Breastfeeding Policy Statement

The three children’s hospitals, Our Lady’s Children’s Hospital, Crumlin, (OLCHC) Children’s University Hospital, Temple St, (CUH) & The National Children’s Hospital, (AMNCH) believe that breastfeeding is the healthiest way for a mother to feed her baby. The benefits of breastfeeding for the mother and her child are well recognised. Nursing staff of the three children’s hospitals are committed to supporting mothers who choose to breastfeed by:

1. Creating an environment that welcomes supports and facilitates breastfeeding.
2. Giving verbal and written information of the importance and management of breastfeeding to parents of newborn babies.
3. Welcoming mothers who wish to breastfeed in any public area of the hospital and endeavouring to provide a private area for those who ask for one.
4. Arranging all interventions by hospital staff to minimise disturbance to the breastfeeding relationship.
5. Ensuring that mothers who are breastfeeding their children will have access to trained staff who have the knowledge and skills to assist mothers in establishing and maintaining breastfeeding and breast milk feeding.
6. Avoiding the use of bottles, teats and soothers whilst establishing breastfeeding, unless needed for medical reasons, or through parental choice.
7. Discussing with parents the need for fortified breast milk or alternative feeds for sick children with specific medical conditions.
8. Giving expressed breast milk or alternative feed by a feeding method conducive to the establishment of breastfeeding.
9. Supplying equipment and information for the safe expression and storage of breast milk, while in hospital.
10. Endeavouring to facilitate siblings who are being breastfed by mothers who wish to be resident with their sick child in the hospital. Where possible siblings will be facilitated to stay in the hospital.
12. Informing mothers on discharge of the hospital and community breastfeeding support services and groups available to her.
13. Supporting staff working in the hospital that choose to breastfeed or express breast milk for their child.

Director of Nursing
TSCUH

Director of Nursing
OLCHC

Acting Director of Children’s Nursing Services
NCH

3rd Edition Issue date July 2015
Review date July 2017