



Summary of the Satakunta Baby- and Family-Friendly Action Plan (2022)

Introduction

This summary describes the core principles of what you can expect from the services at Satakunta's maternity and baby health clinics and Satasairaala Hospital in support of breastfeeding.

The International Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) is an action plan launched by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF in 1991. The action plan aims to motivate facilities providing maternity and newborn services worldwide to implement the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.

The Ten Steps summarise policies and procedures that facilities providing maternity and newborn services should implement to support breastfeeding.

In 2018, the WHO revised the Ten Steps based on the 2017 guideline on protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding in facilities that provide maternity and newborn services.

The Baby-Friendly Programme in Finland

There are three Baby-Friendly Programmes in Finland, intended for different units: maternity hospitals, neonatal intensive care units, and community maternity and baby health clinics. The programmes have different criteria, self-assessment tools and statistical guidelines. In addition, all programmes require compliance with the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (see below).

The Baby-Friendly Programme aims to support breastfeeding in all units that care for pregnant women, mothers who have given birth, and infants.

The purpose of the baby-friendly programme is to:

Help mothers and babies get off to a good start with breastfeeding

Support four to six months of exclusive breastfeeding

Promote the continuation of breastfeeding beyond six months, alongside solid foods, up to one year or beyond

The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) oversees the implementation of the Baby-Friendly Programme in all Finnish maternity and baby health facilities in Finland.

For more information (in Finnish):

[Vauvamyönteisyys ja -sertifikaatti - THL](#)

The Baby- and Family-Friendly Programme in Satakunta

The Satakunta Wellbeing Services County's Satasairaala Hospital was accredited as a Baby-Friendly Hospital in 2019. This means that our hospital meets the minimum criteria of the Baby-Friendly programme in all units where care is provided for newborns and their parents. The hospital will seek recertification in 2024.

Work towards achieving Baby-Friendly accreditation for the Satakunta Wellbeing Services County as a whole is in process. The Satakunta Baby- and Family-Friendly Action Plan is the first step on this path. Satasairaala Hospital and the community health clinics work together towards this goal.

Some mothers do not breastfeed their babies. This may be out of choice or necessity. These families receive guidance on how to safely feed their babies with infant formula.

The Satakunta Baby- and Family-Friendly Action Plan (in Finnish):

[Vauva- ja perhemyönteisyysohjelma Satakunnan hyvinvointialueella](#)

The ten steps for hospitals

The ten steps to successful breastfeeding are applied in the hospital maternity and birth units and the neonatal intensive care unit as listed below:

Hospital services should implement the following key clinical management practices:

Steps 1 and 2: Hospitals should support mothers with breastfeeding by not promoting infant formula, bottles and teats, making breastfeeding standard practice,

keeping track of support for breastfeeding, training staff on supporting mothers to breastfeed and assessing health workers' knowledge and skills.

In addition, hospitals should implement the following key practices:

Step 3: Hospitals should support mothers to breastfeed antenatally by discussing the importance of breastfeeding to babies and mothers and preparing women on how to feed their baby.

Step 4: Immediately after birth, the hospital should support mothers in breastfeeding by encouraging skin-to-skin contact between the mother and baby soon after birth and helping mothers put their baby to the breast right away.

Step 5: Hospitals should support mothers in breastfeeding by checking positioning, attachment and sucking, giving practical breastfeeding support and helping mothers with common breastfeeding problems.

Step 6: Hospitals should support mothers in breastfeeding by giving only breast milk unless there are medical reasons, prioritising donor human milk when a supplement is needed and helping mothers who want to formula feed to do so safely.

Step 7: Hospitals should support mothers in breastfeeding by letting mothers and babies stay together day and night and making sure that mothers can stay near their baby if the baby is sick.

Step 8: Hospitals should support mothers in breastfeeding by helping mothers know when their baby is hungry and not limiting breastfeeding times.

Step 9: Hospitals should support mothers in breastfeeding by counselling mothers on the use and risks of feeding bottles, teats and pacifiers.

Step 10: Hospitals should support mothers in breastfeeding by referring mothers to community resources for breastfeeding support and working with communities to improve breastfeeding support services.

For more information on the International Baby-Friendly Initiative:

[Promoting baby-friendly hospitals \(who.int\)](http://www.who.int)

The seven steps for community services

The baby- and family-friendly programme for maternity and child health clinics is an evidence-based programme drawn up in Finland. The program consists of seven steps adapted from the original Baby-Friendly Programme. These seven steps are followed in Satasairaala Hospital's children's units.

The seven-step programme

The clinic has a written baby-friendly programme as required by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Staff receive training, and their expertise is kept up to date.

Families who are expecting a baby receive breastfeeding guidance.

Public health nurses support breastfeeding and the continuity of breastfeeding.

Public health nurses support mothers to breastfeed exclusively until the baby is four to six months old. Partial breastfeeding is supported up to the age of one year or longer if the family so wishes. Solid foods are started as tasting portions at the age of four to six months, depending on individual readiness.

The maternity clinic creates a breastfeeding-friendly atmosphere.

The maternity and child health clinic ensures the continuity of breastfeeding support and care.

For more information on the seven steps for community services (in Finnish):

[Neuvoloiden vauva- ja perhemyönteisyysohjelma - THL](#)

Peer support for breastfeeding families in Finland

The Finnish Association for Breastfeeding Support – Imetyksen tuki ry (ITU) – offers trained peer support for breastfeeding families in Finland. The support is available for all phases of breastfeeding, from the first moments all the way to weaning. The support is free of charge. Some of their breastfeeding support materials are available [in English and some other languages on their website](#). There is also the option to speak to a peer supporter.

[Breastfeeding peer support in English – Imetyksen tuki ry \(imetys.fi\)](#)

The International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes

The International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (also known as the WHO Code) is an international health policy framework

for breastfeeding promotion adopted by the World Health Assembly (WHA) of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1981. The Code was developed as a global public health strategy and recommends restrictions on the marketing of breastmilk substitutes, such as infant formula, to ensure that mothers are not discouraged from breastfeeding and that substitutes are used safely if needed. The Code also covers ethical considerations and regulations for the marketing of feeding bottles and teats. A number of subsequent WHA resolutions have further clarified or extended certain provisions of the Code.

For more information about the Code:

[International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes - Finnish Food Authority \(ruokavirasto.fi\)](#)

How to get professional help for breastfeeding challenges in Satakunta

Do not hesitate to reach out if you have challenges with breastfeeding: if breastfeeding hurts, you want to increase your milk supply, or have other issues with breastfeeding. The younger your baby is, the more important it is to get help promptly. You do not need to face your worries alone.

The first point of contact should be a healthcare professional: your public health nurse at the maternity or child health clinic (neuvola). All midwives, nurses and health nurses in Satakunta have completed the WHO Breastfeeding Counselling course. A peer supporter can offer you extra help in addition to healthcare professionals.

With a young infant, seek guidance from your maternity hospital before and after you are discharged.

You can make an appointment at your maternity and child health clinic for a trained breastfeeding counsellor (imetysneuvola).

At the Satasairaala Hospital's breastfeeding clinic, midwives trained in lactation issues provide breastfeeding counselling. No referral is needed, but you do need to make an appointment (044 707 7538). Ask at the maternity hospital or maternity and child care clinic for more information.

[Teratology Information Service](#) provides reliable information on breastfeeding and medications. The service is open on weekdays between 9 am and midday, phone 09 4717 6500.

Enjoy caring for your baby!