

Emergency Infant Feeding Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Emergency Infant Feeding SOP is intended to provide guidance to practitioners within Renfrewshire. The guidance will include criteria for referral, pathway, referral process and documentation required.

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Renfrewshire HSCP

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1. Background

1.1 Infant Food Insecurity

Post-pandemic and now during the cost of living crisis families across the UK are facing increased costs, which in turn cause difficult decisions on where to prioritise money and spendingⁱ.

The cost of infant formula increased by 25% between March 2021 and April 2023ⁱⁱ. For families from the most deprived communities, accessing infant formula is becoming more challenging. Evidence suggests that healthcare professionals are reporting that families have been watering down the milk, spacing out feeds and/or introducing their baby to solids before they are ready.

1.2 Emergency Infant Formula Pathway

Directive from NHSGGC, Public Health Maternal and Infant Nutrition Group identified the need for all HSCP areas across the Health Board to develop and implement a pathway (appendix 1) to support families in need of emergency infant formula milk. This was based on UNICEF guidanceⁱⁱⁱ The Scottish Government published guidance in the form of a toolkit to support the development of pathways across Scotland on the 9th February 2024^{iv}.

To ensure the best start for children in Renfrewshire an evidence based approach to the pathway has been implemented. Renfrewshire's Pathway will support the Convention on the Rights of the Child^v and encompass all Infant Feeding^{vi}.

1.3 Section 22

Within NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health practitioners escalated concern that if families were experiencing extreme, sudden financial hardship this resulted, at times, in inappropriate referral to Social Work department for access to short term financial support where no other child care need or risk had been identified.

Section 22 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 sets out the local authority's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in its area who are 'in need'. Help can be given under Section 22 either in cash or in kind. Assistance may be given unconditionally, not subject to repayment or conditions.

Section 22 is often used to make a one off payment but can, at times, be used to make regular payments. Always check first other options, food parcel, pantry, friends, family. To date only Social Work are able to grant Section 22 payments.

1.4 Family Wellbeing Service

Renfrewshire's Family Wellbeing Service offer support on a wide range of issues that may be affecting family health and wellbeing. The team have a wide range of skills and offer evidenced based support including worries about changes of circumstances, bereavement and loss, emotional and mental health difficulties, financial stress and many other aspects of family life.

To provide a cash first approach, families will be referred to the Family Wellbeing Service, who will process for provision of funds through section 22 monies and provide ongoing health and wellbeing support.


2. Procedure

2.1 Pathway

The Emergency Infant Formula pathway (**Appendix 1**) is based on guidance documents published by UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative: A guide for Local Authorities supporting families with infants under 12 months experiencing food insecurity and Scottish Government: Guide to responding to and preventing infant food insecurity in Scotland.

Our focus on children's rights highlights during periods of crisis, babies are one of the most vulnerable groups in our society. In challenging economic times there is a need to ensure uninterrupted access to safe and adequate nutrition is available. This pathway is for use for Renfrewshire HSCP and Council staff, community groups and the voluntary sector.

Following the pathway allows the practitioner to establish correct intervention to support with infant food insecurity. The steps include:

1. Establish if infant is formula fed/mixed fed or breastfed
2. Establish if the family is in crisis – Unable to provide vital items for self/child i.e.: food, heating, transport to appointments.
3. If family is in crisis and using formula milk:
 - Complete referral form
 - Send to Family Wellbeing Service  Referral Form.docx
(urgentinfantformula@renfrewshire.gov.uk) for financial support and access to section 22 money
 - Signpost to [local food supports](#)
 - If immediate access to food required supply food bank voucher or contact Advice Works 0300 300 1238 or Citizens Advice Bureau – 0141 889 2121
4. If family is in crisis and is breastfeeding:
 - Complete referral form
 - Send to Family Wellbeing Service
(urgentinfantformula@renfrewshire.gov.uk) for financial support and access to section 22 money to support maternal nutrition
 - Signpost to [local food supports](#)
 - If immediate access to food required supply food bank voucher or contact Advice Works 0300 300 1238 or Citizens Advice Bureau – 0141 889 2121
5. If family is not in crisis:
 - Let family know they can contact you at any time
 - Consider if Family Wellbeing Service request for assistance is required
 - If appropriate, complete [form](#)

Once referral form is sent, the Family Wellbeing Service will make contact with the family to confirm any outstanding information and assess family's needs. Following this, the Family Wellbeing Lead will complete CBS form and email to CBS for payment.

Note if request for payment is after 3pm, the Family Wellbeing Lead will be required to collect money from Renfrewshire House on behalf of the family (see payment section for more details).

2.1.1 Parent Carer Information Sharing Statement

Ensure all are aware that their information is being shared.

A statement to share with parents/carers:

“In order for us to provide additional support, it is a requirement for us to share certain items of personal information with the service providers, including your name, address and contact telephone number”.

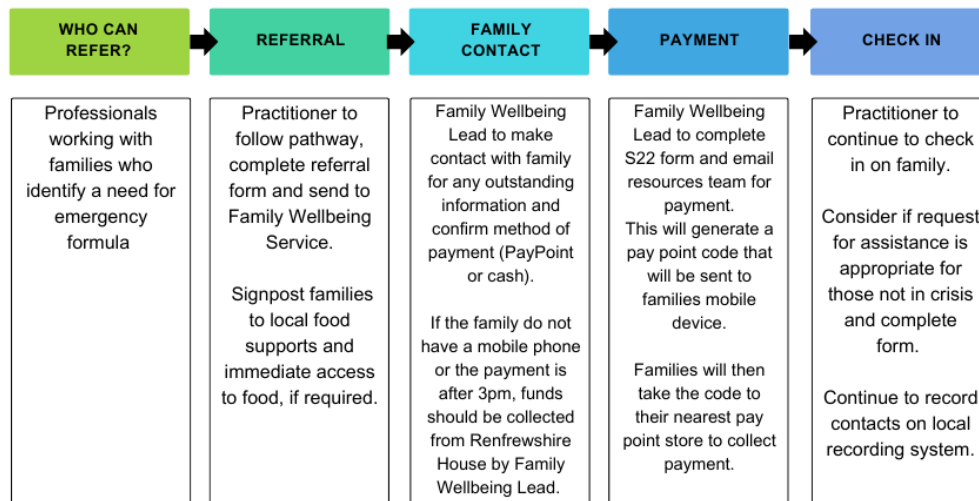
Please indicate on the referral form that family consents to their details being shared.

2.2 Referral Process

The below process highlights the key steps taken to support family in crisis:



Emergency Infant Formula Process



2.3 Payment

- Once referral has been received by Family Wellbeing Lead, they will make contact with the family, identify need and complete S22 form below.



Section 22
Application Form.doc

- Once authorised by Family Wellbeing Lead, the form should be sent to swbsresources@renfrewshire.gov.giv.uk and referrer cc'd into email.
- The resources team will process request via Paypoint or Cash
- PayPoint payments will be sent direct to the service user using SMS (text message). If the client does not have a mobile phone, Family Wellbeing Lead should collect payment from Renfrewshire House.
- Payments for emergency infant formula will be £40 per child however, if rational is given on referral form highlighting need for more this will be granted.
- PayPoint can issue a maximum of £100 per voucher.
- As an HSCP we operate from an ethos of respect, personal responsibility, and trust and therefore where possible, families should be enabled to spend independently.

The text that families will receive in text/voucher will read:

£32.63 CashOut voucher valid at any
PayPoint to 24-Jan-23: [http://
imovo.org/2095651544SC](http://imovo.org/2095651544SC) OR shop:
use CASHOUT > I-MOVO >
2095651544 Help? [bit.ly/
CashOutHelp](http://bit.ly/CashOutHelp)

Please familiarise your families with this so they do not assume that the text is a spam or phishing attempt.

Link provides detail of local PayPoint access: <https://paypoint.com/en-gb>

Once the payment is made it must be redeemed within 14 days otherwise the transactions will automatically expire. If a voucher is still required after expiration, a new request will require to be made.

Many small local shops offer PayPoint but may not carry much cash in their tills to pay out a large PayPoint voucher: If the voucher amount is larger, families should be encouraged to cash these at Customer Service desks in the larger supermarkets

who are equipped to pay out larger cash volumes. Shops should not be charging to accept pay point. Smaller shops may advise that they do not have the cash to pay out. You do not need to spend the funds in the shop that you have received. Payments will not be processed after 4pm 14 days after issue.

Please note:

- Paypoint cut-off times are 3pm Monday to Thursday and 2pm Friday.
- Family Wellbeing Lead will collect payment in person from Renfrewshire House for families that do not have access to a mobile phone.
- Family Wellbeing Lead should collect payment for requests made after 3pm on weekdays at Renfrewshire House on behalf of the family.

Out of Office Hours

Outside of office hours (9am – 4:45pm (3:55pm on a Friday)), the only service that can make an emergency payment is social work. Their emergency number is **0300 343 1505**.

3. Recording

3.1 Health Visiting/FNP

Staff must follow the step-by-step guide below to add and record referral form on EMIS.



Adding Money
Advice Referral Form

Note: it important that staff indicate that the referral to social/financial support is a Section 22 payment.

The Health Visitor/Family Nurse may require to document further within the body of the record (depending on circumstances) and any award of immediate financial assistance **must** be considered within the overall assessment and care planning for the child. This must include consideration of how often this is required and if further support may be needed (for example assistance attending financial support appointments

3.2 All Other Organisations

All other organisations must record contact and outcome on appropriate recording system.

Appendix 1: Renfrewshire Pathway for Emergency Infant Formula

Renfrewshire Pathway for Emergency Infant Feeding



This pathway is based on guidance published by UNICEF¹ and the Scottish Government². Pathways from NHS Grampian, Glasgow and Inverclyde have also been utilised, further developed and localised to Renfrewshire HSCP.

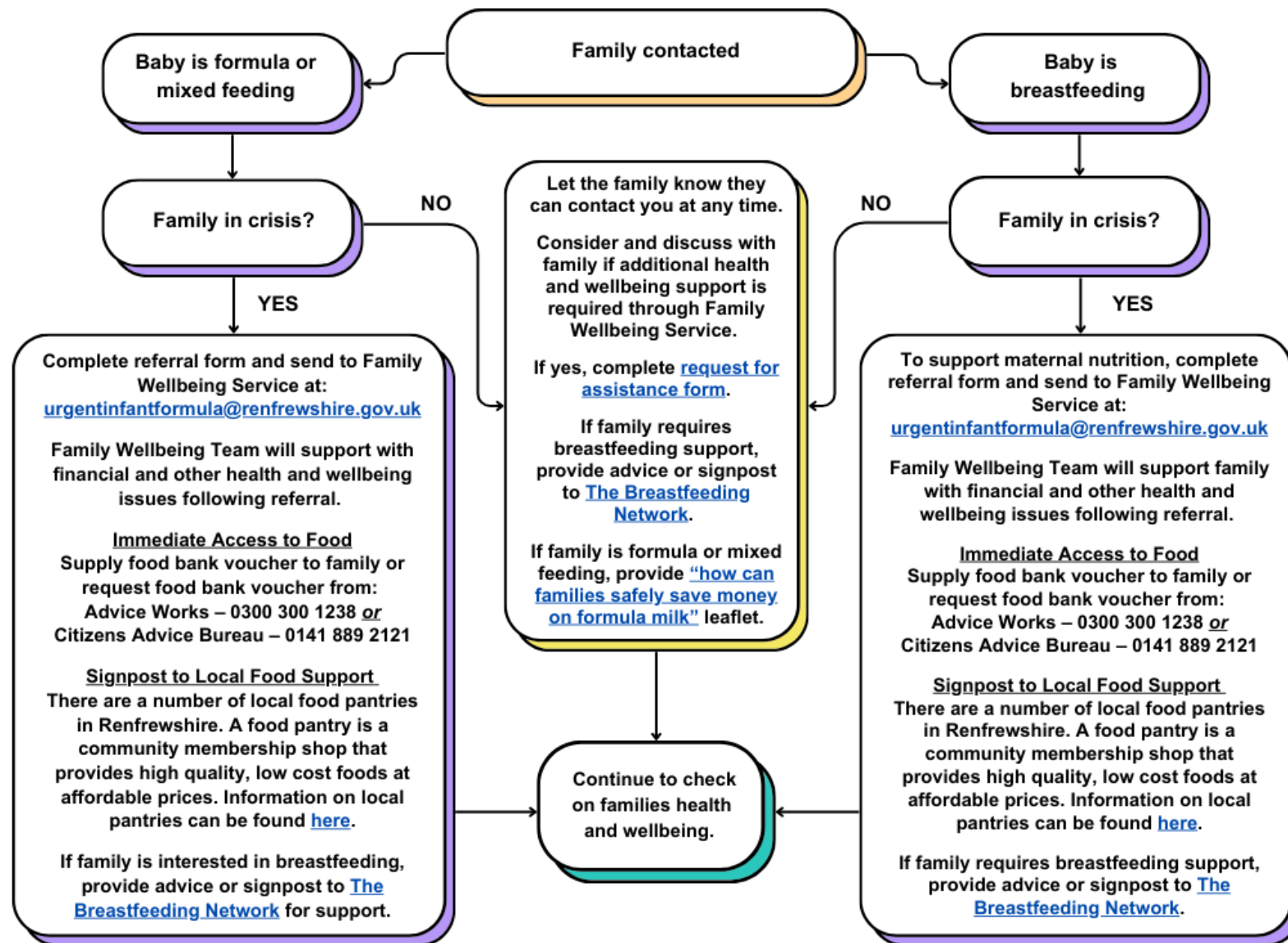
Our focus on children's rights highlights during periods of crisis, babies are one of the most vulnerable groups in our society. In challenging economic times there is a need to ensure uninterrupted access to safe and adequate nutrition is available. This pathway is for use for Renfrewshire HSCP and Council staff, community groups and the voluntary sector.

- There is a wide range of evidence regarding the health benefits of breastfeeding including protection from infections and viruses³. Breastfeeding can protect against food insecurity, should there be an interruption to the infant formula milk supply chain or financial hardship. Services should take all steps possible to promote, protect and support continued breastfeeding. This includes ongoing provision of support from Midwifery, Health Visiting and Family Nurse Teams and signposting to local and national support services.
- To protect breastfeeding and to safeguard infant health, all families that request infant formula through emergency food aid need to have a meaningful conversation on infant feeding with an appropriate health professional as above. This will include all aspects of care including supporting initiation and continuation of breastfeeding, supporting mixed feeding or re-lactation or safe and responsive bottle-feeding.
- If formula feeding, the baby will require ongoing reliable access to powdered infant formula for the first year of life and facilities for safe preparation e.g. washing and sterilisation of bottles and equipment. Where families do not have the facilities for safe powdered formula milk preparation, they may need to be provided with ready to feed formula milk (sterilisation equipment for bottles and teats still required). All families should be signposted to information and support on formula feeding: [Formula Feeding: How to Feed your Baby Safely / Formula Feeding \(Parent Club\)](#)

Current Infant Feeding Recommendations: Breastmilk or First Stage (whey-based) formula milk is all the nourishment an infant requires in the first 6 months of life. Solid foods should start to be introduced around 6 months of age⁴. Breastfeeding should continue along with the introduction of solid foods for up to 2 years of age or beyond. Formula fed babies should continue on first stage formula milk until 12 months of age, when they should be introduced to pasteurised full fat cow's milk. There is no need to introduce "hungry baby" or "follow-on formula" milks.

Cost of Formula Milks: All infant formula milks must meet UK minimal compositional requirements; therefore, all brands are nutritionally adequate and have a similar composition. There is no advantage to purchasing a more expensive brand. For example, the cost of feeding a 2-3 month old baby powdered infant formula over 30 days can vary in cost from £33.00 to £91.20. The least expensive brand of formula milk costing £8 (at the time of writing) was found at a budget supermarket. Ready to feed formula can cost between around £23 and £38 per week. [Choosing a lower cost formula can have a positive impact on household income in the long-term.](#) More information: [Costs | Infant Formula](#)

Powdered Infant Milks are not Sterile: To protect infant health, all infant feeding equipment should be thoroughly washed and sterilised and feeds made up with water at a temperature of 70°C or above, following national guidance: [Formula Feeding: How to Feed your Baby Safely](#)



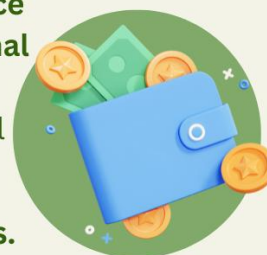
REFERENCES:

1. UNICEF (2022) [A Guide For Local Authorities And Health Boards Supporting Families With Infants Under 12 Months Experiencing Food Insecurity](#) (last accessed August 2024).
2. Scottish Government (2024) [Guide to Responding to and Preventing Infant Food Insecurity in Scotland](#) (last accessed August 2024).
3. Victora CG, Bahl R, Barros AJD et al. for The Lancet Breastfeeding Series Group Breastfeeding in the 21st century: epidemiology, mechanisms, and lifelong effect. Lancet. 2016; 387: 475-490.
4. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. [Starting Solids](#) (last accessed August 2024).

How can families safely save money on formula milk?

Information for healthcare professionals and formula feeding families

All infant formula is expensive but some brands cost over twice as much as others. More expensive products offer no additional benefits. All brands sold in the UK are safe and suitable throughout the first year because the law requires that they all comply with the same nutrition composition standards.



Remember its OK to switch formula brands.

A new formula milk can be offered all at once in a full feed or gradually across feeds - whichever works best for parents and their babies.

The least expensive way to buy infant formula is in powder format.

Larger 1200g (2x600g) packs are the cheapest way to buy infant formula powder.



Supermarket own brand products are generally less expensive than branded products.

There is only 1 supermarket own brand infant formula in the UK and it is the least expensive of all the standard 800g or 900g cans of infant formula available.



Some retailers sell the same infant formula for a little less than others, so it can pay to shop around.

Follow on formula offers no additional benefits for babies aged 6-12 months and may work out to be slightly more expensive than infant formula when made up.

Some retailers offer price promotions on follow-on formula but these are generally short lived and so aren't a good reason to switch from infant formula to follow-on formula when your baby is 6 months old. After the age of 1 year children don't need formula milks so there's no need to buy growing up or toddler milks.

When buying discounted formula milks - always remember to check the best before/use by date.

For more information on the cost of infant milk visit www.infantmilkinfo.org/cost/



FIRST STEPS NUTRITION TRUST

References

ⁱ <https://foodfoundation.org.uk/initiatives/food-prices-tracking#>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cost-of-living-update/cma-cost-of-living-update#infant-formula>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/local-authorities-guide/>

^{iv} www.gov.scot/publications/guide-responding-preventing-infant-food-insecurity-scotland

^v www.gov.scot/publications/united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-bill-rights-and-requirements

^{vi} <https://www.gov.scot/publications/healthier-future-scotlands-diet-healthy-weight-delivery-plan/>