relevant to this pathway.

Homepage: <https://gmca.essentialparent.com>

Breastfeeding: <https://gmca.essentialparent.com/course/breastfeeding/>

Feeding problems: <https://gmca.essentialparent.com/course/feeding-problems/>

Formula feeding: <https://gmca.essentialparent.com/course/formula-feeding/>

Introducing solids: <https://gmca.essentialparent.com/course/introducing-solids/>

Safer sleep for babies: <https://gmca.essentialparent.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Safer-sleep-for-babies-a-guide-for-parents-web-1.pdf>

Toddler nutrition: <https://gmca.essentialparent.com/course/toddler-nutrition/>

Child nutrition: <https://gmca.essentialparent.com/course/child-nutrition/>

Teenage care and health: <https://gmca.essentialparent.com/course/teenage-care-health/>



The Bury Directory



The Bury Directory breastfeeding page <https://theburydirectory.co.uk/breastfeeding>

Video link to why human milk matters [Benefits of breastfeeding | The Bury Directory](#)

Money Advisory Referral Toolkit [The Bury Money Advice Referral Tool \(MART\) | The Bury Directory](#)

Food, clothing, and financial support



Bury Council food and fuel support [Bury food and fuel support - Bury Council](#)

The Bury Directory food banks and pantries including mapping of foodbanks/pantries and clothes banks <https://theburydirectory.co.uk/bury-food-banks>



Citizen's advice bureau <https://www.cabb.org.uk/>



Healthy Start scheme

Healthy Start home page for further information and applying <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>

Anyone in receipt of Healthy Start is entitled to **free vitamins**, this includes children under 4 years -old and expectant mothers and mothers breastfeeding a child up to one year old. Visit the following website for details of where vitamins can be collected. NHSBSA.healthystart@nhs.net



Bury Live Well Service

Offer a broad range of support services to help keep people well, in the best possible health, physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally. <https://www.bury.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/live-well-service/about-bury-live-well-service>

