



Paper for discussion: Draft scope for review on the risks of not breastfeeding.

Agenda Item: 3

Please see paper attached.

Review of risks of not breastfeeding

Background

1. At a previous meeting, the SACN Subgroup on Maternal and Child Nutrition agreed to undertake an assessment of the risks of not breastfeeding to help Health departments to communicate clear messages to mothers regarding the implications of choosing not to breastfeed.

Scope

2. The potential scope of this work is outlined below, for discussion. The Secretariat would like some initial guidance on the scope of the work, to allow terms of reference to be written.

- I. Review the evidence on not being breastfed and short-term health outcomes in the offspring, including:
 - risk of infection (gastrointestinal, ear, respiratory)
 - development of allergy (food allergy, eczema, atopic dermatitis and asthma)
 - necrotising enterocolitis (relevant to pre-term only)
 - body composition
 - appetite/regulation of food intake
 - infant mortality
 - risk of sudden infant death syndrome and
 - psychosocial factors (such as bonding between mother and child).
- II. Review the evidence on not being breastfed and long-term health outcomes in the offspring, including:
 - obesity
 - cognitive function
 - cardiovascular disease
 - diabetes mellitus and glucose intolerance
 - cancer and
 - bone mineral density.

Note that this area has been covered comprehensively in the 'The influence of maternal, fetal and child nutrition on the development of chronic disease in later life' report, and so an approach that avoids repetition of work is needed.

- III. Review the evidence on breastfeeding and short-term health outcomes for the mother, including:
 - return to pre-pregnancy weight and
 - post-natal depression.

- IV. Review the evidence on breastfeeding and long-term health outcomes for the mother, including:
- weight gain and obesity
 - risk of ovarian and breast cancers
 - risk of diabetes mellitus and
 - risk of osteoporosis.

3. The Committee is asked to consider the following questions:

- **How should 'not breastfeeding' be defined?**
 - i. **Never breastfed (i.e. all potential combinations of formula feeding/mixed feeding/early introduction of solids)**
 - ii. **Not exclusively breastfed for six months or**
 - iii. **An alternative.**
- **Should being fed expressed milk be included as breastfed?**
- **Should the review be limited to full-term infants?**
- **And agree the final scope of the review.**