



Press Release from Bournemouth University
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Baby-friendly award for Bournemouth University

The School of Health & Social Care at Bournemouth University (BU) has been recognised by UNICEF and the World Health Organisation for its work on training and educating midwifery students about the benefits of breastfeeding.

BU received a Certificate of Commitment as part of its first steps in achieving international recognition from the Baby Friendly Initiative, a global programme set up by UNICEF and the World Health Organisation to ensure a high standard of care for pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers and babies.

Associate Dean and qualified midwife Professor Paul Lewis and his team decided to work with the Baby Friendly Initiative to ensure a high standard of education and training in breastfeeding for all student midwives graduating from Bournemouth University midwifery courses.

Professor Lewis said: "We know that many women give up breastfeeding before they want to because of difficulties which could have been prevented if skilled help had been on hand. By ensuring that our students are fully trained in how to help a mother breastfeed her newborn child, more women will be able to breastfeed their babies for longer."

Dr Susan Way, Lead Midwife for Education, added: "Breastfeeding protects babies against a wide range of serious illnesses including gastroenteritis and respiratory infections in infancy as well as allergies and diabetes in childhood. We also know that breastfeeding reduces the mother's risk of some cancers – although mums might be more interested in hearing that it's easier, cheaper and simply less hassle than bottle feeding."

The Baby Friendly University Award was launched in the UK in April 2008 – the first such award anywhere in the world – by Public Health Minister Dawn Primarolo, in order to ensure high levels of training in breastfeeding are incorporated in midwifery and health visitor training courses.

The Certificate of Commitment recognises that Bournemouth University is dedicated to implementing recognised best practice standards in breastfeeding education and training, and is part way along the road to full Baby Friendly Accreditation.

Baby Friendly Initiative Programme Director Sue Ashmore said: “We are delighted that BU has received this award. Surveys show us that most mothers want to breastfeed but don’t always get the support they need. Working towards full Baby Friendly Accreditation means that BU is addressing this problem and aiming to ensure more mothers can successfully breastfeed their babies in future.”

For further information on the midwifery courses available at Bournemouth University visit: www.bournemouth.ac.uk/midwifery.

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