



Overview 1: National Health Visiting Programme

The evidence base for achieving improved health, social and educational outcomes from a systematic approach to early child development, including early intervention and prevention, has never been stronger and has been described as 'a powerful equalizer which merits investment' (Irwin et al 2007, Marmot 2010).

Health visitors play a crucial role in ensuring children have the best possible start in life, and lead delivery of the 0-5 elements of the [Healthy Child Programme](#) in partnership with other health and social care colleagues. The increased investment is already having a positive impact on supporting the lifelong health and wellbeing of young children and their families.

[The Health Visiting Programme](#) started in 2011 as a National programme of work to deliver on the Government's commitment by 2015 to:

- Increase health visitors by 4,200 and
- Create a transformed, rejuvenated health visiting service providing improved outcomes for children and families with more targeted and tailored support for those who need it.

It represents a major investment in services for young children and families, and is intended to:

- Improve access to services;
- Improve the experience of children and families;
- Improve health and wellbeing outcomes for under-fives; and
- Reduce health inequalities.

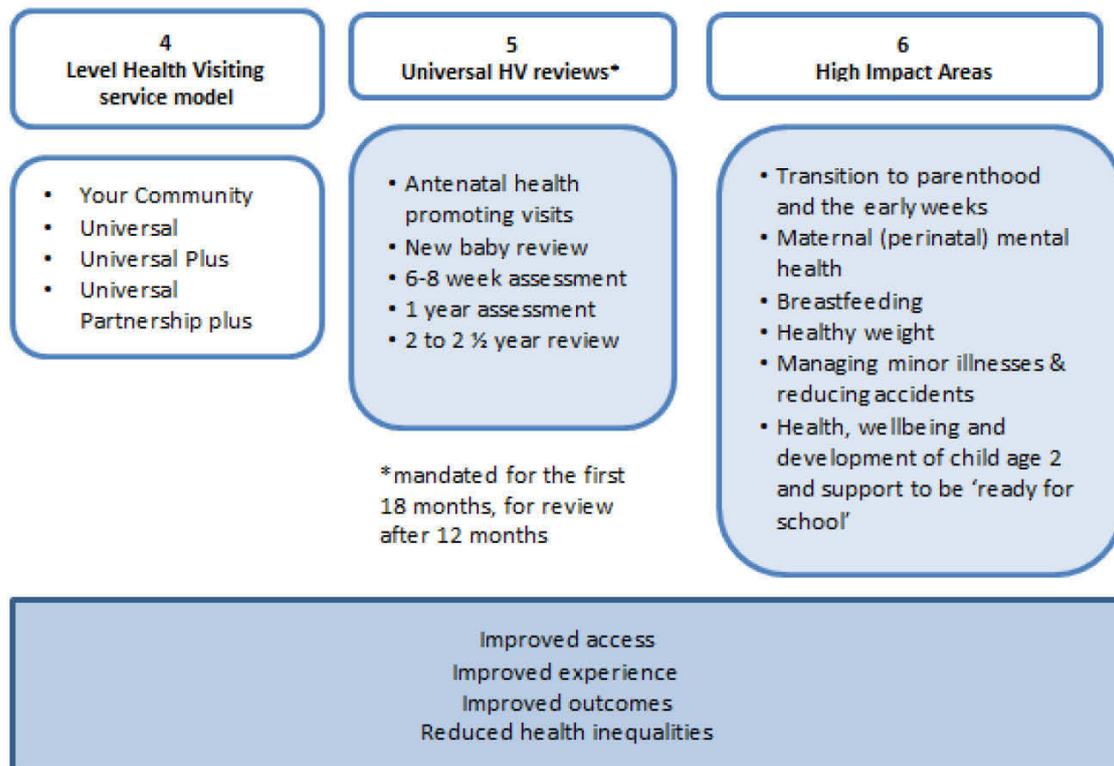
The programme is delivered in partnership between the Department of Health (DH), NHS England (NHS E), Public Health England (PHE) and Health Education England (HEE). DH is the system lead and NHS E is responsible under the NHS Mandate and Section 7A for commissioning the additional capacity and service transformation. Professional leadership comes from both DH and PHE, while HEE is mandated to lead the delivery of students and CPD, and PHE has responsibility for evidence, information and wider public health.

The 'transformed health visiting service' is shown in the model below:

The role of health visitors ¹

Transformation of the health visiting service

The Health Visitor Implementation Plan 2011-15² was published in February 2011 and sets out the full range of services that families will be able to expect from health visitors and their teams as part of the rejuvenated and transformed health service.



The Four Level Service

- Full delivery of the four-level health visiting service including universal elements of the Healthy Child Programme made up of the following elements:
 - **Community:** health visitors have a broad knowledge of community needs and resources available e.g. Children's Centres and self-help groups and work to develop these and make sure families know about them.
 - **Universal:** health visiting teams lead delivery of the HCP. They ensure that every new mother and child have access to a health visitor, receive development checks and receive good information about healthy start issues such as parenting and immunisation.

¹ Overview 2 Health Visiting and Family Nurse Partnership Services can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transfer-of-0-5-childrens-public-health-commissioning-to-local-authorities>

² The National Health Visitor Plan can be found here: <http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/qual-clin-lead/hlth-vistg-prog/info/docs-res/#plan>

- **Universal Plus:** families can access timely, expert advice from a health visitor when they need it on specific issues such as postnatal depression, weaning or sleepless children.
- **Universal Partnership Plus:** health visitors provide ongoing support, playing a key role in bringing together relevant local services, to help families with continuing complex needs, for example where a child has a long-term condition.

Supporting Transformation

The commissioning changes are set out in Overview 3: changes to how 0-5 services are commissioned³.

Support is being provided for commissioners, providers and health visitors to deliver this transformation including:

- Additional funding to NHS England Area Teams to work with providers on transforming the service in line with the HV National Core Service Specification⁴.
- A four-year transformation programme funded by the Department of Health of recruitment and retention, professional development and improved commissioning linked to public health improvement to support health visitors.

This includes:

- A project to develop and support post-qualification development and support for HVs will be commissioned from the Institute of Health Visiting and Partners, 'Making the Most of Health Visitors'.
- The publication of a number of professional guidance and pathway documents including the Health Visiting to School Nursing Pathway and Maternal Mental Health Pathway with more due for release and refresh. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/developing-the-public-health-contribution-of-nurses-and-midwives-tools-and-models>
- **The Building Community Capacity** educational programme, created by a team at Northumbria University led by Professor Pauline Pearson, on behalf of the Department of Health is a professional development package for health visitors, combining learning through education materials and practical application in the workplace and local community.
- A Preceptorship Charter⁵ developed by the Institute of Health Visiting on behalf of DH, outlines the best practice quality markers for newly qualified health visitors entering employment as a health visitor in England.
- A number of training programmes and support materials have been developed to enhance the skills of all health visitors. These have

³ Overview 3: changes to how 0-5 services are commissioned can be found here:

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⁴ HV National Core Service Specification can be found here: <http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/qual-clin-lead/hlth-vistg-prog/info/docs-res/#serv-spec>

⁵ Preceptorship Charter can be found here: http://www.ihv.org.uk/resources/open_access

included Perinatal Mental Health and Domestic Violence and Abuse training and e-learning materials, and a range of guidance documents and leaflets. A successful suite of 10 to-day workshops was delivered on Domestic Violence and Abuse between January to March 2014, a further stage in facilitating spread of this training has begun, with three interactive e-learning modules due to be launched on the e-Learning for Healthcare portal in respect of Domestic Violence and Abuse. Perinatal Mental Health e-learning training is already available on the e-learning for health portal.

- An Education Initiative⁶ developed by DH and HEE providing an enhanced range of CPD training opportunities designed to support both newly qualified and experienced health visitors to gain additional skills to deliver this transformed service.
- Guidance produced by NHS Employers to support providers to enhance recruitment and retention and support re-engagement of health visiting teams.

⁶ The Education Initiative document can be found here: <http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/qual-clin-lead/hlth-vistg-prog/info/docs-res/#serv-spec>