

Appendix One: Procurement of the Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme

Part One: Summary of the Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme

What is the Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme?

An early intervention and prevention public health nursing service, delivering the Government's Healthy Child Programme. Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to deliver the Healthy Child Programme, including the National Child Measurement Programme, which weighs and measures children in school. More specifically, five universal health visitor reviews are mandated for delivery.

The service is known locally as the Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme (HFP) and is delivered by 20 local Healthy Family Teams who provide care to children, young people, and families from before birth to their late teens (0 to 19 years). Care for families is delivered by specialist public health practitioners (health visitors and school nurses) and supported by a highly skilled team made up of a number of clinical and non-clinical professionals.

The Nottinghamshire HFP also includes the Family Nurse Partnership Programme for first time parents under the age of 20, delivered by specially trained Family Nurses.

What do Healthy Family Teams deliver?

Healthy Family Teams (HFT) are universal in reach and personalised in response: support is offered to all families in Nottinghamshire - most family's needs will be met by the universal offer, with targeted, evidence-based support given to those who need it, as early as possible.

HFT's use strengths-based approaches to:

- Provide evidence-based interventions and motivational interviewing
- Assess child development and undertake holistic assessments
- Provide advice and promote health, wellbeing and development to children and families
- Promote health protection and keep children safe

Safeguarding is a core responsibility for HFT's who work to promote the welfare and safety of children and families. Across 2021-22 HFT's attended 14,727 individual safeguarding meetings, and as of September 2022 HFT's had 3,109 children and young people under safeguarding caseloads.

In the **early years** HFT's deliver:

- Antenatal contact (in pregnancy)
- New baby review (health, wellbeing, and development)
- 6 to 8-week review (health, wellbeing, and development)
- 1-year health and development review (comprehensive assessment of a child's health, social, emotional, behavioural and language development)
- 2 to 2.5-year health and development review (comprehensive assessment of a child's health, social, emotional, behavioural and language development)
- Advice and support around parenting, child development and healthy choices, including infant feeding support from birth, through home visits and bookable sessions in community settings
- Focus on maternal mental health, including programmes of support
- Extra support and contacts for families with identified needs, including a targeted review at age 3 to support school entry

For **school age** children and young people, HFT's deliver:

- Health review, information and support for primary and secondary school-age children and young people
- Advice and support at school entry and Year 7, and an assessment of health and wellbeing at Year 9, via online questionnaire
- Programme of sessions for emotional health and wellbeing including anger, anxiety, eating, low mood, self-esteem, self-harm, and sleep, delivered on a one-to-one basis
- Brief intervention or short session of support, including group support, for alcohol, healthy relationships, online safety and sexual health
- Continence support: assessment, care planning, review and provision of products

HFT's also offer digital support including:

- Websites: Health for Under 5's, Health for Kids, Health for Teens
- Text messaging: Parentline (parents and carers) and Chat Health (young people)
- HFT advice line (telephone), where colleagues answered more than 10,000 calls in 2021-22
- Electronic 'information prescription' (RECAP)

The Government identifies [high impact areas](#), six in the early years, and six for school aged children and young people, which underpin the work of HFT's.

What is the Family Nurse Partnership Programme?

An evidenced-based home visiting programme for vulnerable first-time teenage parents and their children. Specially trained Family Nurses work intensively with young parents throughout pregnancy and until their child is aged 2. Family Nurses are experts in the parent-infant relationship and early child development and work closely with young families to ensure they have the knowledge and tools they need to give their child the best possible start in life.

In 2021-22 a total of 203 clients successfully graduated from the Family Nurse Partnership Programme, to be supported by universal services, such as Healthy Family Teams and Children's Centre Services. A further 252 clients enrolled in the programme, beginning their journey with a Family Nurse.

What is the National Child Measurement Programme?

A nationally mandated programme of height and weight checks, which involves measuring the height and weight of all school children in Reception and Year 6. HFT's co-ordinate and deliver the programme in all maintained schools in Nottinghamshire, including academies.

Part Two: Contract and Performance

The Nottinghamshire HFP contract commenced 1st April 2017 and ran for an initial period of three years with a four-year extension enacted, bringing the contract end date to 31st March 2024. Notably, NHFT were the sole bidder for this competitively tendered contract, despite a programme of market engagement aimed at identifying and supporting all potential bidders.

Robust contract management processes are in place to ensure a well performing, high-quality and value-for-money service is available for the population of Nottinghamshire. These processes include:





- Financial scrutiny, applied via an open book accounting agreement with NHFT where queries and challenges are formally raised and resolved,

- A quarterly Contract and Quality Review Meeting (CQRM), where scrutiny is applied to the data within the performance framework and quality schedule, and any plans for improvement are assessed for progress,
- A performance framework, applied to the contract based on evidence of what works to improve outcomes for children, young people and families and underpinned by national guidance,
- A quality schedule, applied to the contract based on local and national NHS quality dashboards and guidance,
- A service review meeting held for each element of the service following review of the performance schedule, where areas for celebration or service improvement are explored with clinical leads,
- Collaborative partnership meetings held to drive ongoing service transformation and ensure an appropriate, evidence-based model of care continues to be delivered,
- Quality assurance visits, that focus on specific elements of service delivery and form part of the quality assurance process.


These arrangements enable the Council to continually transform and enhance the service offer for the benefit of local children, young people, and families. For example, in collaboration with NHFT, commissioners have increased the focus on 0 to 5's in line with national evidence, including:

- The expansion of maternal mental health assessment to the 1-year review,
- The introduction of continuity of carer to age 1,
- The implementation of a parent-infant relationship universal intervention,
- Increased assessment of social and emotional development,
- The implementation of a 3-year targeted review to support school readiness.

Key performance

2021-22			
Reviews delivered	Nottinghamshire	Statistically similar neighbours	National average
Percentage of new birth visits completed, by 14 days*	7,221 (count) 95.3 % 	Not known	82.6 %
Percentage of 6-to-8-week reviews completed by 8 weeks	7,603 (count) 89.8 % 	85.0 %	81.5 %
Percentage of 12-month development reviews completed	7,235 (count) 92.6 % 	81.8 %	81.9 %
Percentage of 2-to-2.5-year reviews completed	6,914 (count) 85.3 % 	77.7 %	74.0 %

Key

 Nottinghamshire value better than the England average (statistically significant)

Source: Fingertips, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, 2022

*In Nottinghamshire in 2021-22 the total number of new birth reviews delivered, including those delivered after 14 days, was 7,557, representing 99.7% of new birth reviews due.

Part Three: Co-operation approach

The Council must comply with its legal obligations under the Public Contract Regulations 2015, its obligation to deliver best value, and the requirements of the Constitution. Some elements are excluded from the Public Contract Regulations, meaning that a competitive tender process is not required, including contracts which use the 'co-operation exemption'. Where that exemption applies a contract can be entered into with a relevant public body such as an NHS Trust. Taking a co-operative approach would enable the Council to enter into a contract with NHFT for delivery of the Nottinghamshire HFP from 2024 onwards.

A formal options appraisal has been undertaken to assess the use of a contract, via the co-operation route, against a competitive tender process. The co-operation route has been identified as the preferred option for the procurement of this service.

In addition to the benefits identified in the main paper, this approach also secures the well performing, high quality 0 to 19 service currently delivered. It is anticipated that a co-operation approach will reduce workforce attrition, when compared to the alternatives. It is important to note here that there are national shortages of health visitors and school nurses, making it challenging for service providers to recruit to vacancies that may occur in the event of workforce instability.