

Infant feeding and food insecurity policy: when the rubber meets the road



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THE
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No consistent Local Authority pathway

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31%

no response

9%

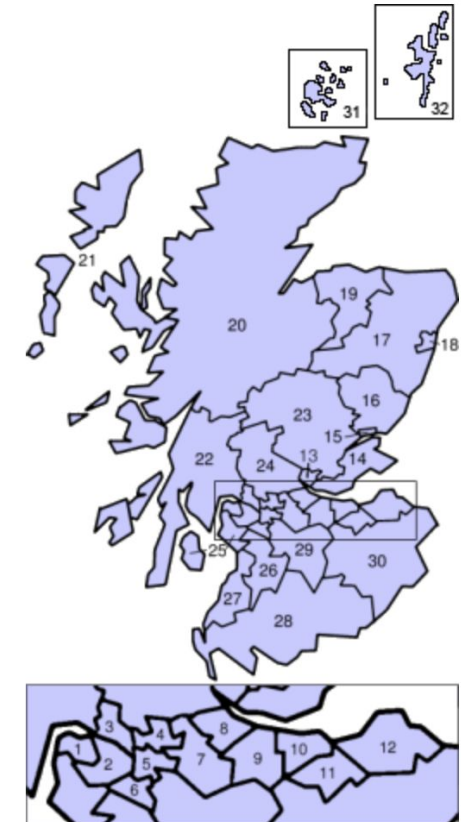
no pathway

63%

rely on food
bank referral

- Families face a postcode lottery of support
- Increases barriers to accessing formula
- Increases delays in accessing formula

“.. If a family came to us, **we would refer them to the local food bank** or social services”



@ Wikipedia

Families and professionals are reliant on foodbanks to fill the gaps

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“I access food banks at least once per week for families I support. In the area I work in ... **food banks are depended on**”

Family Resource Worker,
Barnardos

UK: Mother collapses from hunger at South Tyneside Food Bank

Julie Hyland
© 23 January 2023

 Al Jazeera

UK cost-of-living crisis pushes mothers to the brink

In the midst of the biggest surge in prices in decades, food banks have become a feature of modern British life. Britain poverty.

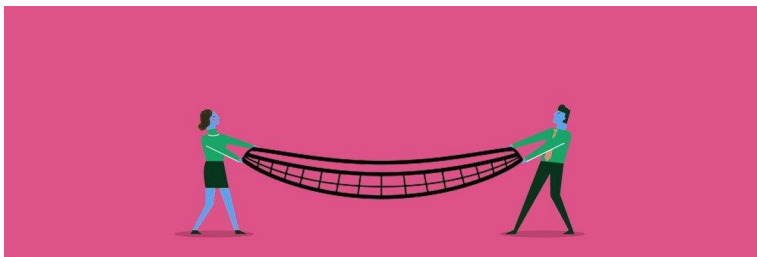
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“Parents have started to write or call the formula companies to ask for free samples because they are so in need”

Social Worker, London

“Food and baby banks are a hugely important resource in supporting families in the area I work in”

Health Visitor, NHSGCC



Feed Review - Dec 2020

The provision of infant formula at foodbanks in the UK

An analysis of current guidelines and pathways for access to infant formula



PROVISION OF INFANT FORMULA

Guidance for food and baby banks in the UK



Feed Inquiry - May 2022

Access to infant formula for babies living in food poverty in the UK

An investigation of the role of food and baby banks



Summary:

CURRENT 'OFFICIAL' SUPPORT INADEQUATE

“.. If a family came to us, **we would refer them to the local food bank or social services**”

South Ayrshire Council

RELIANCE ON EMERGENCY FOOD PROVISION

“**Food and baby banks are a hugely important resource** in supporting families in the area I work in”

Health Visitor, NHSGCC

UNICEF UK GUIDELINES CAUSING FRICTION

“**We are regularly asked for [formula] and deeply frustrated to be prevented from giving it out**”

Baby Bank Trustee, SE London

Policy solutions:

SCIENCE

- Determine true scale and nature of the problem

POLICY

- Identify current gaps
- Ensure key stakeholders engaged and policies for for purpose

SUPPORT

- Support third sector with clear guidance
- Tailored support for all Mums and babies

Reframe the policy focus onto food security and the Right to Food

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Disconnect between guidelines and lived experience

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Feed Inquiry - May 2022

Access to infant formula for babies living in food poverty in the UK

An investigation of the role of food and baby banks



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“As a health visitor I am **unable to refer** to food banks for infant formula as it contraindicates the NHS message which promotes breastfeeding.”

Dominique, Health Visitor,
Scotland

“I think it is a **very privileged point of view** to impose breastfeeding on a group of people by depriving them of easy access to formula. Groups opposing this are also speaking on behalf of people who access foodbanks by **deciding FOR them** that they shouldn't have access to formula instead of asking them and giving them the option.”

Alice, Social Worker, Scotland.

They must change this system as it puts barriers up for families and the children suffer

Kelly, Health Visitor, Scotland

Though NHS management don't allow us to put out formula, a couple of health visitors or midwives have asked us and we have provided formula

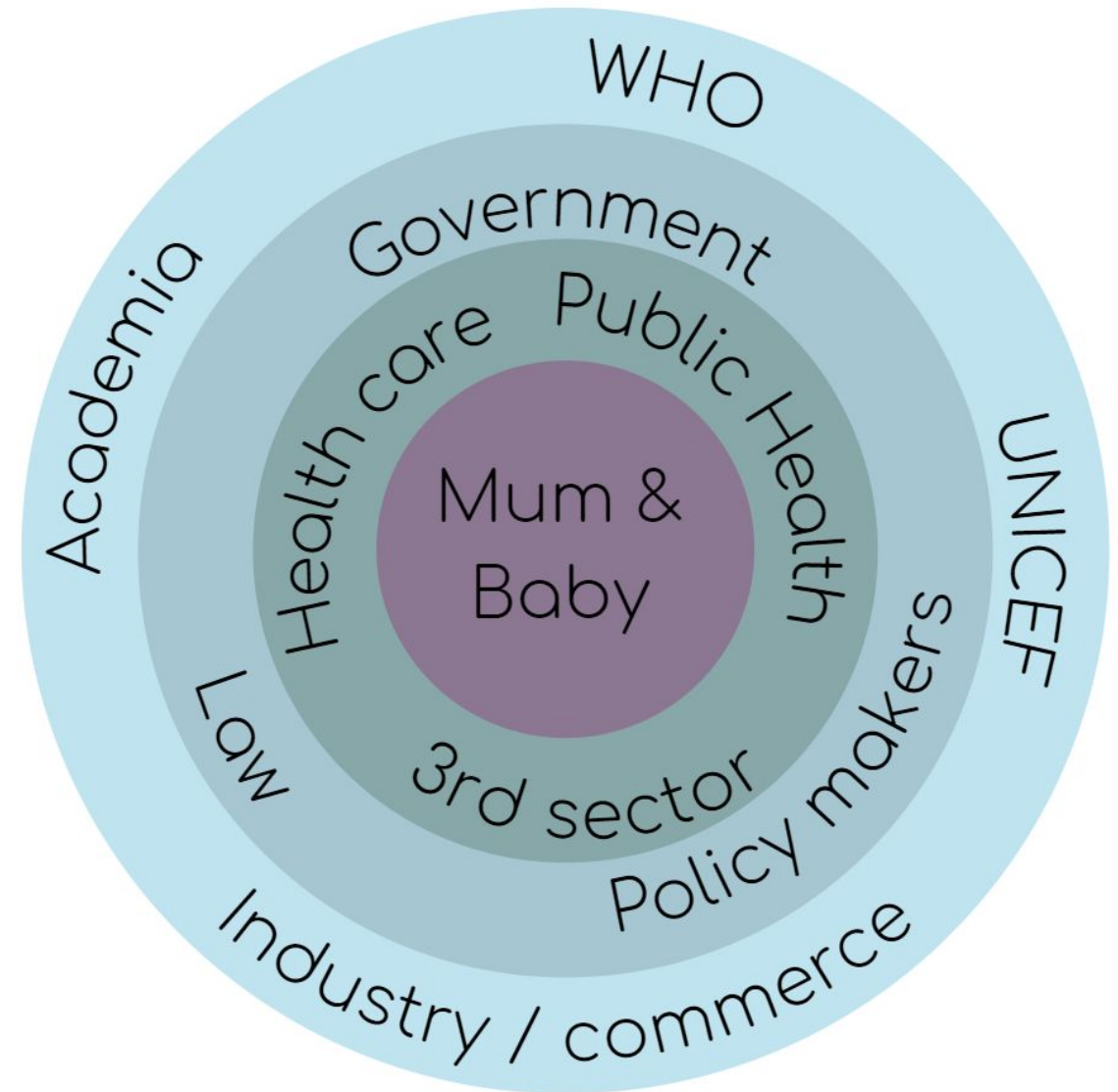
Paul, Baby Bank CEO, Scotland

I don't think people or the government understand how hard it can be

Jasmin, Service User, Scotland



WHO was asked and who wasn't?



Helping families who need infant formula: a cash first approach

