



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION, DOCUMENT

Healthy Start eLearning course (WHC/2023/038)

Scheme to help buy fruit, vegetables, milk, infant formula and vitamins.

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Welsh Health Circular

Information

Welsh Health Circular

Issue date: 9th November 2023

Status: Action

Category: Workforce

Title: Healthy Start eLearning course

Date of expiry: Not applicable

For action by: Local health boards

Action required by: With immediate effect

Sender: Judith Paget CBE Director General of Health and Social Services and NHS Wales Chief Executive

HSSG Welsh Government Contact: Sarah Francis, Healthy and Active Branch, Public Health, Health and Social Services Group

Enclosure(s): None

Information

Dear Colleagues,

The Healthy Start Scheme provides eligible pregnant women and young families in receipt of certain benefits help to buy fruit, vegetables, milk and infant formula, and free Healthy Start Vitamins. It applies from the 10th week of pregnancy until

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a child's fourth birthday. The support amounts to £4.25 per week for eligible pregnant women and children from their first until their fourth birthday, and £8.50 per week for babies up to one year of age, pre-loaded onto pre-paid cards issued to households.

Take up of the scheme in Wales is currently around 70% but varies across the country. We know families on low incomes have to spend a disproportionate amount of their income on food, and in the current cost of living crisis, we are committed to increase take up of the scheme and achieve consistency across Wales.

We have developed a bite-size training course for health professionals to raise awareness of Healthy Start and how it can support our most vulnerable young families to access healthier food, thereby contributing to reducing food poverty and consequent health inequalities that arise from poor diet (such as obesity and increased risks of non-communicable diseases).

The course is accessible via the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) system and Learning@Wales platforms.

It will be mandatory for all health care professionals working with pregnant women and families with children under 4 years old. This will include staff within Flying Start, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, those working in children's centres, healthcare support workers, community nursery nurses, assistant practitioners, and Allied Health Professionals. It will need to be retaken every 3 years, or sooner if there are significant changes to the scheme. It should be introduced as part of the induction process for new employees who have not already undertaken the training and for those already in post, they should be informed that they will need to complete it. Completion rates will be collated by NHS Shared Services Partnership.

I know that our NHS staff will embrace this course, which will help to ensure our most vulnerable young families are supported to register for Healthy Start.

Yours sincerely,

Judith Paget CBE

Director General of Health and Social Services and NHS Wales Chief Executive

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