

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi



Analysis for Policy



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

SOCIAL RESEARCH NUMBER:

47/2023

PUBLICATION DATE:

25/04/2023

# Scoping Research to Inform the National Rollout of Baby Bundles in Wales

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# Scoping Research to Inform the National Rollout of Baby Bundles in Wales

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Arad Research



Full Research Report: Lewis, S; McAlister-Wilson, S; Stedman, K (2023).  
*Scoping Research to Inform the National Rollout of Baby Bundles in Wales*.  
Cardiff: Welsh Government. GSR report number 47/2023.  
Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/scoping-research-inform-national-rollout-baby-bundles>

Views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government.

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## Table of contents

List of Tables.....	2
List of figures.....	2
1. Introduction and background.....	4
2. Methodology.....	8
3. Baby Bundle Items .....	15
4. Information in the Bundle .....	45
5. Registration and Delivery of the Baby Bundle .....	49
6. Conclusions.....	57
Annex A: Parents' Survey .....	61
Annex B: Professionals' Survey .....	70
Annex C: Topic Guides .....	78
Annex D: Parents' Survey respondent demographics.....	95

## List of Tables

Table 2.1: Parent characteristics (expectant parents / other children) – Parents’ survey.....	10
Table 2.2: Age of other child/children – Parents’ survey .....	10
Table 2.3: Parent characteristics (adoptive/surrogate/carer parent, multiple births) – Parents’ survey.....	10
Table 2.4: Survey respondents’ role – Professionals’ survey.....	12
Table 2.5: Professionals’ employer – Professionals’ survey .....	13
Table 2.6: Local authority employer – Professionals’ survey .....	13
Table 2.7: Health board employer – Professionals’ survey .....	14

## List of figures

Figure 3.1 Top five most useful items for the bundle for parents (%).....	17
Figure 3.2 Other items and their usefulness rating for parents (%).....	18
Figure 3.3 Top five most useful items for the bundle for professionals (%).....	19
Figure 3.4 Other items and their usefulness rating for professionals (%).....	19
Figure 3.5 Rating of usefulness of condoms in bundle for parents (%).....	21
Figure 3.6 How likely is it that the following items would be used if they were included in the bundle you received? Parents’ survey (%).....	24
Figure 3.7 How likely do you think it is that the following items would be used by parents if they were included in the bundle? Professionals’ survey (%).....	25
Figure 3.8 How would you prefer to receive the following items, if at all? Parents’ survey (%) .....	39
Figure 3.9 How would you prefer to receive the following items, if at all? Parents’ survey – excluding those who said they do not want to receive the items at all (%).....	40
Figure 3.10 In your opinion, what is the best way to provide the following items, if at all? Professionals’ survey .....	41
Figure 3.11 In your opinion, what is the best way to provide the following items, if at all? Professional survey (%) .....	42
Figure 3.12 Which of the following items do you think should be included in a smaller bundle? Parents’ survey.....	43
Figure 3.13 Which of the following items do you think should be included in a smaller bundle? Professionals’ survey (%).....	44

Figure 4.1 The bundle may be accompanied by further information on some topics. Do you think information on the following should be included? Parents' survey (%) .....46

Figure 4.2 The bundle may be accompanied by further information on some topics. Do you think information on the following should be included? Professionals' survey (%) ..46

Figure 5.1: Method of informing parents: Should parents be informed of the bundle by their midwife at a midwife appointment? (%).....49

Figure 5.2 As a professional, which method of registration do you think would be best? Professionals' survey (%).....52

Figure 5.3 When registering for the bundle, this may be done online or by a paper form - which method of registration would you prefer? Parents' survey (%).....54

## 1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of scoping research commissioned by the Welsh Government to inform the national rollout of baby bundles in Wales. The research was carried out between October 2022 and March 2023 and involved gathering evidence from expectant and new parents, as well as members of the workforce who have an interest in baby bundles, such as midwives, health visitors, and others.

### Background

- 1.2 The Welsh Government's Programme for Government includes a commitment to offer free baby bundles to more families across Wales. The bundles would contain a range of products and information for the child's first months and the intention is that bundles will be offered to all families free of charge, and in respect of every baby. The scheme will be fully inclusive, with families able to register for a bundle and access bilingual information on baby bundles freely and openly.
- 1.3 A baby bundle pilot was carried out in the Swansea Bay University Health Board area between September 2020 and March 2021 and saw 200 bundles delivered to families expecting a baby within this period. The evaluation of the pilot indicated that the scheme was delivered smoothly. Registering to receive the bundle was very straightforward according to both the parents and the midwives taking part and there were generally very positive views on the contents of the bundle.<sup>1</sup> However, the pilot and its evaluation were carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic, in a single health board area with a limited number of parents. As such, this research gathers input from more professionals, and from a more diverse group of parents and communities from all over Wales before a potential rollout.

### *The proposed baby bundles scheme*

- 1.4 A written statement providing an update on the scheme explains:
- ‘Our aim is to provide a scheme, which is open to all new and expectant parents in Wales. Bundles would be offered to all families free of charge for each baby

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<sup>1</sup> [Evaluation of baby bundles Pilot | GOV.WALES](#)

born. They would be a gift to welcome a new baby, with no strings attached and without stigma.’<sup>2</sup>

1.5 The proposed baby bundle scheme aims to offer a universal service that is accessible to all new and expectant parents residing in Wales. The 2022 statement set out the intended aims, namely contributing towards:

- Better outcomes for children, by signposting families to information and advice about parenting and support programmes.
- Tackling inequalities, by providing all families with access to the same essential items to support their child’s start in life.
- Tackling poverty, by removing some of the costs families face when a baby is born.
- Decarbonisation – the baby bundles will avoid single-use products and will reduce the amount of packaging used, using local suppliers wherever possible.

### **Overview of similar schemes elsewhere and lessons learnt**

1.6 The proposed scheme, and the earlier pilot, have been informed by evidence from similar programmes around the world. Baby bundles or baby box schemes provide new parents with a package of essential and non-essential items for their newborn. The goal of these programmes is usually to promote maternal and child health and wellbeing.

1.7 Finland’s Baby Box programme, which was introduced in the 1930s, is one of the most well-known. The programme provides new parents with a specially designed cardboard box that doubles as a baby’s first bed, along with a mattress and a selection of baby items such as clothing, bedding, and toiletries. The programme is available to all expectant parents in Finland and has been credited with helping to reduce the infant mortality rate in the country. Similarly, the Scottish Baby Box programme introduced in 2017 is a universal initiative aimed at promoting maternal and child health and reducing health inequalities. The programme provides new parents in Scotland with a package of essential items, including clothing, bedding,

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<sup>2</sup> [Written Statement: An update about progressing a national baby bundles scheme \(20 July 2022\) | GOV.WALES](#)

and hygiene products, as well as a specially designed cardboard box that can be used as a baby's first bed. In addition to the practical items included in the box, the programme also provides new parents with information on a range of health and wellbeing topics, including parenting advice and support for breastfeeding.

1.8 Evaluations of similar schemes in Finland, Scotland, and elsewhere have attributed their success to several factors, including:<sup>3</sup>

- Universal eligibility: One of the key factors of the success of these schemes is that they are universally available to all expectant parents, regardless of their socio-economic status. This helps to ensure that all families have access to the essential items and support provided by the programmes, which helps to reduce health inequalities.
- Easy registration and sign-up: Another important factor is the ease of registering for and receiving the baby box. In many programmes, expectant parents can sign up online or in person, and the process is straightforward and simple helping ensure that all families who are eligible for the programme can benefit.
- High-quality items: The quality of the contents of baby boxes themselves has been reported as a key factor in the success of these programmes.
- Good reputation: Over time, word-of-mouth recommendations and positive media coverage has helped to build support and interest in the schemes, which has in turn helped to drive their growth and success.

### **Research objectives and report content**

1.9 The specific objectives of the research were to gather evidence to inform the delivery of the baby bundles scheme, identify the essential items that should be included in the bundle, and determine the subject area and format of any information provided to parents as part of the bundle. The research also explored views on registration and delivery of the bundle, as well as options for introducing

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<sup>3</sup> Scotland evaluation: [Baby Box: evaluation - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot); Evaluation of schemes in some NHS Trusts in England [Baby-box schemes in England: parent and practitioner experiences, and recommendations | BMC Pediatrics | Full Text \(biomedcentral.com\)](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-017-0388-1); Overview of the Finnish scheme and some others: [The baby box Enhancing the wellbeing of babies and mothers around the world \(researchgate.net\)](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-017-0388-1)



information about the baby bundles to expectant parents. It also considered environmental considerations in the provision of contents.

- 1.10 The remainder of this report details the methodology used in the research, the findings of the research and the conclusions drawn from the findings.

## **2. Methodology**

- 2.1 The methodology chapter outlines the approach taken to conducting the research. A mixed methods approach was adopted, which drew on the views of parents, expectant parents and professionals through surveys, interviews and group discussions.

### **Desk Research and Scoping**

- 2.2 Researchers conducted desk research to review existing literature and policy documents relating to similar initiatives implemented elsewhere, such as the baby box in Scotland and the baby box programme in Finland. There was also a review of the research on the baby bundles pilot carried out in the Swansea Bay University Health Board to help inform research tools.

#### *Welsh Government Interviews*

- 2.3 Interviews were held with two officials from the Welsh Government policy team. These interviews were designed to gain further context on the background of the scheme and findings from the baby bundles pilot, as well as to gather perspectives and insights on the initiative, anticipated impacts and views on the future delivery of baby bundles.

### **Primary Research**

#### *Survey of Expectant and New Parents*

- 2.4 A bilingual survey was created for expectant and new parents to complete online (this can be viewed in Annex A). Topics in the survey included: items in the bundle; information to be included in the bundle; registering for the bundle; and delivery of the bundle.
- 2.5 A bilingual advert was created to advertise the survey amongst parents, expectant parents and relevant support organisations. This advert was promoted via social media (predominately Facebook) and by sharing a digital flyer and survey link via groups who support expectant and new parents. Groups involved in the promotion included Wales-based toddler playgroups, breastfeeding support groups, libraries,

and networks such as Flying Start and Family Information Services in each local authority.

- 2.6 A total of 1,078 parents and expectant parents completed the survey. As shown in Table 2.1, 64.1 per cent of respondents were not expectant parents but have children under the age of 5, whilst 35.9 per cent of respondents were currently expecting (22.4 per cent of which have other children already, 13.5 per cent do not). Table 2.2. shows that 45.6 per cent of respondents had a child/children under the age of 12 months, 61.7 per cent had a child/children aged 1-5 years and 18.2 per cent had a child/children over the age of five. Please note that parents who reached the survey but answered that they had a child over the age of five were only asked to continue with the survey if they were also expecting another child.
- 2.7 Table 2.3 demonstrates that small numbers of respondents were adoptive parents or carers of looked after children (eight respondents across both categories), have had twins, triplets or more or expecting a multiple birth (12 respondents), parents of a child/children born by surrogacy or expecting a child to be born to surrogacy (11 respondents).
- 2.8 Further demographic details were collected from respondents and showed that the majority were aged 25-34 (62.3 per cent), female (98 per cent), same gender identity as sex registered at birth (98.8 per cent), English as main language spoken at home (90.7 per cent), no physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more (79.5 per cent), employed full-time (50.6 per cent), had a partner or spouse living with them (84.8 per cent), straight/heterosexual (95.6 per cent), White – Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British (92.9 per cent) and with no religion (69.1 per cent). Full demographic tables can be found in Annex D. No analysis was carried out based on this data for two main reasons. Firstly, some of the demographic groups had very small numbers, making it difficult to draw meaningful conclusions from the data. Secondly, an initial analysis of some survey questions by some demographic group revealed that there were no notable differences in the views expressed by different groups.

**Table 2.1: Parent characteristics (expectant parents / other children) – Parents’ survey**

	Number of responses	Percentage
Expectant parent with no other children	146	13.5%
Expectant parent and have another child/children	242	22.4%
Not an expectant parent but have other children under the age of 5	690	64.1%

Base = all (1,078) surveyed parents. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding. Survey question: ‘Which of the following describes you?’, and answer options as in table.

**Table 2.2: Age of other child/children – Parents’ survey**

	Number of responses	Percentage
I have a child/children under 12 months old	425	45.6%
I have a child/children aged 1-5 years old	575	61.7%
I have a child/children aged over 5 years	170	18.2%

Base = all (932) surveyed parents who had answered that they already had children. Multiple choice question. Survey question: ‘Which of the following best describes the age(s) of your other child/children?’ and answer options as in table.

**Table 2.3: Parent characteristics (adoptive/surrogate/carer parent, multiple births) – Parents’ survey**

	Number of responses	Percentage
I am an adoptive parent or I am a carer of looked after children	8	0.8%
I have had twins, triplets or more, or I am expecting a multiple birth	12	1.1%
I am a parent of a child/children born by surrogacy, or I am expecting a child to be born by surrogacy	11	1.0%
None of the above	1,030	97.1%

Base = all (1,061) surveyed parents. 17 respondents did not provide an answer. ‘I am an adoptive parent’ and ‘I am a carer of looked after children’ were separate answer choices, but the results are presented jointly here as the numbers for each category were small. Survey question: ‘Do any of the following describe you’. Multiple choice.

### *Focus Groups with Expectant and New Parents*

- 2.9 Arad conducted five focus groups with a total of 37 expectant and new parents. The focus group guide can be viewed in Annex C. During focus groups, a list of the proposed bundle contents and pictures of the pilot baby bundle were shown to participants. Participants were asked their views on the items and if there were any considerations or issues with any of the items for themselves or particular groups of parents. Participants were also asked about their views on the registration for and delivery of the bundle.
- 2.10 Participants of the focus groups were recruited through a mix of the survey respondents (those who selected that they would be happy to be contacted to take part in a focus group when filling out the survey) and through relevant support groups and organisations. The following focus groups took place:
- Parents supported by an asylum seekers / refugee charity. Seven parents, all female, six had a child aged 0-2, one was an expectant parent. Face to face group.
  - Young parents (under 26) group. Five parents (four female, one male). Face to face group.
  - English-medium virtual group recruited through the survey – five parents of children aged 0-1. All female.
  - Welsh-medium virtual group recruited through the survey – three parents of children aged 0-2. All female.
  - Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) parent group, organised through Newport City Council. Seventeen parents, all female, details not collected on number of children or children's ages, one was an expectant parent. Face to face group.

### *Workforce Survey*

- 2.11 A bilingual survey was created for professionals to complete online (this can be viewed in Annex B). Topics in the survey included: items in the bundle; information to be included in the bundle; informing parents about the bundle; registering for the bundle; delivery of the bundle; and what to do in cases of pregnancy loss, stillborn or neonatal loss.

- 2.12 The link to the online survey was distributed to midwives, health visitors and other professionals on behalf of the research team by the chair of the heads of midwifery advisory group and the chair of the heads of health visiting group. As such, it is not known how many professionals received the survey link in order to calculate a response rate. However, the Nursing and Midwifery Council report that there were 1,859 midwives registered in Wales in September 2022.<sup>4</sup> Of these registered midwives, 113 completed the survey, representing approximately 6 per cent of the midwife population.
- 2.13 Overall a total of 238 professionals completed the survey. Table 2.4 demonstrates that 47.5 per cent of respondents were midwives, 18.5 per cent were health visitors and 34 per cent were from another profession (e.g. family support workers, maternity support workers, perinatal mental health practitioners). Table 2.5 demonstrates that 28.7 per cent of respondents were employed by the local authority (either through Flying Start 19.8 per cent or in another way 8.9 per cent), whilst 73.4 per cent were employed by a health board.
- 2.14 Respondents who were employed by the local authority were asked to name the authority they are employed by. Table 2.6 demonstrates the spread of respondents by local authority area and shows that respondents were from 14 out of 22 of the local authorities in Wales.
- 2.15 Respondents who were employed by a health board were asked which health board employed them. As shown in table 2.7 the highest number of responses came from Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (22.5 per cent).

**Table 2.4: Survey respondents' role – Professionals' survey**

	Number of responses	Percentage
Midwife	113	47.5%
Health Visitor	44	18.5%
Other	81	34.0%

Base = all (238) surveyed professionals. Single choice question. Survey question: 'What is your role?'

<sup>4</sup> [The NMC register Wales mid-year update](#)

**Table 2.5: Professionals' employer – Professionals' survey**

	Number of responses	Percentage
Local authority – Flying Start	47	19.8%
Local authority – other	21	8.9%
Health board	174	73.4%
Other	12	5.1%

Base = all (237) surveyed professionals. 17 respondents ticked more than one answer. One respondent did not answer this question. Survey question: 'Who are you employed by'. Multiple choice.

**Table 2.6: Local authority employer – Professionals' survey**

	Number of responses	Percentage
Bridgend	2	3.1%
Cardiff	13	20%
Ceredigion	2	3.1%
Conwy	1	1.5%
Denbighshire	2	3.1%
Flintshire	11	16.9%
Gwynedd	5	7.7%
Merthyr Tydfil	3	4.6%
Neath port Talbot	3	4.6%
Newport	3	4.6%
Pembrokeshire	3	4.6%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	8	12.3%
Torfaen	8	12.3%
Wrexham	1	1.5%

Base = all (65) surveyed professionals who work for a local authority. Survey question: 'Which local authority area do you work in?'

**Table 2.7: Health board employer – Professionals’ survey**

	Number of responses	Percentage
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board	20	11.6%
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	32	18.5%
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	29	16.8%
Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board	39	22.5%
Hywel Dda University Health Board	29	16.8%
Powys Teaching Health Board	10	5.8%
Swansea Bay University Health Board	14	8.1%

Base = all (173) surveyed professionals who work for a health board. One respondent did not answer this question. Survey question: ‘Which health board are you employed by?’

#### *Interviews with professionals*

- 2.16 Interviews were conducted with members of the workforce including midwives, health visitors and support workers to gather more in-depth insights and experiences related to the initiative.
- 2.17 A total of eight professionals were interviewed. The breakdown of roles for these professionals is as follows:
- Two midwives
  - Four parenting support workers
  - Two health visitors.

#### *Interviews with stakeholder organisations that support parents*

- 2.18 Interviews were conducted with specialist stakeholder organisations that support parents to gather their perspectives on the initiative and the assistance they provide to parents. These organisations were the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), Fertility Network, Oasis, Gypsies and Travellers Wales, Newport City Council (Gwent Education Minority Ethnic Service) and Flying Start.



### 3. Baby Bundle Items

#### General support

- 3.1 There was overwhelming support for the concept of a universal baby bundle scheme amongst respondents. Parents, stakeholders, and professionals alike were supportive of the project's aims and intentions and welcomed the initiative.
- 3.2 The scheme received positive feedback from professionals who participated in the survey, who commented that it is a 'fantastic idea' and a 'brilliant initiative'. A small number of respondents—across the fieldwork with both parents and professionals—raised concerns about its cost and the impact it may have on existing services, such as local baby bank schemes. Parents who participated in the focus groups were also supportive of the baby bundles highlighting how it would alleviate some of the financial burden associated with having a new baby and help them source the key items they need.

#### Views on key items

- 3.3 Parents, stakeholders, and professionals were asked in the surveys, interviews and focus groups about the perceived usefulness of each item suggested for the baby bundles, including whether they felt any items were not necessary, unsuitable or might go to waste.
- 3.4 The list of items that were discussed with parents, professionals and stakeholders included:

- Baby clothes - sleepsuits / bodysuits and a fleece jacket
- Play mat
- Travel changing mat
- Hooded bath towel
- Baby sleeping bag
- Baby thermometer
- Bath and room thermometer in one
- Reusable nappy starter pack
- Baby wrap or sling
- Rucksack changing bag
- Maternity pads
- Breast pads<sup>5</sup>
- Condoms
- Nipple cream<sup>5</sup>

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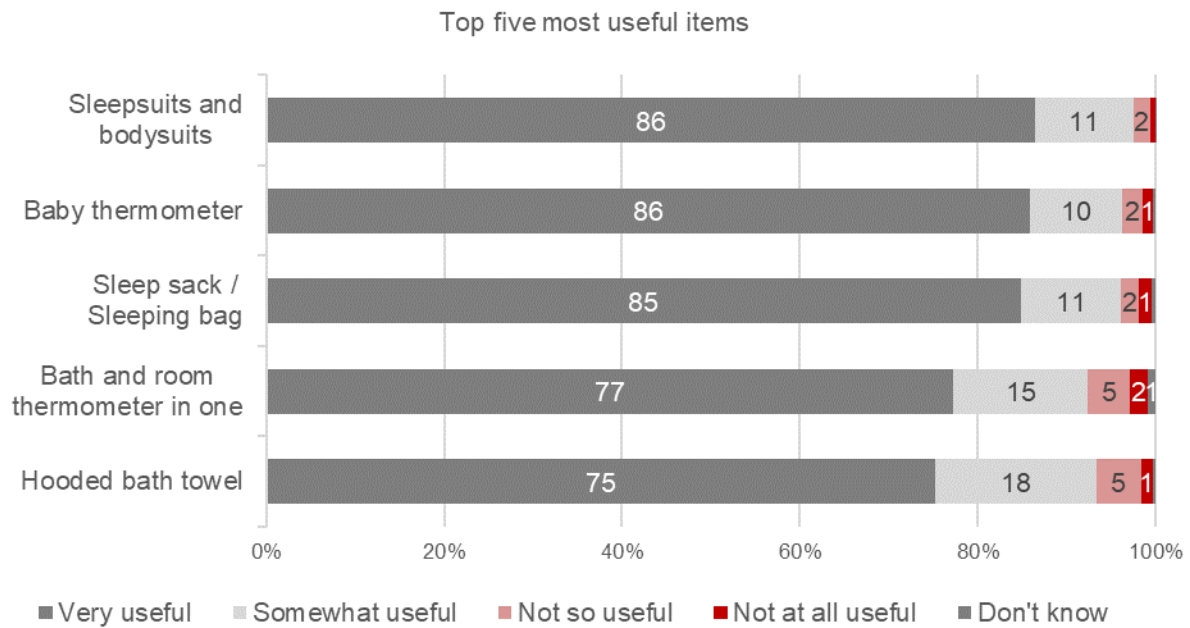
<sup>5</sup> In the parents' and professionals' surveys, 'breast pads' were referred to as 'breastfeeding pads' and 'nipple cream' was referred to as 'breastfeeding cream'. An update to the terminology used in the research was made following feedback from professionals. For consistency, these items are referred to as 'breast pads' and 'nipple cream' throughout this report.

3.5 There was consensus that most of the items were appropriate and would be used, and the contents were viewed as a combination of key items (such as clothing and maternity pads) and 'nice-to-have' non-essential items (such as the play mat). A few items were identified as possibly being unsuitable or as potentially going to waste, and these will be discussed in more detail in paragraphs 3.32 onwards.

*Parents' views on key items*

3.6 Figure 3.1 shows the top five items that were deemed useful to be included in the baby bundle, according to the responses from the parents' survey. The top item respondents felt would be useful to include was sleepsuits and bodysuits, with almost all respondents (97 per cent) rating this as useful (with 86 per cent rating it as 'very useful' and 11 per cent rating it as 'somewhat useful'). This was closely followed by the baby thermometer and a sleep sack / sleeping bag, with the vast majority also feeling that these are either 'very useful' or 'somewhat useful' (96 per cent for both items). Slightly fewer, though still a majority of respondents, rated a hooded bath towel and a bath and room thermometer in one as either 'very useful' or 'somewhat useful' (93 per cent and 92 per cent respectively). Very few respondents rated any of these items as 'not so useful' or 'not at all useful'.

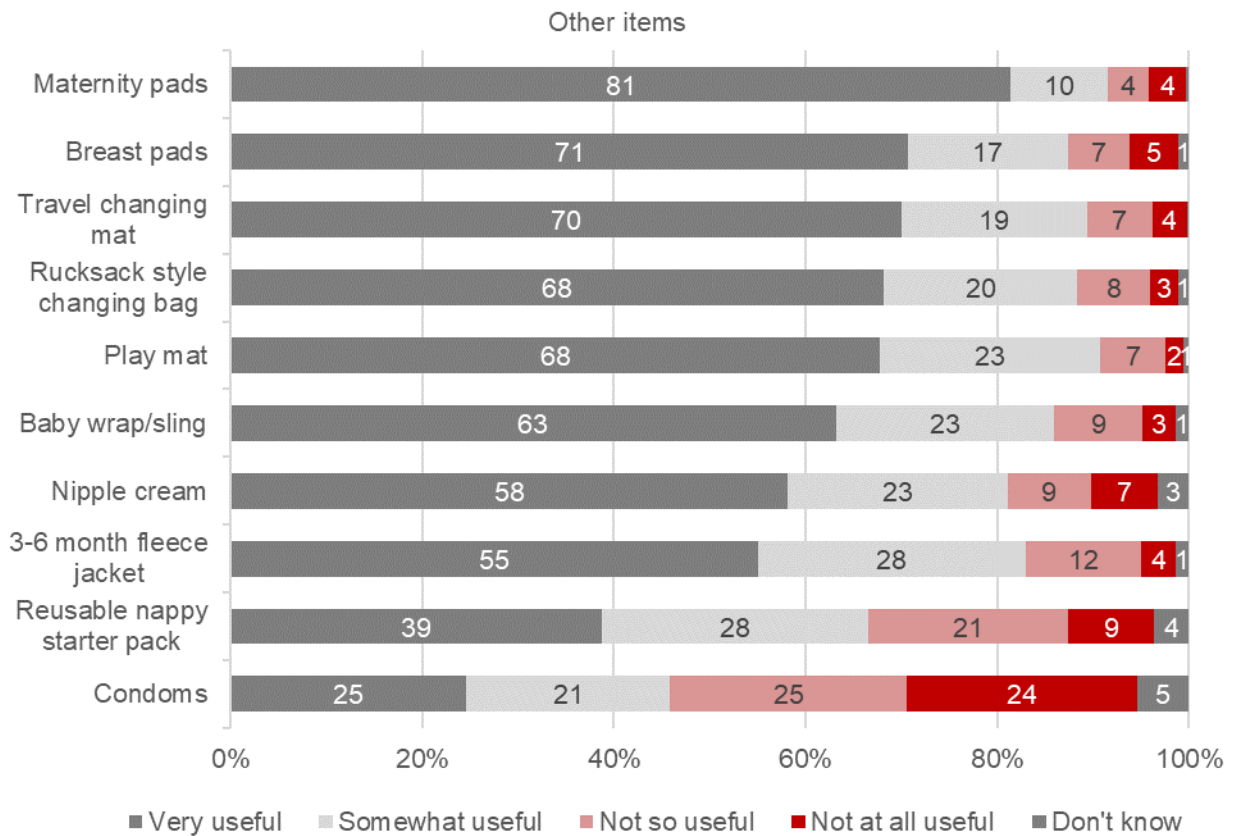
**Figure 3.1 Top five most useful items for the bundle for parents (%)**



Source: Parents' survey (n=1,078). Survey question: 'The following items may be included in the bundle. How useful would you find the following items if they were to be included in the bundle?'

3.7 Figure 3.2 demonstrates how the remaining 10 items were rated in terms of usefulness in the parents' survey. This shows that there is a general consensus that almost all of the items would be considered useful to be included in the bundle. The two items which received the lowest score of being 'very useful' or 'somewhat useful' were reusable nappy starter packs, and condoms. These items are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

**Figure 3.2 Other items and their usefulness rating for parents (%)**

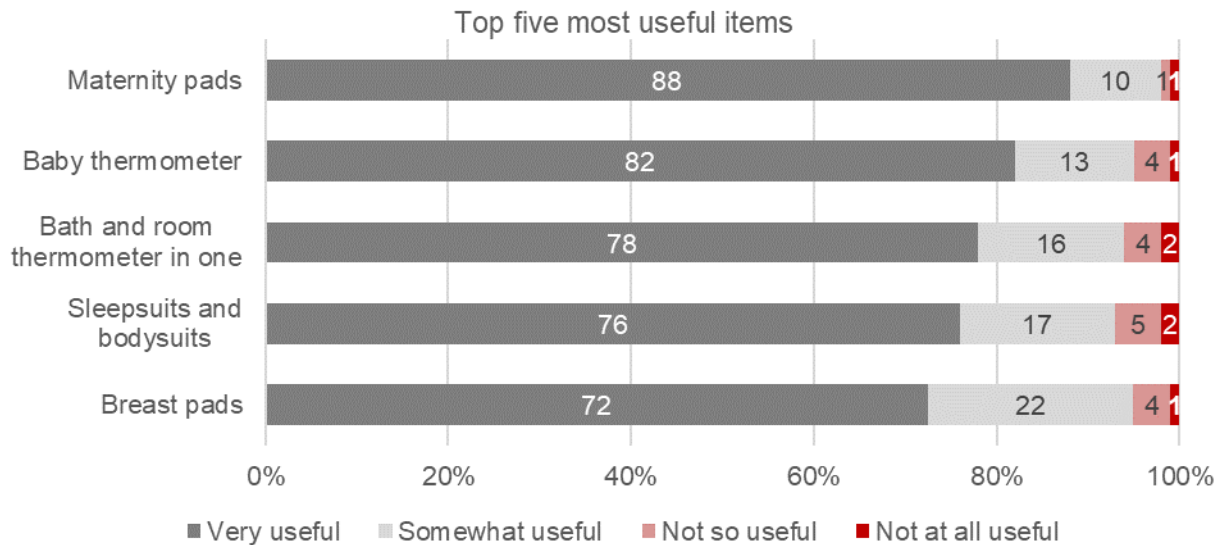


Source: Parents' survey (n=1,078)

*Professionals' views on key items*

3.8 Figure 3.3 shows the top five items which respondents to the professionals' survey said would be useful to be included in the bundle. The top item respondents said would be useful to include was maternity pads, with almost all respondents (98 per cent) rating this as useful (with 88 per cent rating it as 'very useful' and 10 per cent rating it as 'somewhat useful'). Maternity pads and breast pads featured in the top five most useful items for professionals but were not in the top five for parents, however all items received similar high ratings of usefulness across the two surveys.

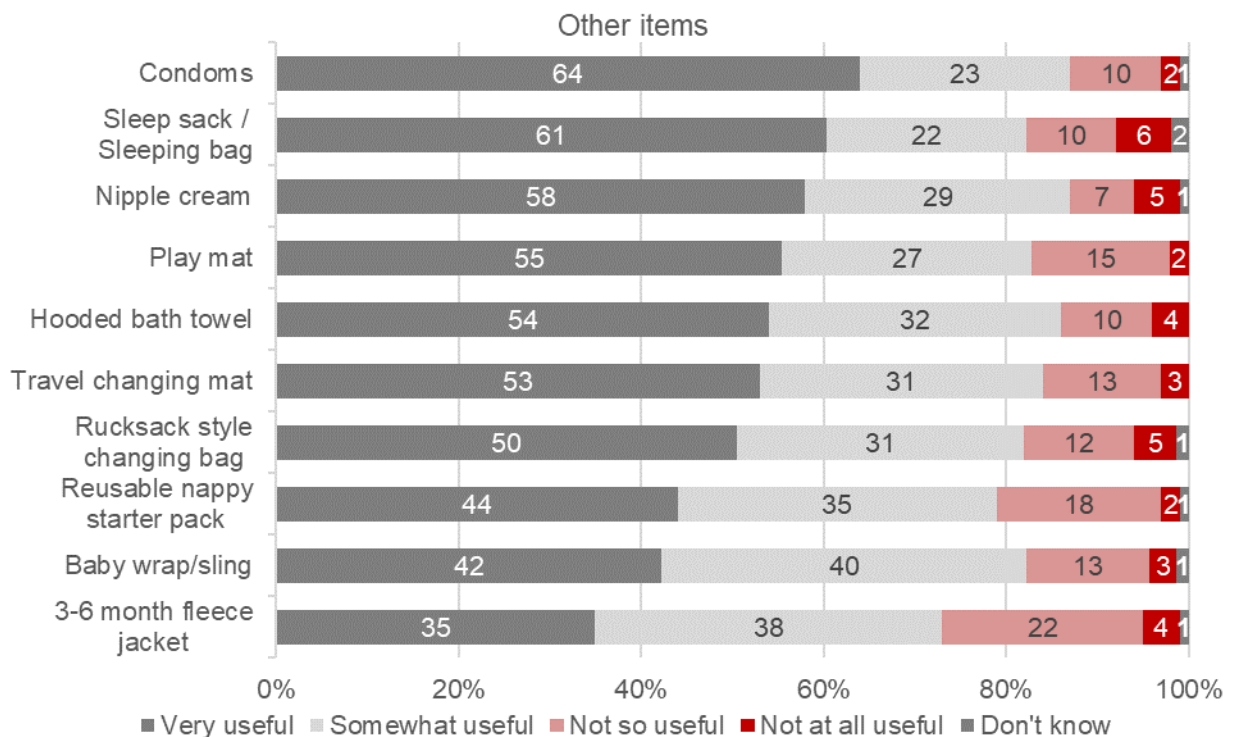
**Figure 3.3 Top five most useful items for the bundle for professionals (%)**



Source: Professionals' survey (n=238). Survey question: 'The following items may be included in the bundle. How useful do you think each of these items would be to parents if they were to be included in the bundle?'

3.9 Figure 3.4 shows how the remaining 10 items were rated in terms of usefulness in the professionals' survey. This shows that there is a general consensus that almost all of the items would be considered useful to be included in the bundle.

**Figure 3.4 Other items and their usefulness rating for professionals (%)**



Source: Professionals' survey (n=238). Survey question: 'The following items may be included in the bundle. How useful do you think each of these items would be to parents if they were to be included in the bundle?'

*Overall views of parents and professionals on items to be included in bundle*

- 3.10 The main difference between the parents' and the professionals' survey was that condoms were rated at a higher score of being 'very useful' or 'somewhat useful' by professionals compared to parents (condoms were rated as useful by 46 per cent of parents, compared with 87 per cent of professionals).
- 3.11 During follow up discussions with stakeholders and professionals, and group discussions with parents, most of the items were deemed key items by the majority of parents, stakeholders and professionals and there was a general consensus that they should be included in the bundle. These items were clothing, the play mat, travel changing mat, hooded bath towel, baby sleeping bag, the two types of thermometer (baby, and room/bath), breast pads and maternity pads. Respondents indicated that most of the bundle items would be used and that these items seemed appropriate contents for a baby bundle.
- 3.12 Although the majority of items were well received and considered appropriate by parents, stakeholders, and professionals, there were some concerns raised about certain items such as clothing, condoms, washable and reusable items, sleeping bags, the bath and room thermometer, nipple cream, and the rucksack changing bag. The next sections will address these items individually.

**Clothing**

- 3.13 Clothing items were well received and there was clear consensus that these would be used. This was the case particularly with regards to more generic items such as sleepsuits/bodysuits, which were viewed as 'staple' wardrobe essentials for a baby. Many respondents – both parents and professionals – noted that parents would likely be given clothing as presents, or like to buy their own, but that staple clothing items would always prove useful. Comments regarding the sizing of clothing were raised, most notably to include sizes other than Newborn, which would not be useful for larger babies, and so that the clothing items could be used for longer. Suggestions

included having a mix of sizes including Newborn, 0-3 months, and 3-6 months in the baby bundle, or 0-3 months at the least.

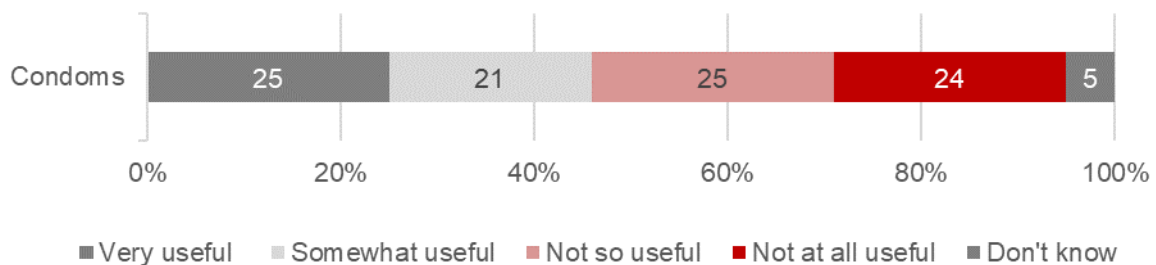
- 3.14 Several respondents noted their preference for clothing to be gender neutral colours, avoiding pink and blue.
- 3.15 The fleece jacket was one of the items identified as least likely to be used. The main reason given for this was the seasonal nature of the item, and concerns over correct sizing. Several respondents cited this item would not be useful for summer babies, and the sizing of this item was also potentially problematic – for example the fleece jacket may be in a size that did not fit the baby at the right time of year. A couple of professionals and parents interviewed suggested that seasonal bundles could be a solution which would include an appropriately sized seasonal garment, such as a summer bundle including a sunhat or a winter bundle including the fleece jacket. Another suggestion was for a voucher to be included for purchasing these sorts of clothing items to avoid the sizing/seasonal problem.

## Condoms

### *Parents' views*

- 3.16 In the parents' survey, as can be seen in figures 3.2 and 3.5, condoms were the item that received the highest percentage of responses stating it was 'not at all useful', with 24 per cent of respondents indicating so, and a further 25 per cent indicating that they would be 'not so useful'.

**Figure 3.5 Rating of usefulness of condoms in bundle for parents (%)**



3.17 Several parents provided additional comments explaining their reasons - they cited allergies to latex, inclusiveness for single parents and same-sex families, and potential expectation for sexual activity soon after birth:

‘I am allergic to latex and frankly it is presumptuous to provide these without asking the prospective parents. These are better offered separately during antenatal/postnatal care.’ Parent survey respondent

‘Condoms - I think if this is universal you are aiming this at a heterosexual family. Single parents/same sex families like myself would feel this was not inclusive and I feel it is out of place in a baby and parent starter pack.’ Parent survey respondent

‘Condoms - these are available free anyway and are not suitable for parents with fertility issues, etc. Also could create expectation to have sex soon after giving birth!’ Parent survey respondent

3.18 There were mixed views on condoms in the parent focus groups too. Some participants felt that condoms did not ‘fit’ with the ethos of the baby bundle and seemed out of place, whilst others felt that having just one or two condoms included in the bundle (rather than a box) would be useful. Some participants preferred condoms to be included in the bundle ‘just in case’, citing friends who had become pregnant again soon after giving birth. Whilst it was acknowledged that these are readily available to buy, or obtainable for free from sexual health clinics, it was suggested that new parents may not be prepared and so including them could prevent an unplanned pregnancy.

3.19 Parents in the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller focus group were not in favour of condoms being included in the bundle. These parents did not feel that condoms fitted with the rest of the bundle items, and were further concerned that their older children may find the condoms (as likely to have access to the bundle); these parents stated they would not want to have to explain what condoms are or risk having condoms being handled by their other children.



*Professionals' and Stakeholders' views*

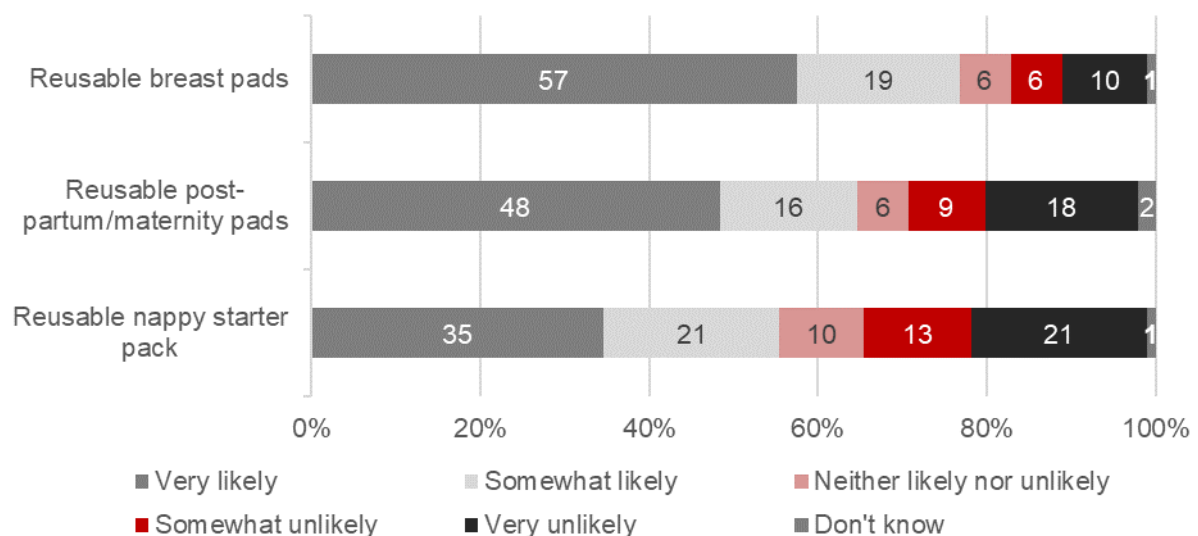
- 3.20 There were mixed views on condoms from professionals and stakeholders. Several highlighted their inclusion would be useful in reinforcing messages about contraception and safe sex. Others felt family planning and sexual health advice could be obtained elsewhere and that this item was not inclusive and therefore at odds with the intent of the baby bundles scheme being suitable for all.
- ‘I would not recommend putting condoms in the pack, the focus should be on mother and baby, not contraception, condoms are not suitable for everyone and makes assumptions on one's family planning.’ Professional survey respondent
- 3.21 There was suggestion from stakeholders that the inclusion of condoms may be misunderstood by some communities. This was highlighted as being potentially culturally inappropriate, and might feed into prevailing misconceptions of there being a desire to limit the number of children that some communities have. During the interviews, two workers who assist refugee and asylum-seeking parents expressed their belief that including condoms in the baby bundle could potentially send the message that these families should not have any more children now that they are in the UK.
- 3.22 Other stakeholders who supported expectant parents did not feel condoms were appropriate for all family types, such as same-sex couples or lesbian single-parents, and that their inclusion would go against the inclusivity ethos of the bundle. In addition, it was felt condoms were not necessary given that many of the families they support do not want to prevent pregnancy. Some stakeholders commented that this item did not fit with the rest of the bundle contents.
- 3.23 There were mixed views from the two Gypsy, Roma and Traveller stakeholder organisations. As representative organisations, it was felt condoms could be useful in opening discussions between parents, particularly mums, and support workers on contraception and subsequent pregnancies, but the stakeholder organisations also believed that the mums and parents themselves would not want condoms to be included in the bundle as they would likely feel uncomfortable discussing sex.

3.24 Some stakeholders felt that including condoms would be useful to guard against unexpected pregnancy, or that information on postpartum fertility could be included to combat misconceptions that pregnancy is not possible soon after having given birth. Others cautioned against the inclusion of condoms in what seems to be a gift of items for baby, highlighting that condoms either were not a preferred means of contraception or suitable for all (such as same-sex families, those with allergies, or for religious reasons).

### Washable and reusable items

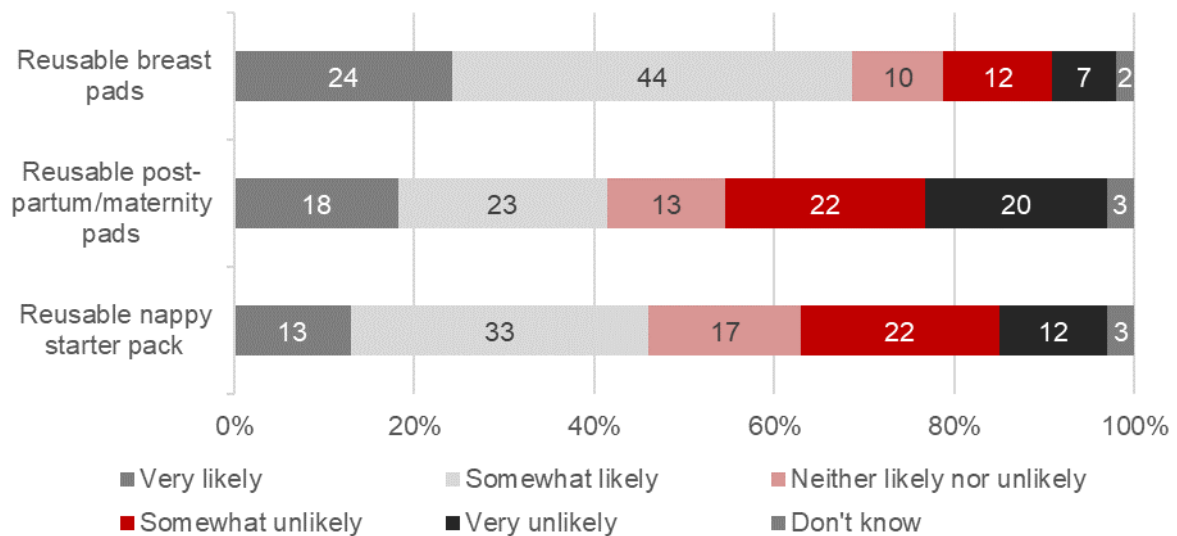
3.25 Parents, stakeholders and professionals were asked for their views on the inclusion of washable, reusable items in the bundle. These items were specifically identified as a reusable nappy starter pack, reusable postpartum maternity pads, and reusable breast pads. Respondents were also asked to provide suggestions for other reusable items which could be included in the bundle to bolster environmental considerations.

**Figure 3.6 How likely is it that the following items would be used if they were included in the bundle you received? Parents' survey (%)**



Source: Parents' survey (n=1,077)

**Figure 3.7 How likely do you think it is that the following items would be used by parents if they were included in the bundle? Professionals' survey (%)**



Source: Professionals' survey (n=237)

*Parents' views on reusable nappies*

3.26 There were mixed views in the survey and focus groups over the appetite for reusable/washable nappies. Many respondents were positive, having already used reusable nappies in the past, whilst others were inexperienced in using reusable nappies and expressed no desire to trial them.

'Reusable nappies are brilliant but I think a minority would use them so perhaps not cost effective even if it is eco-friendly.' Parent survey respondent

'I wouldn't say reusable nappies are ideal for newborns, as they require changing so often, reusable nappies would create a lot of additional work, laundry etc.' Parent survey respondent

3.27 Survey respondents who were in favour of reusable nappies had either used them before and were therefore experienced, or were curious about the items and wanted to give them a try. Parents highlighted environmental considerations and financial reasons for wanting to use or try reusable nappies, notably reducing the use of disposable items and expecting to save money in the long run. In addition, some parents wanted there to be consideration over what would happen to the starter pack nappy and

whether it could itself be reused. They felt this was important for long-term sustainability if reusables were to be promoted and included in the bundle.

- 3.28 A preference for larger sizes was stated by those in favour of reusable nappies, citing the main reason as an unlikelihood to use reusables in the first few weeks after birth. This was explained by feeling overwhelmed and tired from the pressures of looking after a newborn, and reusables being hard to commit to at this early stage. These parents stated they would be much more likely to try, or begin to use, reusable nappies once their baby was out of the newborn stage.
- 3.29 Survey respondents who were not in favour of reusable nappies cited a variety of reasons for not being willing to use or try them. These included being put off by the prospect of doing extra washing and drying, difficulties in getting the right 'fit' and potential leakages (especially for newborn babies), frequency of changes and number of nappies which would be required, and the financial outlay of extra washing and drying during high energy prices and the cost-of-living crisis:
- 'Love the idea of reusable for the environment but realistically as a mum to a newborn you just don't have the time or energy.' Parent survey respondent
- 3.30 Several survey and focus group respondents highlighted other schemes that could be invested in, signposted to, or connected with as part of the baby bundles scheme. These included nappy lending libraries, incentives given by some local authorities to try reusables, and council cashback schemes designed to encourage uptake.
- 3.31 Several participants in the online English-medium language focus group were users of reusable nappies and committed to the concept but could foresee problems with including trial packs without more support to encourage long-term use. They highlighted that Nappy Lending Libraries are a good place to borrow from because of having access to a range of sizes and brands to try, but that not all areas have nappy lending libraries, and some lending libraries close down due to lack of funding.

### *Parents' views – other reusable items*

- 3.32 There was support among the parent survey respondents for reusable breast pads and most survey respondents (76.6 per cent) reported that they were very likely or somewhat likely to use reusable breast pads were they to be included in the bundle. While some expanded on their answers to explain that they already used them or were keen to try, some other respondents felt these may go to waste.
- 3.33 Some concerns were raised over the inclusion of maternity pads. Comments included that they found the idea of reusable maternity pads 'off-putting', hygiene concerns or that the extra washing would be a hassle in the first few weeks after giving birth. However most respondents indicated that they were very or somewhat likely to use them (65 per cent) and some even suggested that using reusable maternity pads could encourage women to adopt other reusable period products in the future. Some comments also noted that reusable items may not be suitable for everyone.

'I love the idea of reusable nappies and maternity pads. However I am disabled and will unfortunately need to make life as easy as possible when baby arrives and that means using disposable items.' (Parent survey)

- 3.34 Focus group participants welcomed the inclusion of reusable items generally, including maternity pads and breast pads. Most had not used, nor heard of, washable versions of these in the past and felt inclusion of these items in the bundle would prompt them to try this reusable alternative.
- 3.35 Parent survey respondents and focus group participants suggested the bundles could include reusable baby wipes as an alternative to disposable. Many had used these in the past and felt these were a low-cost item which might encourage parents to switch to an environmentally friendly choice.

### *Professionals' and Stakeholders' views – reusable nappies*

- 3.36 Several stakeholders and professionals thought the inclusion of a nappy starter pack was a good idea and welcomed this environmental focus in the bundle. However, most had not worked with parents who appeared

interested in reusables, or had discussions with any parents regarding reusable nappies. It was therefore felt the starter pack would probably not be used and would go to waste.

‘I think a lot of parents on our caseload, would not use the reusable nappies because of the cost of washing & drying them.’ Professional survey respondent

- 3.37 When the contents of the nappy starter pack were listed (one outer wrap layer and five liners), it was noted this seemed too little for parents to meaningfully trial their usage, and that a larger starter pack should be provided in the bundle. In addition, the need to get sizing right was raised, as in the parents’ feedback. Professionals and stakeholders mentioned that newborn sizes could lead to leakages, and this might be off-putting to parents using reusables for the first time. As with the parent responses, older-age sizes were cited as being a better option if a starter pack were to be included, and that the pack should be accompanied by clear instructions on how to use reusables and correct fit/sizing.
- 3.38 Stakeholders did feel the starter pack would be a good prompt for discussion of the pros of switching to environmentally friendly options, but this needed to be weighed up against the cost of including an item which may not have a good overall uptake.
- 3.39 Stakeholders pointed out that many parents they work with would have difficulty doing additional washing and drying due to financial constraints, and cited this as a barrier to switching to reusables. In addition, the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller stakeholders highlighted that many parents do not have adequate air-drying facilities or space at home in their type of accommodation, and therefore would be unlikely to commit to extra washing and drying.
- 3.40 There was support for the idea of providing a voucher for reusable nappies rather than a starter pack in the bundle.

‘Unfortunately I think most people wouldn’t choose to use the reusable items, they might just use disposable nappies for ease. But I think offering it as a voucher would be good’. Professional survey respondent

- 3.41 Many professionals highlighted other schemes such as Nappy Lending Libraries which would allow parents to trial nappies in their own time and provide them with more choice over brand, sizing and fit.

*Professionals' and Stakeholders' views - other reusable items*

- 3.42 Professionals and stakeholders were supportive of other reusable items being included in the bundle such as maternity pads and breast pads. Respondents, however, noted that not all mothers want or are able to breastfeed. Inclusion of breast pads was therefore felt to be useful for those who do breastfeed, but potentially a wasted item in many bundles, or even potentially upsetting for those who want to breastfeed but cannot. This was countered by a view that this is a relatively low-cost item which fitted well with the ethos and intention of the bundle scheme.
- 3.43 It was noted that clear instructions on hygiene and washing should be included in the bundle for reusable items. There was concern about providing parents with the knowledge needed to ensure items are sanitary before re-use.
- 3.44 A professional who was supportive of reusable maternity and breast pads did note that a sufficient quantity would need to be provided for them to be useful to postpartum mums. This was due to the frequent number of changes required and needing to allow for washing and drying time before pads could be used again.
- 3.45 Reusable wipes were suggested by stakeholders and professionals, in line with parent responses. Again, this was viewed as a low-cost item which could encourage parents to switch from disposables.

**Slings/wraps**

*Parents' views*

- 3.46 There were mixed views on the inclusion of slings within the bundle. Some parents explained in their survey response or in the focus group discussion that they were familiar with the item having already used a sling in the past

and felt it would be good to include this in the bundle. Other parents did not have experience of prior use but were curious to try one with their baby. However some parents in the focus groups did not feel it was an item that would appeal to all.

- 3.47 Parents who were unfamiliar with slings commented that they would try one if instructions and guidance were included on proper and safe usage. This idea was reinforced by a number of professionals.

‘Think careful consideration would need to be gained from a sling consultant as to suitable carrier. Including a link to local consultant and copy of ‘Ticks’ guidelines.’ Parent survey respondent

- 3.48 Many respondents noted that several types of sling are available and wondered which type would be included in the bundle. Some slings were highlighted as being more expensive than others, but comments were made about the relatively low cost of fabric wraps/slings compared to the more structured types which feature buckles and padding. These parents stated that personal preference is important and were concerned that as only one type of sling would be included, it may not suit everyone and therefore be a wasted item.

- 3.49 The idea of providing a voucher to obtain a sling, rather than the physical item itself being included in the bundle, was supported by 34 per cent of survey respondents. There was agreement that inclusion of a voucher rather than the item itself would allow parents who were curious to try slings the chance to obtain one, leading to less waste of unused items. Practicalities around where a sling voucher could be used and ensuring the voucher would only be used for this item were subsequently raised.

#### *Professionals’ and Stakeholders’ views*

- 3.50 Professionals and stakeholders were generally supportive of the inclusion of slings. Many reported they did not work with parents who tended to use them but inclusion of the item in the bundle would be a way of encouraging uptake.



- 3.51 Some survey respondents noted there were sling lending libraries in some areas, which give parents choices and options to try different types and see what suits them best. These respondents wanted to know whether the bundle would link to these sorts of schemes but acknowledged this was very localised and that not all areas have sling lending libraries.
- 3.52 Professionals and stakeholders highlighted the need for instructions to be included for slings, so that parents could confidently use them in the correct way. Some suggested that specific instructions for baby sling/wrap use should be provided on a link or QR code for video instructions, covering correct wearing techniques and safety precautions. Additionally, professionals recommended that the instructions should consider varying parent needs, such as using simple language and pictures.
- 3.53 Respondents were supportive of the idea of a voucher rather than a sling being included in the bundle. This would allow parents to choose the most suitable type for themselves and lead to less wastage from parents who had no interest in using a sling. Again, concerns were raised, about whether a voucher could specifically be used to obtain a sling, and if so from which shop/scheme. Like parents, professionals and stakeholders queried whether this might lead to vouchers not being used as originally intended under the scheme.

## **Sleeping bags**

### *Parents' views*

- 3.54 Parents welcomed the inclusion of baby sleeping bags with many having used them before. According to the survey responses, sleeping bags was deemed the third most useful item, with 85 per cent of parents saying they were a very useful item and a further 11 per cent saying they were somewhat useful.
- 3.55 Parents commented on the need to consider which size and tog rating of sleeping bag would be included in the bundle, highlighting that heavier togs in younger sizes would be unsuitable for babies born in the summer, and vice versa with winter babies.

- 3.56 Some parents highlighted that instructions on safe usage should be included if a sleeping bag is provided in the bundle. This would need to cover guidance on correct fit (age and weight of baby) and avoiding overheating.

#### *Professionals' views*

- 3.57 Overall, professionals were supportive of the inclusion of a sleeping bag, and some commented that these are very common items which they see their families using regularly. However, some professionals raised concerns over safety if the size or tog rating was not correct for the baby.
- 3.58 The Lullaby Trust was often cited by professionals as being a key resource they use when offering advice and guidance to parents on safe sleeping. Many stated they felt the Lullaby Trust information should be included if sleeping bags are part of the bundle. This was both for awareness raising about potential dangers as well as ensuring consistency in the sources of advice being given.

### **Bath and room thermometer**

#### *Parents' views*

- 3.59 The bath and room thermometer was the fifth most useful item identified by parents, with 77 per cent stating this would be very useful and 15 per cent identifying it as somewhat useful. Some parents asked for instructions to be included with this thermometer to be sure they were using it correctly and following guidance, particularly about not overheating rooms.

#### *Professionals' and Stakeholders' views*

- 3.60 The bath and room thermometer was the fourth most useful item cited by professionals in the survey, with 94 per cent rating it as useful (including 78 per cent who said 'very useful' and 16 per cent who said 'somewhat useful'). Some professionals did state they preferred to encourage parents to do the 'elbow test' for bath water as a more reliable means of ensuring the correct temperature. This point was followed up in interviews with professionals, with

the consensus being that the 'elbow test' can be encouraged alongside use of the bath thermometer. These professionals preferred the bundle to include the thermometer as it would act as a backup in reassuring parents to learn to trust their own judgement when checking temperatures in the house.

- 3.61 One stakeholder highlighted that visual aids are often in-built to some household gadgets, such as colour changing items or ones which sound an alarm/music when conditions are optimum. This stakeholder felt there should be consideration given to these sorts of features to ensure the bundles are as inclusive as possible. They noted that such features would be useful for all parents and not just those who are visually impaired.

### **Nipple cream**

#### *Parents' views*

- 3.62 There were mixed views over the inclusion of nipple cream in the bundle. Many parents welcomed its presence stating they had breastfed their babies and had used it before, whereas others were not intending to breastfeed/had not breastfed in the past and would therefore not use it. These parents highlighted that the cream would be wasted if included in every bundle and could make new mums feel pressured or guilty if they were not breastfeeding.

'The breast feeding cream is a great idea for those who breast feed but for people like me who can't breast feed due to no milk production or those who don't want to this would be a waste of money so maybe make this a optional for those who want it.' Parents' survey respondent

- 3.63 Some parents pointed out that nipple cream may be used by parents who are in need of breastfeeding support (the implication being that sore nipples from feeding may indicate an underlying problem with latch, or similar). These parents felt that there could be an assumption that breastfeeding causes pain which should be treated with a cream, rather than this being an indication that specialist advice and support should be sought from a professional. In these cases, it was suggested that information leaflets on

breastfeeding, problems associated with breastfeeding and advice on when to seek support should be included in the bundle.

- 3.64 For those who were supportive of nipple cream being included in the bundle, several considerations were raised: to ensure the cream is a type which does not need to be wiped off before feeds; to be mindful that some creams contain ingredients that some people may be allergic to (such as lanolin) or may not be suitable for sensitive skin; and to ensure a good-quality cream is chosen.

*Stakeholders' and professionals' views*

- 3.65 Stakeholders were generally supportive of nipple cream and did not have reservations about its inclusion other than it may not be used by all families. One stakeholder organisation interviewed was keen to highlight that not all parents are the birth parents and so nipple cream would not be relevant to everyone for a variety of reasons, and not just those who choose not to breastfeed or cannot.
- 3.66 Some professionals felt the inclusion of nipple cream might suggest to new mothers that breastfeeding would likely cause pain, and that this could put-off those mothers from starting to breastfeed, with several stating that if done correctly breastfeeding will not cause sore nipples. As with the parent responses, it was felt this could be countered by the inclusion of advice and information on breastfeeding, including when to seek support from a specialist.

‘I would suggest that breastfeeding cream suggests that you always need that, which is not the case. It would presumably be advertising a particular brand and suggests that sore nipples are an inevitable part of breastfeeding’ (Professionals’ survey / Health visitor)

- 3.67 Professionals further highlighted the issue of nipple cream not being a substitute for proper support with breastfeeding, and one professional pointed that the leading brands of nipple cream are not compliant with the WHO Code on Marketing of breastmilk substitutes, which services are

obliged to follow as Baby Friendly accreditation is embedded in the Welsh Government Breastfeeding Action Plan.

“Breastfeeding cream” [is] not a substitute for proper support with breastfeeding, and the leading brands are not compliant with the WHO Code on Marketing of breastmilk substitutes which services are obliged to follow as Baby Friendly accreditation is embedded in the Welsh Government Breastfeeding Action Plan.’ (Direct submission to the research)

- 3.68 Some professionals felt the inclusion of nipple cream in every bundle could lead to waste as it would not be used by all. To lessen this, some professionals suggested including small sample or trial pots/tubes of nipple cream as opposed to larger full-sized pots/tubes. One professional referred to the trial-sized items included in Bounty pack of baby product samples as a potential solution, allowing parents who would use this cream to do so, but reducing the potential waste of full-sized pots.

### **Rucksack changing bag**

- 3.69 Whilst the majority of parents surveyed were in favour of the rucksack changing bag (68 per cent felt they would be very useful and 20 per cent felt they would be somewhat useful), the feeling among many parents in the focus groups, as well as the stakeholders and professionals was that parents tended to like buying their own. Matching the changing bag to the pram were often cited as the main reason, and that this item is a very personal choice. Balanced against that were views from some stakeholders that those on low incomes would appreciate a ‘big-ticket’ item such as this and that it would be well used.
- 3.70 The results of the 2021 pilot survey show mixed views on the usefulness of the rucksack changing bag. Parents responding to the survey planned to use most of the items included in their baby bundle. Of the items, the bag was the item least likely to have been used at the time of the survey, yet a majority of parents (44 out of 57) still planned to use this item. While some of the interviewed parents found the bag to be one of the most useful items, others reported that it had not been used. Nevertheless, the majority of

parents had used the bag either as a main or a second bag. There was no consensus on the usefulness of the rucksack changing bag. Five of the 16 parents interviewed described this as one of the most useful items, but another five reported that it had not been used. The majority of parents had used the bag, either as a main bag, or as a second bag.

### **Other items which could be included**

#### *Parents' views*

- 3.71 A total of 617 parents provided suggestions in the survey on additional items that could be included, and many of the suggestions were similar in nature to that provided by professionals. The most frequently suggested item by parents was disposable nappies (suggested by some 100 parents), followed by wipes, nappy rash cream and bottles and formula. Other recommended items, recommended by at least 25 respondents, included a baby book, muslin cloths, a blanket, sensory toy and other toys. Other items suggested by fewer parents were various small clothing items, care items such as nail scissors, baby toothbrush, dummies, and medical items such as vitamin drops and nasal sprays.
- 3.72 During focus group discussions with parents, there was also a desire for disposable nappies and bottles and formula. While this was a suggestion in all focus groups, they were described as priority items in the discussions with refugee and asylum-seeking parents and the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parent group. While some parents acknowledged the potential reasons for not including these items, they emphasised that these products would be most welcome and well used. Some stakeholder organisation interviews also reiterated this point.

#### *Professionals' views*

- 3.73 In the survey, professionals were asked about their opinions on additional items that could be included in the bundle. Out of the 238 respondents, 110 provided suggestions. The most commonly suggested item was a baby book. Furthermore, ten professionals recommended adding disposable

nappies, while a similar number of respondents suggested including nappy cream. Other suggestions, each noted by five or more professionals, included muslin cloths, wet wipes (both disposable and reusable), bottle feeding items, a blanket, and a toy.

### Other similar schemes available

3.74 Professional survey respondents were asked if they were aware of any schemes or services in their health board or local authority area which already provide the same or similar new items to parents free of charge. The following were mentioned by participants:

Health board of respondent	Schemes already in existence
Aneurin Bevan University Health board	Local baby banks/charities (not specified) Early years transformation programme local projects Swap don't shop events Bounty packs In Newport, birth boxes are provided for expectant parents in the Pathfinder Pilot areas
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	Baby Basics Home start Kids Bank Chester Local sling libraries Flying Start – hooded bath towels provided in Denbighshire
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	Local baby banks/charities (not specified) Little smarties baby bank Cwtch baby bank Flying Start – provides items such as cups, toothbrushes and toothpaste
Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board	Cwtch baby bank
Hywel Dda University Health Board	Local baby banks/charities (not specified) Plant Dewi Salvation Army Nappy libraries
Powys Teaching Health Board	Salvation Army
Swansea Bay University Health Board	Local baby banks/charities (not specified) Best Beginnings Sling libraries Flying Start – Neath provide slings/wraps with instruction from a trained staff member

3.75 During the focus group discussions, some parents also mentioned local schemes that tended to be targeted at families most in need.

- 3.76 According to some professionals and stakeholders interviewed, it is crucial that the baby bundle scheme ensures it does not duplicate any existing services and instead should collaborate and work with these local services and other schemes. These professionals and stakeholders also feel it is important that the baby bundle scheme has a clear communication plan that distinguishes it from other schemes, making it easier for parents to understand the different types of support available to them.

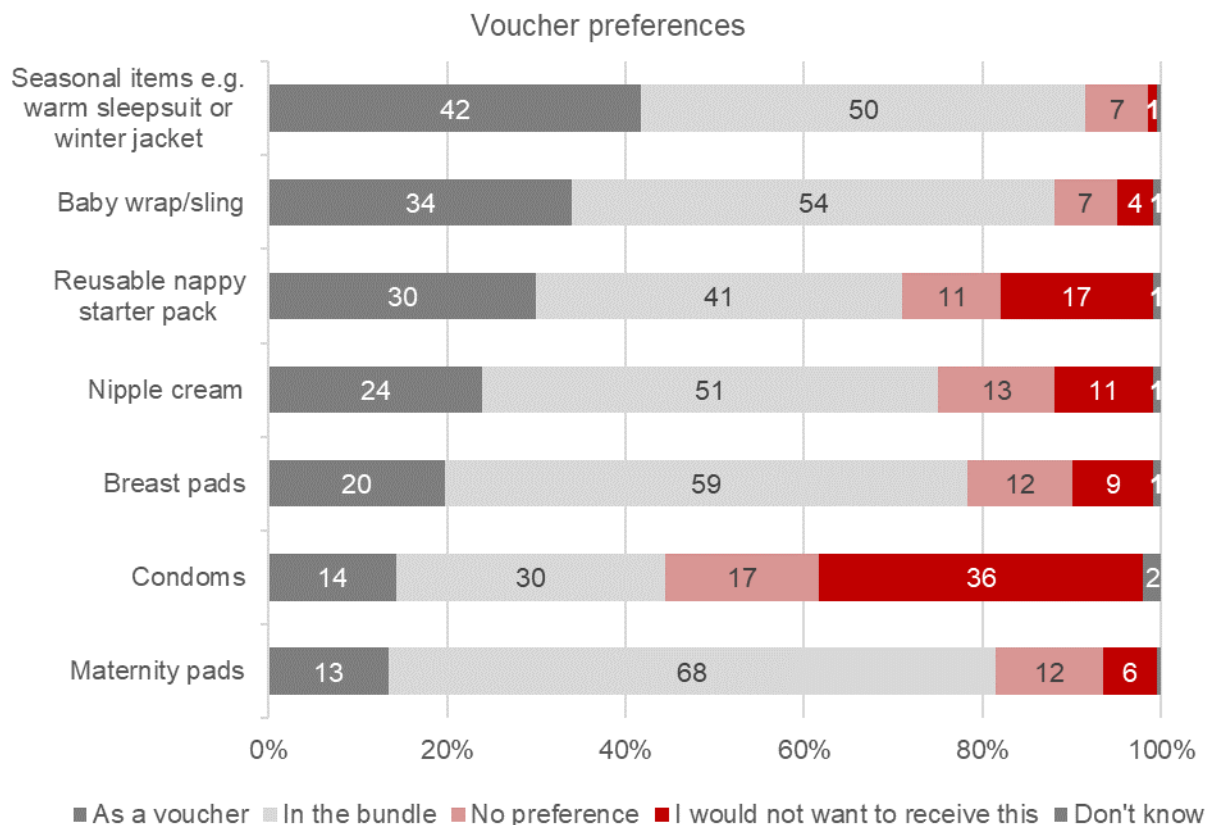
## **Vouchers**

### *Parents' views*

- 3.77 Figure 3.8 demonstrates how survey respondents from the parents' survey would prefer to receive certain health and personal items and some seasonal items. Seasonal items e.g. warm sleepsuit or winter jackets received the highest preference to be received as a voucher compared to the other items listed, with just over two in five (42 per cent) citing a preference to receive this as a voucher. Items with the lowest preference to receive as a voucher were maternity pads and condoms (14 per cent and 13 per cent respectively). However, these items were regarded as more sensitive than some other items (see 3.16 onwards). It is important to note that all items received a higher proportion of respondents selecting that they would like to receive them in the bundle, rather than as a voucher, or not wanting to receive the items at all. This is with the exception of condoms where more than a third (36 per cent) selected that they do not want to receive this, compared to 30 per cent who would like to receive it in the bundle.



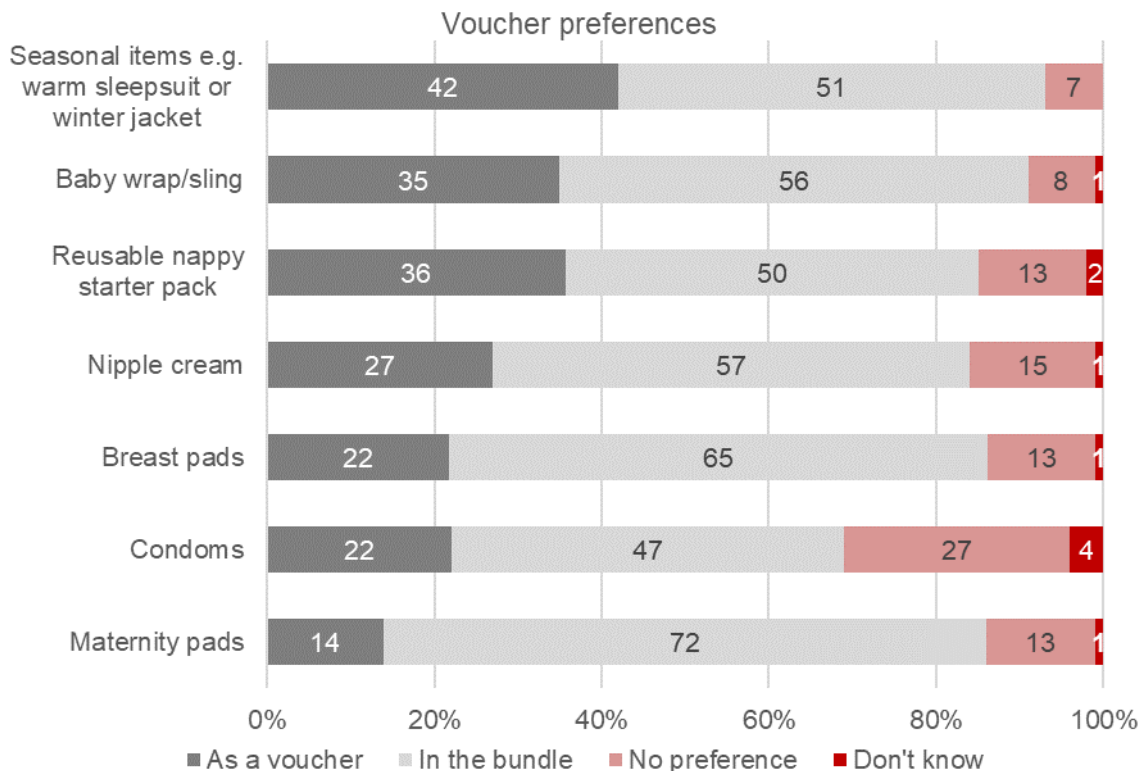
**Figure 3.8 How would you prefer to receive the following items, if at all?  
Parents' survey (%)**



Source: Parents' survey (n=1,076)

3.78 Figure 3.9 demonstrates how survey respondents from the parents' survey would prefer to receive certain health and personal items and some seasonal items, when excluding those who answered they would not want to receive the item at all. Results are similar to those in figure 3.8 for most items, the biggest difference can be seen for condoms, with 22 per cent preferring to receive them as a voucher and 47 per cent preferring to receive them in the bundle when excluding those who did not want condoms at all.

**Figure 3.9 How would you prefer to receive the following items, if at all? Parents' survey – excluding those who said they do not want to receive the items at all (%)**



Source: Parents' survey. Number of respondents varied: seasonal items, n=1066; baby wrap/sling, n=1026; reusable nappy starter pack, n=892; nipple cream, n=956; breast pads, n=974; condoms, n=683; maternity pads, n=1,012.

3.79 Some parent respondents provided further comments about the inclusion of vouchers for some items. Those who indicated a preference for vouchers felt that this was useful for certain items to help parents be able to have more choice, and to be able to buy things more specific to them (e.g. the correct clothing sizes etc.). Others felt that items would be better off being provided in the bundle to ensure parents have these useful items which they may not go out and buy themselves even with a voucher.

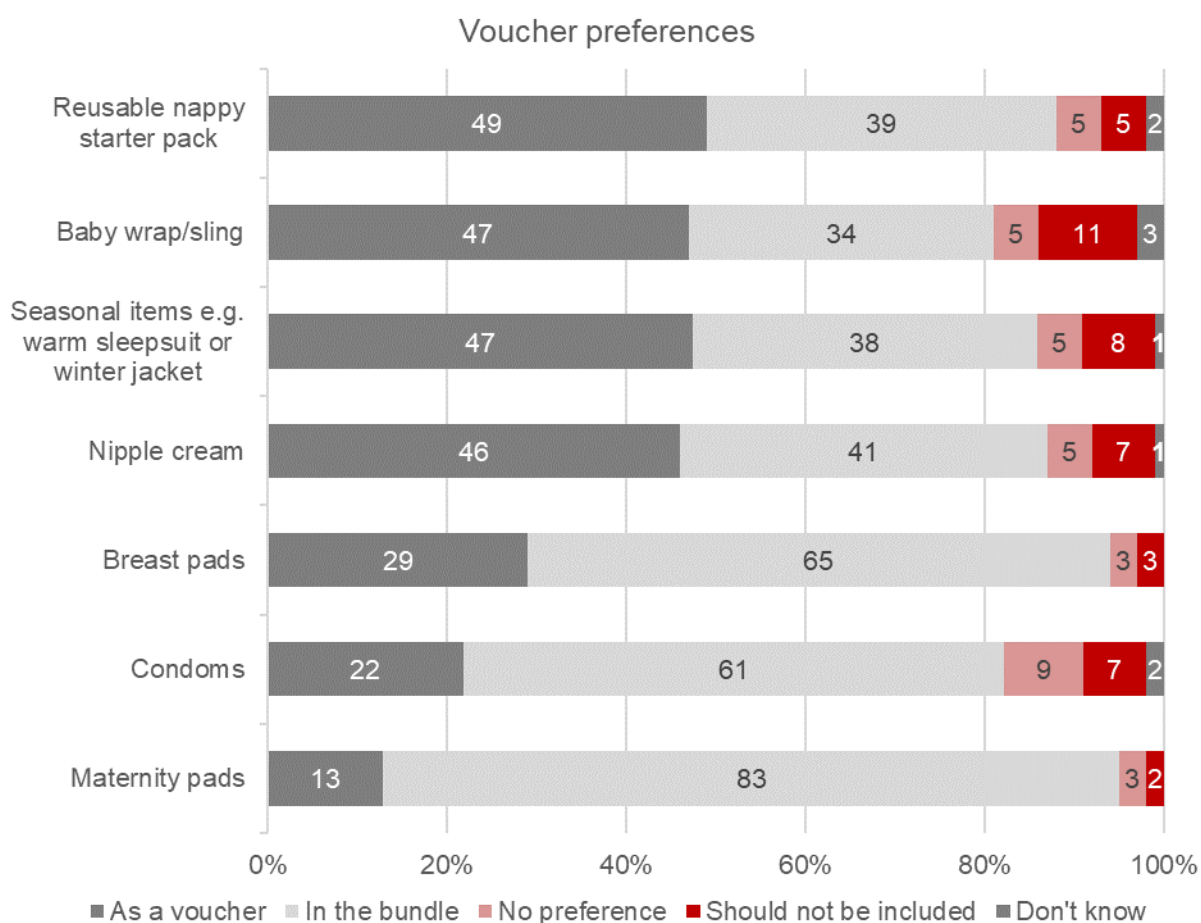
‘I think most items being provided in the bundle can help to guide new parents who might be overwhelmed (especially when tired!) by the variety of choices available for different item. If vouchers provided, then detailed guidance should also be provided.’ Parent survey respondent

‘My baby was premature so a voucher would be useful so I could buy tiny clothes for her.’ Parent survey respondent.

*Professionals' and Stakeholders' views*

3.80 Figure 3.10 sets out how respondents to the professionals' survey would prefer for parents to receive certain health and personal items and some seasonal items. Professionals responded in a similar way to parents, with slightly more citing a preference for parents to receive vouchers for certain items than those who responded to the parents' survey.

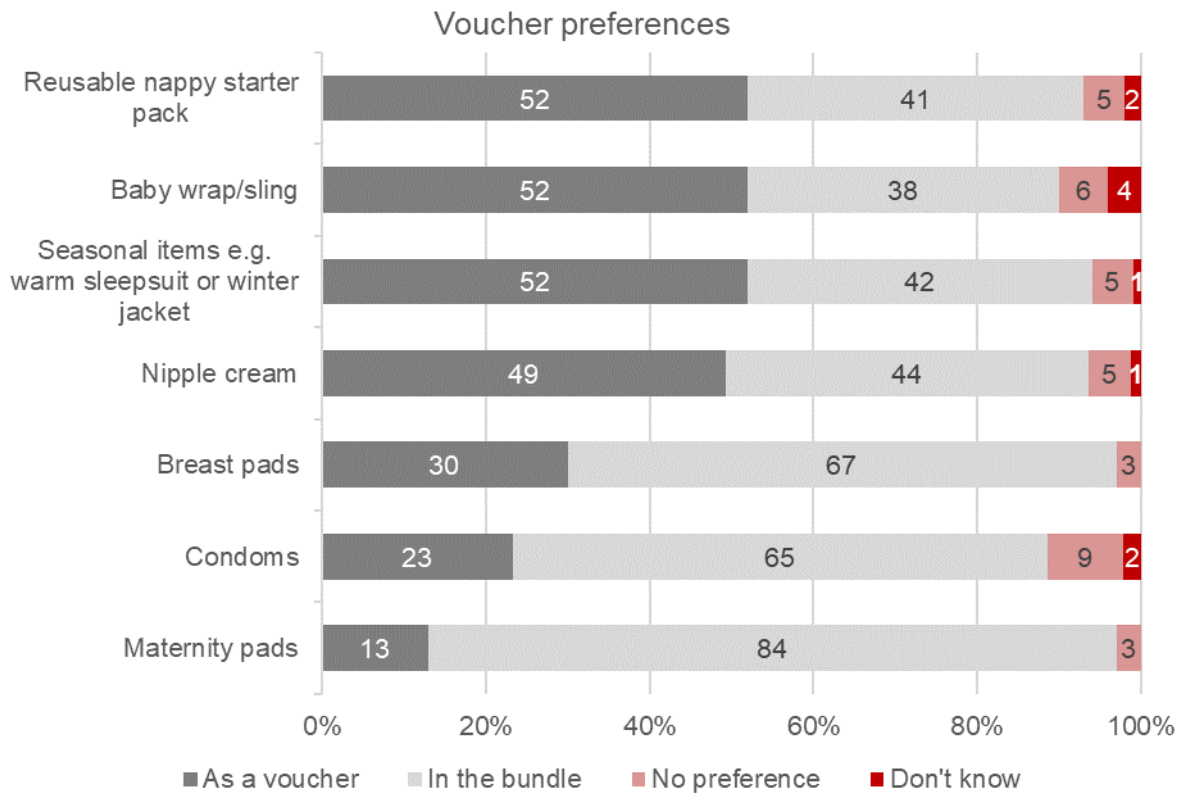
**Figure 3.10 In your opinion, what is the best way to provide the following items, if at all? Professionals' survey**



Source: Professionals' survey (n=236)

3.81 Figure 3.11 demonstrates how survey respondents from the professionals' survey would prefer for parents to receive certain health and personal items and some seasonal items, when excluding those who answered they would not want them to be included at all. Results are similar to those in figure 3.10 with only minimal percentage differences.

**Figure 3.11 In your opinion, what is the best way to provide the following items, if at all? Professional survey – excluding those who said ‘should not be included’ (%)**



Source: Professionals' survey. Number of respondents varied: reusable nappy starter pack, n=221; baby wrap/sling, n=206; seasonal items, n=215; nipple cream, n=214; breast pads, n=232; condoms, n=213; maternity pads, n=231.

3.82 Professionals and stakeholders during the fieldwork interviews expressed the view that vouchers could be included in the bundle without issue, provided that they were for easily accessible high-street shops or supermarkets. Some professionals noted that the Healthy Start Scheme vouchers were a good example of this method, as they are already established and are now provided as electronic e-cards.<sup>6</sup> During the discussions, most parents also had no issues with the inclusion of vouchers, but a few raised concerns about ensuring that the vouchers were used as intended. They emphasised that they wanted to make sure that the vouchers were only spent on items that would benefit the new baby and that they would be used appropriately.

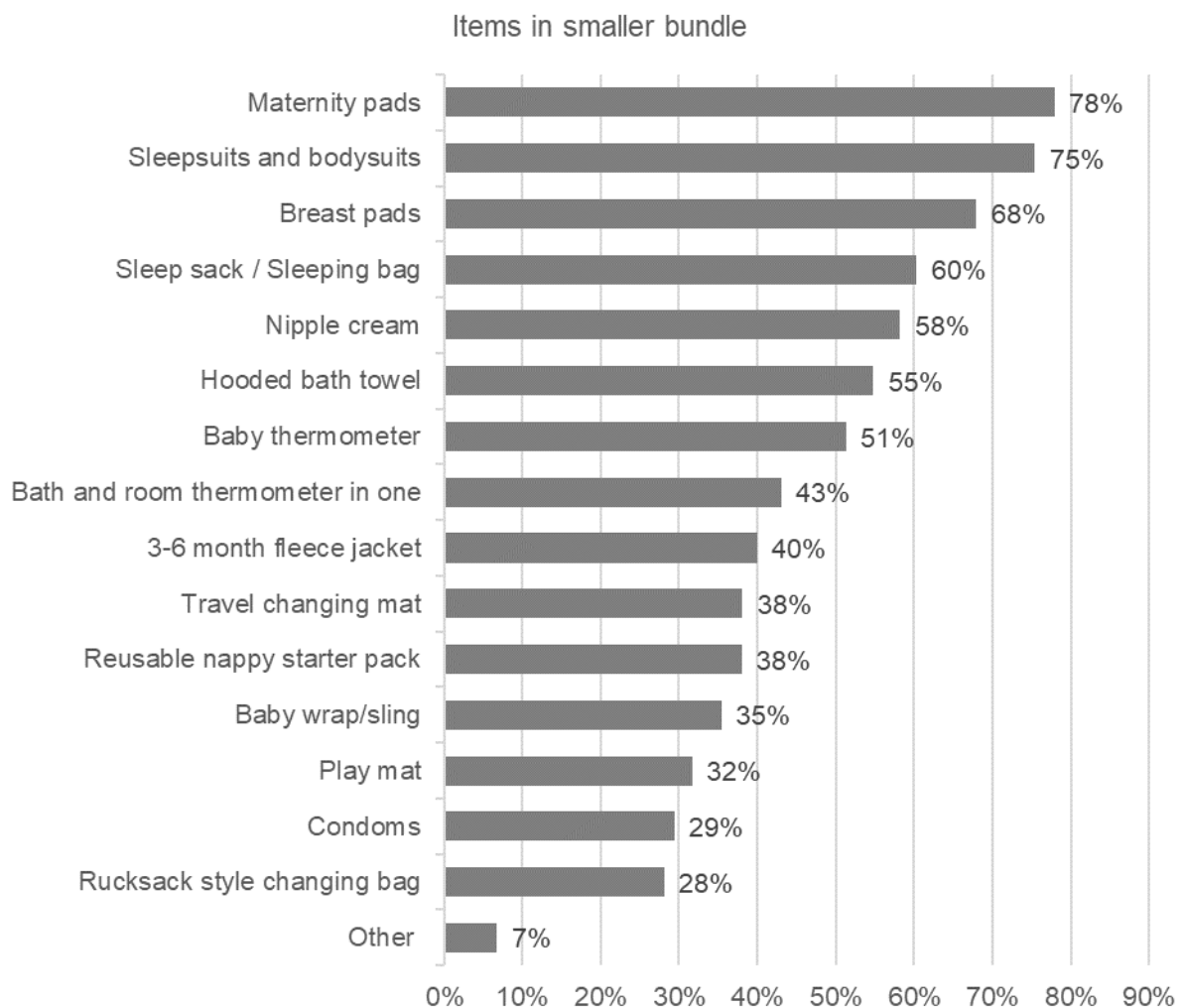
<sup>6</sup> [Get help to buy food and milk \(Healthy Start\)](#)

## Smaller Bundle

### Parents' views

3.83 The survey explained that the Welsh Government is considering making two types of baby bundles available. One for first time parents and a second smaller bundle for parents who already have children. This is to minimise duplication or waste to those who may already have some of these essential items. Survey respondents were given a list of items and asked which they think should be included in the smaller bundle. The most popular item to be included among parents was maternity pads (78 per cent), followed by sleepsuits and bodysuits (75 per cent) and breast pads (68 per cent).

**Figure 3.12 Which of the following items do you think should be included in a smaller bundle? Parents' survey**

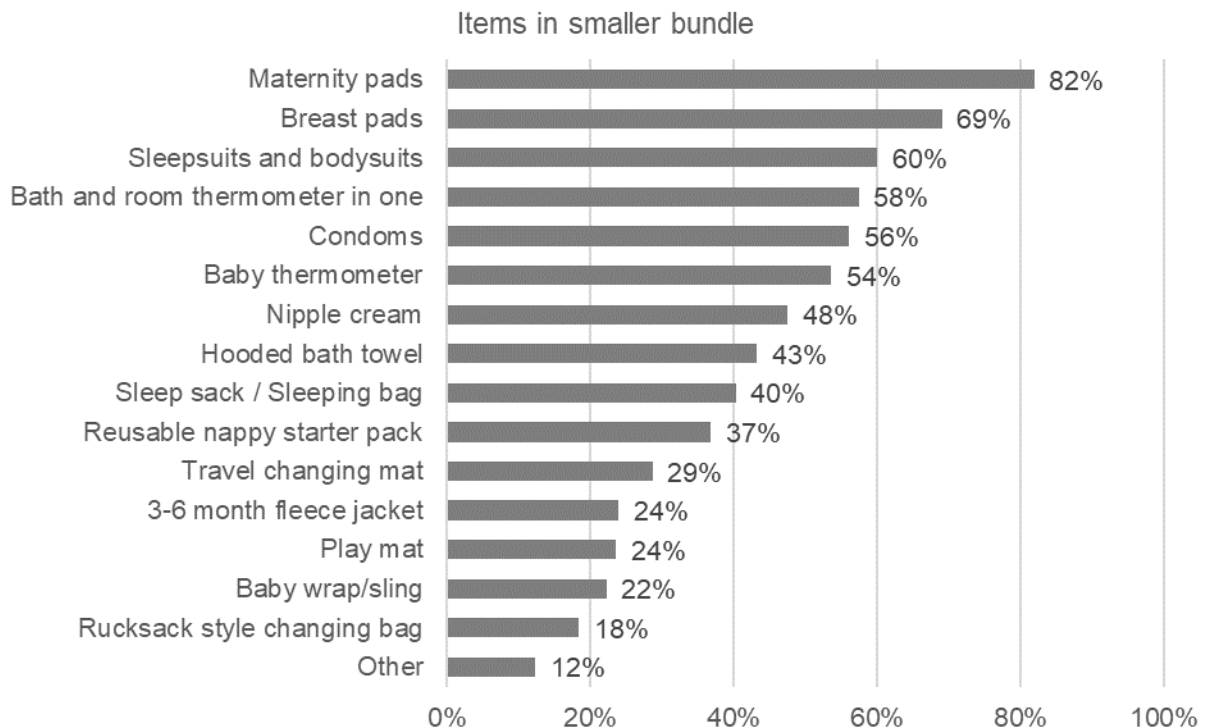


Source: Parents' survey (n=1,058)

### Professionals' views

- 3.84 Professional survey responses yielded similar results to this question about a second smaller bundle as parent survey respondents, with maternity pads being the most popular item (82 per cent) and a rucksack style changing bag (18 per cent) being the least popular item to be included in a smaller bundle.
- 3.85 The topic of providing different bundles generally was brought up in survey respondents comments, interviews, and focus groups. The feedback received was mixed, with some respondents proposing a standard baby bundle regardless of whether it was a second or subsequent child or a multiple birth as it was deemed inappropriate for the scheme to assume what a parent might require. Others suggested a more personalised approach where parents could select which items they wanted upon registration, particularly if it was not their first child. The latter group believed that this approach would reduce waste and ensure that all items would be used. As a result, there was no clear consensus on which approach was the most appropriate with regards to smaller bundles for various scenarios.

**Figure 3.13 Which of the following items do you think should be included in a smaller bundle? Professionals' survey (%)**



Source: Professionals' survey (n=233)

## **4. Information in the Bundle**

4.1 The bundle for the pilot of 2020/21 contained a leaflet with information on safe sleeping and perinatal mental health. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the type of information that parents and professionals recommend to be included with the baby bundles and the format in which it should be provided.

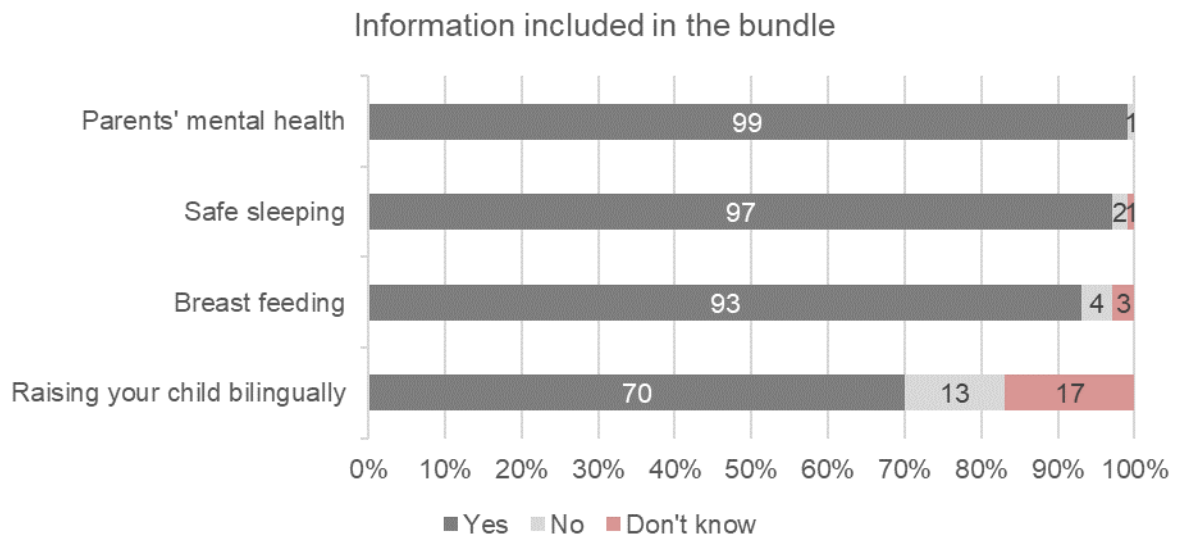
### **Topics to include**

4.2 The surveys asked both parents and professionals whether information on some topics should be included within the bundle. Safe sleeping, parents' mental health, breast feeding and raising a child bilingually were the topics presented.

4.3 The results of the parents' survey revealed a general consensus that these topics were important ones to include as set out in figure 4.1. Almost all parents (99 per cent) agreed that information on parents' mental health should be included with the vast majority also agreeing that safe sleeping and breast feeding be included. The topic which received least support was raising your child bilingually, however 70 per cent still agreed that this should be included.

4.4 Respondents to the survey of professionals also showed support for these topics, with almost all agreeing that information on safe sleeping, parents' mental health and breast feeding should be included – see figure 4.2. When it comes to the issue of safe sleeping, many professionals cited the information provided by the Lullaby Trust as a reliable source that they currently rely on for guidance. Similar to the opinion of parents, the topic which received least support was raising your child bilingually, however 69 per cent still agreed that this should be included.

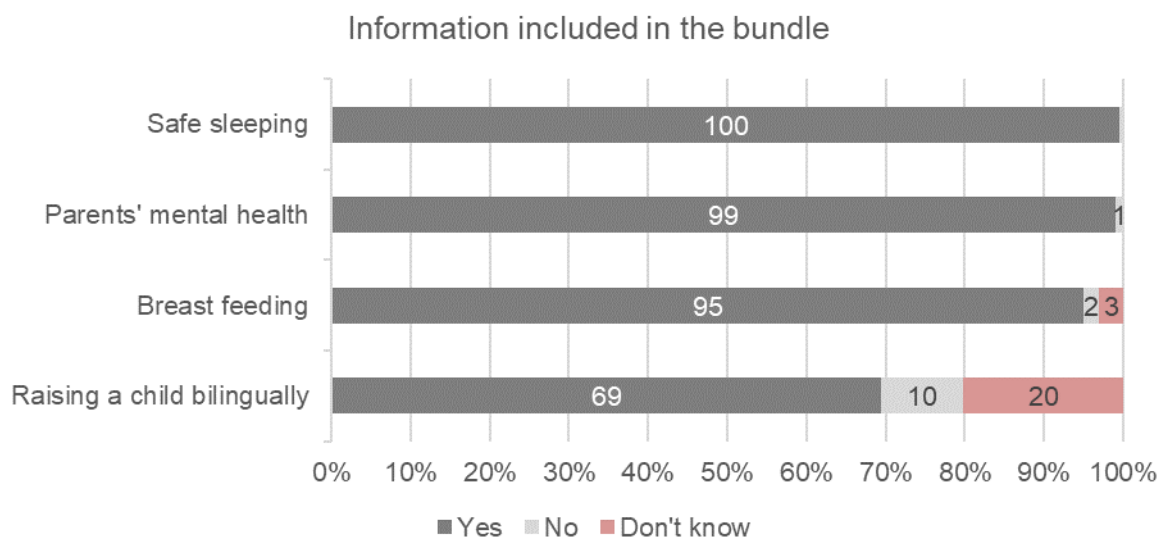
**Figure 4.1 The bundle may be accompanied by further information on some topics. Do you think information on the following should be included? Parents' survey (%)**



Source: Parents' survey (n=1,078)

**Figure 4.2 The bundle may be accompanied by further information on some topics. Do you think information on the following should be included? Professionals' survey (%)**

Source: Professionals' survey (n=237)<sup>7</sup>



4.5 Parents and professionals were also consulted on any additional topics that should be included in the baby bundles. Some parents expressed the need

<sup>7</sup> Please note figures for Safe sleeping appear as 100% in the chart due to rounding. 99.58% said yes to this question, 0.42% said no (1 respondent).



for information and resources that were not solely focused on mothers, highlighting the importance of including material for fathers. Other suggestions included information on local baby groups, pre-school and school planning, car seats, birth registration and child benefit forms, and pet safety. Parents also recommended incorporating information on bonding with the baby and how to make the most of the early stages of their child's life. In a couple of groups, parents suggested including guidance on how to manage a crying baby.

- 4.6 During stakeholder interviews, one group discussed the importance of using inclusive language and imagery in the baby bundles and including visuals that represent different types of families. In a separate interview, one health visitor recommended including a QR code that links to a selection of videos on the information topics and instructions on the items provided in the bundle. She noted that people may not always read through written materials, but quick and informative videos could be more effective. The health visitor also suggested that the Welsh Government create a video that accompanies the baby bundle, providing a warm welcome and explaining each item in detail, including how to use it safely.

#### **Format of information**

- 4.7 When asked how they would prefer to receive information on the topics previously mentioned, or other pregnancy and/or parenting topics, most parents responding to the survey would prefer the information as a hard copy in the bundle (78 per cent). The other options available to the respondents in the survey had fewer responses: prefer to receive this via digital resources (44 per cent) or from a health professional (20 per cent).
- 4.8 According to the stakeholder groups advocating for the interests of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, some parents may face difficulties with the written information as literacy levels may be a barrier to reading the material for some parents. Parents from this community explained that either the material would not be read or an older child within the household would read and interpret it for them. Stakeholder organisations recommended that any information material needs to be easy-read and include pictures. They cited

COVID-related public health pamphlets in Wales that were tailored to this community as examples of good practice.

- 4.9 During stakeholder interviews and focus groups with parents from asylum-seeking and refugee families, the issue of which languages to use for the written material was discussed. In response, it was suggested that including information in the top five most spoken languages in Wales would be the most effective approach. Moreover, they explained that the use of translation apps on smartphones was commonplace, and parents were familiar with using these apps or websites to translate written or digital materials. The priority for them, therefore, was that the material be in large print and easy to scan.

*Other sources of pregnancy and parenting advice*

- 4.10 During the discussion regarding written materials, the topic of which websites the materials should refer to was also addressed. The suggested websites were those belonging to the Welsh Government and the NHS. Additionally, while discussing this topic with parents specifically, the NHS sites were mentioned as a source, but many parents referred to a list of other sites such as Emma's Diary, Bounty, period tracker apps and various social media channels. Parents in all focus groups, except the Gypsy Roma and Traveller parent group, listed some or all of these sites as ones used by them and their friends.

## 5. Registration and Delivery of the Baby Bundle

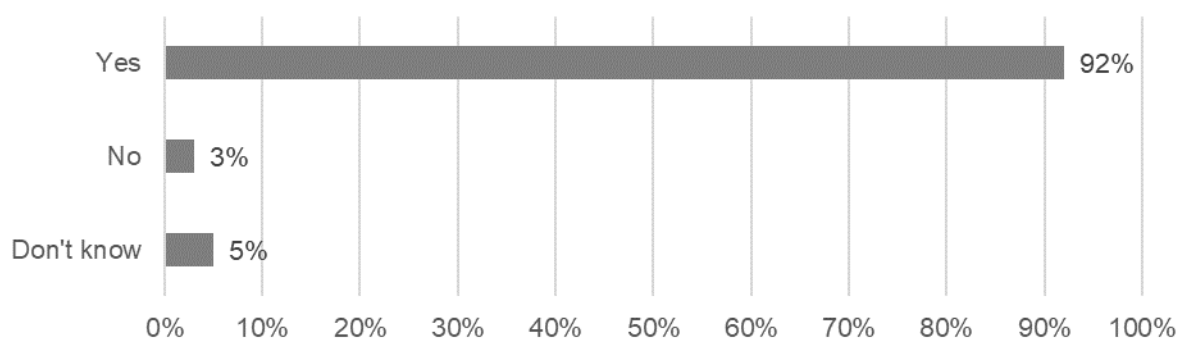
5.1 The scoping research also explored the preferred approaches for expectant parents to be informed about the bundles, registering for them, and obtaining them.

### Introducing expectant parents to the baby bundles scheme

#### *Professionals' views*

5.2 Professionals were asked about how best to raise awareness of the scheme and let expectant parents know about the bundles. Note that parents were not asked this question. Figure 5.1 demonstrates that the majority (92 per cent) of respondents to the professionals' survey thought that parents should be informed about the baby bundle at a midwife appointment.

**Figure 5.1: Method of informing parents: Should parents be informed of the bundle by their midwife at a midwife appointment? (%)**



Source: Professionals' survey (n=238). Survey question: 'During the Baby Bundles Pilot, parents were informed of the bundle by their midwife at a midwife appointment. Do you think this is the best way of informing parents?'

5.3 There was no difference in views across the professions, and of the 113 midwives who responded to this question, the same proportion (92 per cent, or 104 of them) agreed that parents should be informed about the baby bundle at a midwife appointment. Five midwives did not think that this was the best way and four answered 'don't know'.

5.4 In interviews, the professionals and stakeholders also noted that midwives were the obvious key gateway to let parents know about the baby bundle and thought 'a clear and concise information leaflet given by midwives' was

a good idea. Several also mentioned that midwives had a unique opportunity to explain the purpose and benefits of the baby bundle and answer any questions parents may have. However, some respondents felt that the responsibility for informing and registering parents should be shared among health visitors, antenatal clinics, and GP practices.

‘I don't think it should be solely done in this method - I think more awareness to the scheme for individuals to access themselves should complement this method.’ Professional survey respondent – Midwife

‘Should be advertised in supermarkets, radio/media, leaflets with pregnancy information. advertising screens in waiting areas in antenatal clinics/hospitals GP surgery, could then help as a talking point for women at their app. The midwife has many topics to discuss, it could be mentioned but should not be the only time it is discussed.’ Professional survey respondent – Midwife

‘Could this be done via the new Digital maternity system to identify those parents who would be entitled to this? Expecting more and more from midwives who cannot provide the basic elements of their role due to staffing crisis is asking too much! Provide more midwives if you expect midwives to do more.’ Professional survey respondent – Midwife

- 5.5 In addition to relying on midwives to inform parents about the baby bundles scheme, other methods were suggested. The use of social media (primarily TikTok and Instagram and, to a lesser degree, Facebook), apps, and posters in GP surgeries and other locations were named as possible tools for raising awareness about the scheme.
- 5.6 Additionally, some parents suggested using period tracker apps and pregnancy apps or websites like Emma's Diary as a means of learning about the baby bundles. These apps were widely used by expectant parents interviewed in the focus groups, and given their popularity, some parents and stakeholders suggested that it may be worth considering paid advertising within these apps and sites as a means of reaching parents as it fits in with what expectant parents are already doing. Placing posters in waiting rooms and other settings where expectant parents are likely to visit

was also raised by professionals in the survey and by parents across all focus groups.

- 5.7 The comments from parents and professionals highlight the importance of using a range of communication channels to ensure that the message about the baby bundles scheme is seen by as many expectant parents as possible.

*Professionals' views on when to first inform parents*

- 5.8 Respondents to the professionals' survey were also asked at which week of pregnancy they thought it would be appropriate for parents to be first informed of the baby bundle and its contents. Note that parents were not asked this question. The following 'weeks' of pregnancy were the most popular choices:

- Week 12: 10 per cent of respondents
- Week 16: 15 per cent of respondents
- Week 20: 23 per cent of respondents
- Week 28: 11 per cent of respondents

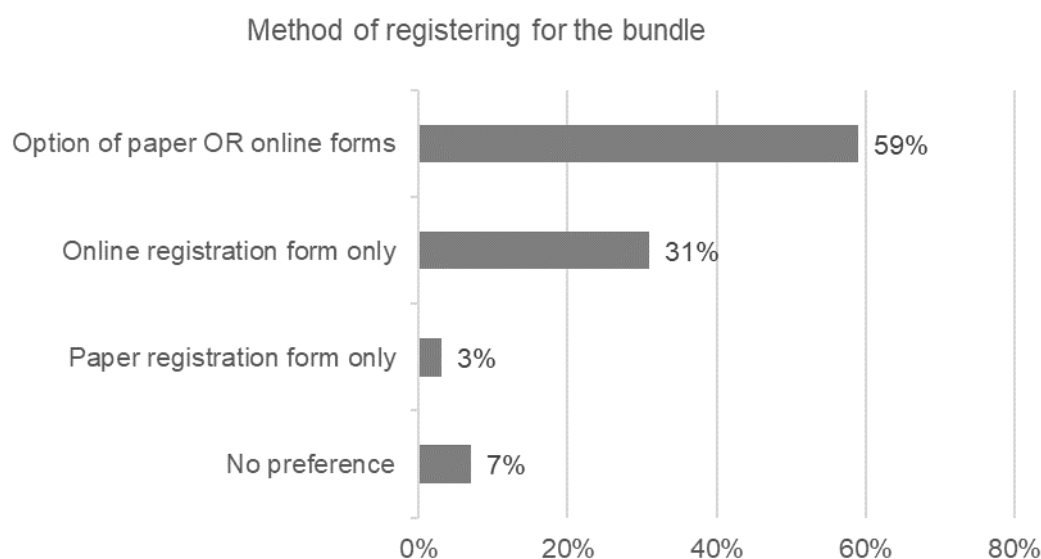
- 5.9 Midwives, however, were more likely to favour informing the expectant parents at week 16, with a quarter of them selecting this week.

**Registration methods**

*Professionals' views*

- 5.10 The survey asked professionals which method of registration they thought would be best for parents to register for the baby bundle - a paper form completed by a midwife or an online registration form, or an option of both. Most respondents (59 per cent) felt that both the option of paper or online forms would be best (see figure 5.2). There was no difference in opinion between the different groups of professionals (midwives, health visitors and others).

**Figure 5.2 As a professional, which method of registration do you think would be best? Professionals' survey (%)**



Source: Professionals' survey (n=236)

5.11 Professionals were also asked whether any issues might arise if an online method of registration is used, and some respondents raised concerns about accessibility and technical issues. One respondent stated that 'not all parents will have access to a computer or smartphone to complete the online form'; while another respondent suggested that 'technical support may be required for parents who are not familiar with using online forms'. Other issues raised included concerns about data security and privacy, as well as ensuring that the online registration process is user-friendly and easy to navigate. Overall, while the majority of respondents preferred the use of an online registration form, this needed to be very straightforward and some suggested that offering both options may be beneficial to ensure that all parents are able to register for the baby bundle in a way that suits their needs and preferences.

*Considerations for diverse groups and family situations*

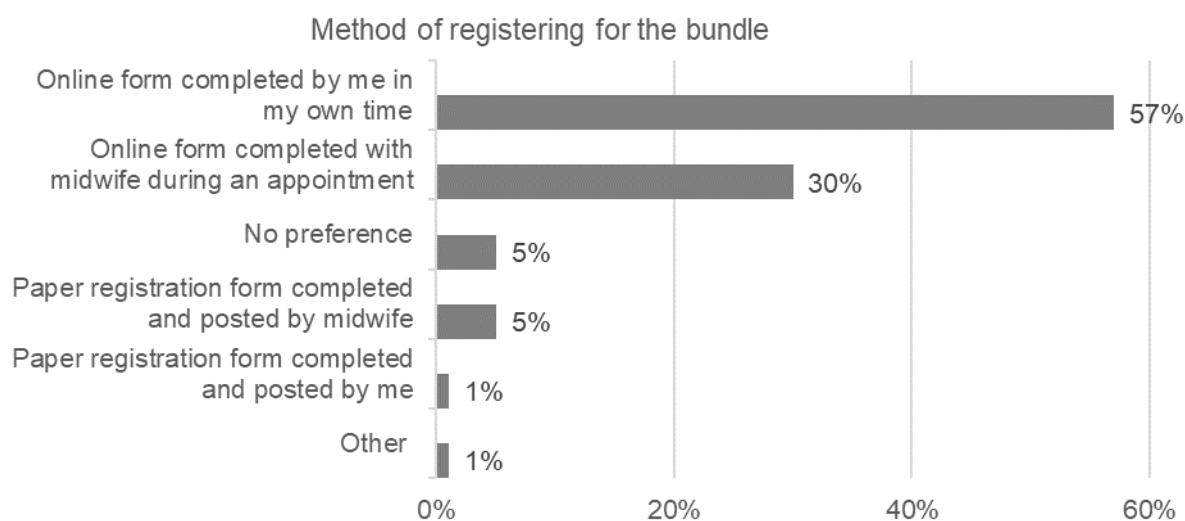
5.12 Stakeholders who work with different groups of parents and communities were also asked about the methods of registration, as were parents in focus groups. The majority of respondents were confident that an online registration method would work well. However, there were some exceptions,

including stakeholders who work with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents and the parents from these communities participating in the focus group. In these cases, there were concerns raised about low literacy levels and the fact that written material may not be read. In particular, these parents wanted a trusted support worker or their midwife to register on their behalf. Overall, the feedback suggests that while an online registration method may work for most parents, there may be a need for additional support for certain groups to ensure that they are able to successfully register for the baby bundle. More generally professionals and stakeholders did not anticipate any issues with accessing information and registering online for those who did not speak much English or Welsh. Many noted that these groups of individuals were used to using online and app-based translation services (see also paragraph 4.8 about the written material to be contained in the bundles).

#### *Parents' views*

- 5.13 Parent survey respondents showed the highest preference for completing an online form themselves in their own time to register for the bundle, with 57 per cent selecting this method. This was followed by 30 per cent that said they would prefer to complete an online form with a midwife during an appointment. Only a small number would prefer paper registration (5 per cent completed and posted by midwife and 1 per cent completed and posted by themselves) – see figure 5.3.

**Figure 5.3 When registering for the bundle, this may be done online or by a paper form - which method of registration would you prefer? Parents' survey (%)**



Source: Parents' survey (n=1, 075)

#### *Professionals' views on when to register for the bundle*

- 5.14 Professionals were asked at which point in pregnancy they felt that it was appropriate for parents to *register* for the bundle. Note that parents were not asked this question. The two most popular weeks of pregnancy selected were week 20 (selected by 24 per cent) and week 28 (selected by 16 per cent). Among the midwives only, the most popular week for registering was week 28 (selected by 23 per cent). However the whole range of options from week 12 to week 36 were selected as suitable weeks by respondents to the survey, so there was no clear consensus on best week to register.
- 5.15 Comments were also provided in the survey and in interviews to support the choice of weeks. Many professionals felt that flexibility was important that parents should be able to register at any point during their pregnancy, to suit individuals who relocate to an area while pregnant or realise their pregnancy at a later stage. Furthermore, professionals and stakeholders suggested that if parents missed out on registering for the bundles, they should be allowed to register and receive them after the birth of their baby.

‘Having an emergency stock of bundles within each maternity unit would also be beneficial for mothers with concealed pregnancies’ (Survey / Midwife)



- 5.16 Many professionals felt that flexibility was important and that parents should be able to register at any point during their pregnancy. These findings suggest that offering early registration, possibly even from the first antenatal appointment, would be a good approach to ensure that as many parents as possible are aware of and able to access the baby bundle.

### **Delivering the bundles**

#### *Parents' views*

- 5.17 Survey results suggest that most parents would prefer to receive the bundle between weeks 30 and 36, with 67 per cent of respondents selecting one of these weeks.
- 5.18 The week with the highest preference to receive the bundle was at week 30 (26 per cent).

#### *Professionals' views*

- 5.19 Across all professionals responding to the survey, the most popular week for delivering the baby bundle to parents was also between weeks 30-36 of pregnancy, with 74 per cent of respondents selecting one of these weeks. Professionals overall gave the highest preference for parents to receive the bundle at week 36 (23 per cent).
- 5.20 There were some differences in views between midwives, health visitors, and other professionals regarding the week of pregnancy when the baby bundle should be delivered. Midwives were most likely to suggest delivering the bundle at 36 weeks (32 per cent), followed by 34 weeks (19 per cent). Health visitors were most likely to suggest delivering the bundle at 30 weeks (27 per cent), followed by 36 and 34 weeks (both 16 per cent).
- 5.21 Overall, it seems that most respondents believe that delivering the baby bundle to parents between weeks 30-36 of pregnancy would be appropriate, falling after the second trimester, when parents are beginning to prepare for the arrival of their baby.

## **Pregnancy loss or neonatal loss**

- 5.22 As part of the professionals' survey, a question was asked about the best options for informing the baby bundle supplier in those instances where a parent may be registered for a bundle but experience pregnancy loss. Most respondents thought that midwives should be the ones to inform the supplier, either through a dedicated email address (63 per cent), via an online form (59 per cent) or with a dedicated phone number (50 per cent).
- 5.23 This was discussed in interviews with a small number of midwives and other professionals. There was no consensus as to which method would be best for informing the baby bundle supplier in case of a pregnancy loss, nor who should get in touch with the supplier, as long as the process was very straightforward for the parents. One midwife explained that there is a system within the health board with a list of services to contact in the case of a pregnancy loss, so that booking letters and other relevant materials can be stopped, and that a baby bundle delivery contractor could be added to that list. Although the scoping research did not explore the practicalities associated with this option, it merits further investigation.
- 5.24 The respondents to the professionals' survey were also asked about the options that should be available to parents who wish to return the bundle in the event of stillbirth or neonatal loss after the bundle has been delivered to them. The majority of respondents felt that a midwife or health visitor should be the ones to arrange this, either through a dedicated email address (56 per cent), via an online form (32 per cent) or with a dedicated phone number (47 per cent).
- 5.25 The small number of professionals interviewed agreed that this was a sensitive issue that needed to be handled carefully. One midwife suggested involving pregnancy bereavement workers who would need to be informed about the bundles. Another professional cautioned against assuming or guessing what parents would want to do with the bundle in such a situation, as some may wish to keep it as a memory. Further discussion and planning is necessary to ensure that appropriate options are explored and the steps for cancelling the delivery of bundles and returning bundles designed into the scheme.

## 6. Conclusions

- 6.1 The scoping research conducted to inform the national rollout of baby bundles in Wales has provided insights into the views and opinions of parents, professionals, and stakeholders regarding the potential content of the bundles and the processes associated with the scheme. The findings are clear that baby bundles are considered a good idea and are widely supported by the target audience. However, some details were noted regarding individual items in the bundles and how they should be registered and delivered to ensure that they are suitable and reach most parents.
- 6.2 The proposed contents of the baby bundles were generally well received by parents and professionals, with many considering them to be suitable and useful. The items that were particularly liked by almost everyone included baby clothing such as sleep suits and baby grows, thermometers, sleeping bags and maternity and breast pads. As such there are several items where there is a strong case for including them in the baby bundle. These items were well received by parents and professionals and are viewed as essential.
- 6.3 Opinions were divided regarding some of the bulkier and more expensive items included in the bundle. Concerns were raised about the practicality of these items and whether they would be used. The fleece jacket, in particular, was considered by some participants to be a seasonal item, with suggestions made for a variation in the bundle to exclude warmer clothes for babies born in the summer. With the rucksack changing bag, while there were no major objections to including the bag, a few parents, professionals, and stakeholders expressed concern that not all parents would use the bag and it could go to waste. Overall, the inclusion of both the fleece jacket and rucksack in the bundle was not a major issue, but the potential for waste was noted.
- 6.4 Some parents, professionals and stakeholders expressed concerns about the inclusion of condoms. While some participants found this to be a helpful addition, others felt that it was unnecessary and potentially offensive.
- 6.5 There were mixed views on the inclusion of nipple cream, baby slings and reusable nappies. If these items are included, professionals and

stakeholders recommend they be accompanied with clear instructions and guidance.

- 6.6 In particular, with regards reusable nappies, while some respondents expressed strong support for including these items in the baby bundle, others had concerns or reservations. For example, some participants were unsure about the practicality of reusable nappies for larger families or those without washing and drying facilities or space. Offering a voucher system for reusable nappies was considered a viable solution to prevent the items from being wasted, and it was emphasised that providing clear instructions and links to additional guidance sources was crucial.
- 6.7 There were also some items suggested by participants that were not currently included in the baby bundle, but which could be considered for inclusion in future versions. These items include: a book, vouchers for baby products or services; a sensory toy; wipes (reusable or disposable), and milestone cards. Some parents in the survey and groups proposed disposable nappies and bottles, however, many of them also recognised that there might be problems associated with supplying these items.
- 6.8 In addition to the physical items, respondents to the surveys and interviews agreed with important information being provided in the baby bundles. Almost all respondents to both the parents' and professionals' surveys thought that information on the topics of safe sleeping, parents' mental health and breast feeding should be included. Respondents further suggested including information on local support services and resources. Respondents recommended that this information should be presented in an accessible and easy-to-read format.
- 6.9 Midwives were identified as the preferred channel for registering and delivering baby bundles, and the majority of midwives surveyed were supportive of this role. However, there were some concerns about midwives' workloads, and also how to reach and support all families. Some participants suggested that alternative information and registration methods, such as advertising via parenting apps and websites and QR codes on posters.
- 6.10 In conclusion, the findings from this scoping research indicate that there is a high level of support for the introduction of a universal baby bundles scheme

that is accessible to all expectant parents. Moreover, almost all participants in the research believed that midwives would be the most effective means of informing expectant parents about the scheme and registering them for it.

## **Annexes**

This annex contains:

- Copy of Parents' Survey
- Copy of Workforce Survey
- Topic Guides
- Parents' Survey demographics

## Annex A: Parents' Survey

We are interested in your views about a baby bundle 'welcome to the world gift'.

The Welsh Government intends to deliver a universal Baby Bundle scheme. The scheme will give expectant parents a free 'baby bundle' – a gift containing items for babies and parents, delivered a few weeks before the baby's due date.

The Welsh Government has asked Arad Research to gather parents' views on the baby bundle. The information you provide will play a key role in helping the Welsh Government make future decisions about baby bundles in Wales.

The survey should take around 5 - 10 minutes. Your response will not be shared with any third parties and no identifying information will be included in any published reports. Further details are available in this privacy notice. If you would like further information or prefer to provide your answers over the phone, please contact [email]

### About you

1. Which of the following describes you? \*

- I am an expectant parent - with no other children
- I am an expectant parent - and I have another child / children
- I am not an expectant parent but have children under the age of 5
- None of the above

[For those who answered 'none of the above']

### Thank you

This survey is aimed at collecting the views of expectant parents or parents of children under the age of 5. As you have indicated that these do not describe you, the survey will finish here. Thank you for your interest in taking part in the survey.

2. Which of the following best describes the age(s) of your other child/children?

- I have a child/children under 12 months old
- I have a child/children aged 1-5 years old
- I have a child/children aged over 5 years

## Contents

3. The following items may be included in the bundle. How useful would you find the following items if they were to be included in the bundle? If you would like more information on any of these items, please click [here](#).

	Very useful	Somewhat useful	Not so useful	Not at all useful	Don't know
Sleepsuits and bodysuits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3-6 month fleece jacket	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Play mat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel changing mat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hooded bath towel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sleep sack / Sleeping bag	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baby thermometer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bath and room thermometer in one	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baby wrap/sling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reusable nappy starter pack	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rucksack style changing bag	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maternity pads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breastfeeding pads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condoms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breastfeeding cream	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there items in the list above that would not be suitable for the baby bundle? If so, please note which items and why.

4. Are there any other items you would like to see in the bundle? Use the box below to note which items and why.



## Contents

5. Vouchers may be provided in the baby bundle instead of some items. These could be used for purchasing health and personal items and / or seasonal items.

How would you prefer to receive the following items, if at all?

	In the bundle	As a voucher	No preference	I would not want to receive this	Don't know
Maternity pads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breastfeeding pads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condoms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breastfeeding cream	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seasonal items e.g. warm sleepsuit or winter jacket	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baby wrap/sling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reusable nappy starter pack	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any other items you think could be better provided as a voucher? Please include any details below.

## Contents

The Welsh Government is considering making two types of baby bundles available. One for first time parents and a second smaller bundle for parents who already have children. This is to minimise duplication or waste to those who may already have some of these essential items.

6. Which of the following items do you think should be included in a smaller bundle? If you would like more information on any of these items, please click here.

- Sleepsuits and bodysuits
- 3-6 month fleece jacket
- Play mat
- Travel changing mat

- Hooded bath towel
- Sleep sack / Sleeping bag
- Baby thermometer
- Bath and room thermometer in one
- Baby wrap/sling
- Reusable nappy starter pack
- Rucksack style changing bag
- Maternity pads
- Breastfeeding pads
- Condoms
- Breastfeeding cream
- Other (please specify):

**Contents**

7. How likely is it that the following items would be used if they were included in the bundle you received?

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	Don't know
Reusable nappy starter pack	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reusable breast pads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reusable post-partum/maternity pads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Please tell us if you have any comments about the reusable items listed above, or any other ideas for reusable / environmentally friendly items that could be included.

## Information

9. The bundle may be accompanied by further information on some topics.

Do you think information on the following should be included?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Safe sleeping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parents' mental health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breast feeding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Raising your child bilingually	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What other topics or advice, if any, do you feel are important to include in the bundle?

10. How would you prefer to receive information on these topics or other pregnancy and/or parenting topics?

- As hard copy included in the bundle e.g. leaflets, cards
- Digital resources, e.g. links to websites, QR codes, apps
- In another format
- From a health professional
- No preference
- I would not want to receive this
- Other (please specify):

## Registering for the bundle

11. When registering for the bundle, this may be done online or by a paper form - which method of registration would you prefer?

- Paper registration form completed and posted by midwife
- Paper registration form completed and posted by me
- Online form completed with midwife during an appointment
- Online form completed by me in my own time
- No preference

Other (please specify)

### Receiving the bundle

12. At what week of pregnancy do you think is appropriate for the baby bundle to be delivered to parents?

### About you

The rest of the survey asks some questions about you. By answering the following questions, you are helping to design the best bundles possible that represent the needs of all parents in Wales.

13. Do any of the following describe you?

- I am an adoptive parent
- I have had twins, triplets or more, or I am expecting a multiple birth.
- I am a parent of a child/children born by surrogacy, or I am expecting a child to be born by surrogacy.
- I am a carer of looked after children
- None of the above

14. What is your age?

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45 or older
- Prefer not to say

15. What is your sex?

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

16. Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

If no, please write in your gender identity

17. What is the main language(s) of your home?

- Welsh
- English
- Other language(s)
- Prefer not to say

18. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

19. What is your current employment status? (inclusive of maternity/paternity leave)

- Employed - full time
- Employed - part-time
- Employed - zero-hours contract
- Self-employed / Freelancer
- In education or training
- Not in work or training - looking for work
- Not in work - not looking for work
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify):

20. Do you have a partner or spouse living with you?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

21. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

- Straight/Heterosexual
- Gay or Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Other sexual orientation (please specify):

### About you

22. What is your ethnic group?

#### White

- Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Roma
- Any other White background

#### Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other Mixed or Multiple background

#### Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background

Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other Black, Black British or Caribbean background

Other Ethnic Group

- Arab
- Any other Ethnic Group
- Prefer not to say

23. What is your religion?

- No religion
- Christian (all denominations)
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Any other religion (please specify):

You have now reached the end of the survey.

Please click 'Finish survey' below to share your answers.

You will be asked on the next page whether you would like to discuss the baby bundles scheme in more detail. Please leave your details if you are interested.

## Annex B: Professionals' Survey

### Introduction

We are interested in your views about a baby bundle 'welcome to the world gift'.

The Welsh Government intends to deliver a universal Baby Bundle scheme. The scheme will give expectant parents a free 'baby bundle' – a gift containing items for babies and parents, delivered a few weeks before the baby's due date.

The Welsh Government has asked Arad Research to gather the views of health professionals and other professionals on the baby bundle. The information you provide will play a key role in helping the Welsh Government make future decisions about baby bundles in Wales.

The survey should take around 5 - 10 minutes. Your response will not be shared with any third parties and no identifying information will be included in any published reports. Further details are available in the privacy notice. If you would like further information or prefer to provide your answers over the phone, please contact Sioned Lewis of the research team at [e-mail]

### About you

1. What is your role? \*

Midwife

Health visitor

Other (please specify):

2. Who are you employed by?

Local authority - Flying Start

Local authority - other

Health board

Other (please specify):

### About you

3. Which local authority area do you work in?

4. Which health board are you employed by?



## Contents

5. The following items may be included in the bundle. How useful do you think each of these items would be to parents if they were to be included in the bundle? If you would like more information on any of these items, please click [here](#).

	Very useful	Somewhat useful	Not so useful	Not at all useful	Don't know
Sleepsuits and bodysuits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3-6 month fleece jacket	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Play mat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel changing mat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hooded bath towel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sleep sack / Sleeping bag	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baby thermometer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bath and room thermometer in one	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baby wrap/sling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reusable nappy starter pack	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rucksack style changing bag	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maternity pads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breastfeeding pads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condoms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breastfeeding cream	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Do you have any comments on the usefulness of the above items. For example, if you said items were not useful, do you have any suggestions as to what to change?

7. Are there any items in the list above that should not be included in the baby bundle? If so, please tell us which items and why.

8. Could any of the items listed above cause any issues for some groups of parents, for example parents from different cultural backgrounds, disabled parents etc? If so, please tell us which items and why.

9. Are there any other items you would like to see in the baby bundle?  
If so, please tell us which items and why.

10. Are you aware of any schemes or services in your health board or local authority area which already provide the same or similar new items to parents free of charge?  
Please let us know which items and scheme.

## Contents

11. The Welsh Government wants to make sure that parents get the best possible use out of the items included in the bundle, and minimise waste. We are currently exploring options around providing vouchers in the bundle instead of some items. These could be used for purchasing health and personal items and / or seasonal items.

In your opinion, what is the best way to provide the following items, if at all?

	In the bundle	As a voucher	No preference	Should not be included	Don't know
Maternity pads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breastfeeding pads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condoms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breastfeeding cream	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seasonal items e.g. warm sleepsuit or winter jacket	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baby wrap/sling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reusable nappy starter pack	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any other items you think could be better provided as a voucher? Please include any details below.

## Contents

The Welsh Government is considering making two types of baby bundles available. One for first time parents and a second smaller bundle for parents who already have children. This is to minimise duplication or waste to those who may already have some of these essential items.

12. Which of the following items do you think should be included in a smaller bundle? If you would like more information on any of these items, please click here.

- Sleepsuits and bodysuits
- 3-6 month fleece jacket
- Play mat
- Travel changing mat
- Hooded bath towel
- Sleep sack / Sleeping bag
- Baby thermometer
- Bath and room thermometer in one
- Baby wrap/sling
- Reusable nappy starter pack
- Rucksack style changing bag
- Maternity pads
- Breastfeeding pads
- Condoms
- Breastfeeding cream
- Other (please specify):

## Contents

13. We want to better understand the best way to include reusable / environmentally friendly items in the bundle.

How likely do you think it is that the following items would be used by parents if they were included in the bundle?

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	Don't know
Reusable nappy starter pack	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reusable breast pads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	Don't know
Reusable post-partum/maternity pads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. Please tell us if you have any comments about the reusable items listed, how we could increase the likelihood that they would be used, or any other ideas for reusable / environmentally friendly items that could be included.

### Information

15. The bundle may be accompanied by further information on some topics.

Do you think information on the following should be included?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Safe sleeping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parents' mental health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breast feeding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Raising a child bilingually	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What other topics or advice, if any, do you feel are important to include in the bundle?

### Informing parents about the bundle

A baby bundle pilot was carried out in the Swansea Bay University Health Board area between September 2020 and March 2021 and saw 200 baby bundles delivered to families expecting a baby within this period.

These next questions are intended to understand any implications of rolling out the Baby Bundle Scheme in a similar way to the Pilot.

16. During the baby bundles Pilot, parents were informed of the bundle by their midwife at a midwife appointment. Do you think this is the best way of informing parents?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If no, in what other way do you think parents should be informed about the Baby Bundle scheme?

17. At which week of pregnancy do you think it would be appropriate for parents to be first informed of the baby bundle and its contents?

### Registering for the bundle

18. During the Pilot, midwives registered parents for their bundle during an ante-natal appointment. This was a paper registration form, which the midwife completed with, and posted on behalf of parents.

In future, there may be an alternative option of completing the registration form online. As a professional, which method of registration do you think would be best?

- Paper registration form only
- Online registration form only
- Option of paper OR online forms
- No preference

Can you think of any issues that might arise due to using an online method of registration? What might need to be considered to reduce or prevent these issues?

19. At which point in pregnancy do you feel it is appropriate for parents to register for the bundle?

20. In the pilot, midwives informed and registered parents for the baby bundles. What are your thoughts on this being the approach for the new scheme?

### Delivery of the bundle

21. At what week of pregnancy should the baby bundle be delivered to parents?

## Cancelling a bundle

22. In some cases, a parent may be registered for a bundle but experience a pregnancy loss. When this happens, the Baby Bundle supplier will need to be informed as soon as possible to make sure a bundle is not delivered to these parents. As a professional, which options do you think need to be available?

Please tick all that apply.

- Midwives should be provided with a dedicated phone number to contact
- Midwives should be provided with a dedicated email address to contact
- Midwives should complete an online form
- Parents should be provided with a dedicated phone number to contact
- Parents should be provided with a dedicated email address to contact
- Parents should be able to complete an online form
- Other method (please specify):

## Cancelling a bundle

23. There may be instances where a parent experiences a stillbirth or neonatal loss after the bundle has been delivered to them. They may wish to return the bundle.

As a professional, which options do you think need to be available to arrange this?

- Midwives/Health Visitors should be provided with a dedicated phone number to contact
- Midwives/Health Visitors should be provided with a dedicated email address to contact
- Midwives/Health Visitors should complete an online form
- Parents should be provided with a dedicated phone number to contact
- Parents should be provided with a dedicated email address to contact
- Parents should be able to complete an online form
- Other method (please specify):

## Additional information

24. What other comments do you have about the Baby Bundle scheme?

You have now reached the end of the survey.  
Please **click 'Finish survey' below** to share your answers.

You will be asked on the next page whether you would like to discuss the baby bundles scheme in more detail or if you would like to take part in a working group to test ideas and help shape the baby bundles scheme. Please leave your details if you are interested.

## **Annex C: Topic Guides**

### **BABY BUNDLES: TOPIC GUIDE FOR PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEWS OR FOCUS GROUP**

**(Designed to work as an interview topic guide, but if focus groups are possible then same questions will be asked)**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

- a. Introductions, plus thanks for making the time to participate given the exceptional circumstances
- b. Baby Bundle Scheme, the pilot and the current research (acknowledge survey completion, will discuss in more depth in this interview/group)
- c. Confirm receipt of privacy notice – reiterate key points.

#### **BACKGROUND**

- 1. What is your role? What is your contact with expectant and/or new parents?**
- 2. Had you heard of the baby bundle scheme (before this invite/the survey), and if so, what do you know about the scheme and what is your general impression?**

#### **BABY BUNDLE CONTENTS**

- 3. You may recall from the survey that there was a list of items that may be included in the bundle: [Facilitator note - show or briefly list]**
  - Baby clothing items
  - Play mat
  - Travel changing mat
  - Hooded bath towel
  - Sleep sack / Sleeping bag
  - Baby thermometer
  - Bath and room thermometer in one
  - Baby wrap/sling
  - Reusable nappy starter pack  
**[Facilitator note: explain we will discuss this later on]**
  - Rucksack style changing bag
  - Maternity pads
  - Breast pads
  - Condoms
  - Nipple cream

**In the survey, some respondents had observations on some of the items proposed for the bundles. Can I run through some of those to see if you agree or disagree?**



- **Baby clothing items** –many thought clothes would be useful; but some thought they'd go to waste, and told us that parents would prefer to buy their own, or that getting the sizing or the season right would be difficult.
  - What are your thoughts? Anything in particular we should consider with regards baby clothing items?
  - What are your thoughts about including seasonal items such as a fleece jacket?
  
- **Thermometers – room/bath thermometer.** Most thought this would be very useful. But some told us that they did not recommend relying on bath thermometers.
  - What are your thoughts? Anything in particular we should consider with regards room/bath thermometer, or body thermometers?
  
- **Sleeping sack / bags.** Again, most thought this would be useful, but some raised concerns about safe use regarding the age and weight of babies and ensuring the appropriate tog rating for the time of year.
  - What are your thoughts? Anything in particular we should consider with regards to sleeping bags?
    - Prompt: Are there any resources around safety that the Welsh Government should refer to when considering the inclusion of a sleeping bag?
  
- **Slings/ baby carriers.** As with sleeping bags, issues raised about safe use and concerns that they might not be used.
  - What are your thoughts? Anything in particular we should consider with regards to baby slings?
    - Prompt: Are there any resources around safety that the Welsh Government should refer to when considering inclusion of a sling/baby carrier?
  
- **Condoms.** Although most said these would be useful, some thought that these could be problematic for several reasons e.g. inappropriate for those cultures that do not use them and for same sex female couples, potential allergies, and parents already being able to access these for free
  - What are your thoughts? Should condoms be included?
  
- **Nipple cream.** Again, most said this would be useful, but there were comments about breastfeeding items going to waste for some, upsetting for those who can't breastfeed, and/or suggest that breastfeeding might cause sore nipples.
  - What are your thoughts? Anything in particular we should consider with nipple cream?
  
- 4. **Would you like to discuss any of the other contents, or make any further suggestions for items to include or not include?**

## **Suitability of contents for all parents**

- 5. The bundles are being designed to be inclusive, and the aim is that they will be as suitable as possible for parents.**

**Do you work with any of the following parents? Do you have any comments on the suitability of any of the bundle contents for these parent groups?**

- Parents expecting twins, triplets or more
- Young parents
- Disabled parents
- Parents who have / planning gender reassignment
- Parents in same sex relationships
- Parents from different ethnic backgrounds
- Parents from different religions
- Parents from households where the main language at home is Welsh
- Carers of Looked After Children
- Adoptive parents of children under one year old
- Parents of children born by surrogacy

## **CONTENTS – ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS and VOUCHERS**

- 6. Some environmentally friendly and/or reusable items may be included in the Bundle, including reusable nappies. In the pilot, parents were provided with 1 outer wrap and 5 liners as a starter pack. Do you think this would be sufficient for a parent to try out reusable nappies?**

- Prompt: What size nappies do you think would be best to provide to parents – newborn size or older? If older, what size?
- Prompt: What types of information/instructions might parents need to support them to start using reusable nappies?
- Prompt: Do you envisage any issues with providing a reusable nappy starter pack in the bundle?

- 7. Other environmentally friendly and/or reusable items may also be included, such as reusable breast pads, and biodegradable nappies. Do you think these items would be useful to parents?**

- Prompt: Anything in particular to consider with providing biodegradable nappies or reusable breast pads?
- Prompt: What other reusable or eco-friendly items could be included?

- 8. As explained in the survey, vouchers may be provided in the bundle instead of some items. What are your thoughts on giving the following items as a voucher?:**

- Baby sling / wrap
- Rucksack style changing bag
- Reusable nappies starter pack
- Seasonal items such as specific clothing items (ie the fleece jacket and sleep sacks)

**Do you think the following personal and health items, if included, would be more suitable as a voucher?:**

- Maternity pads
- Breast pads
- Condoms
- Nipple cream

**9. Are there any issues or challenges to providing vouchers as part of the bundle to the parents with whom you work?**

- Prompt: If yes, what and why?
- Prompt: Are there any considerations to ensure proper use of the vouchers?

## **INFORMATION**

**10. The bundle may contain some leaflets, or digital resources with topics around pregnancy/parenting. Suggested topics include:**

- Safe sleeping
- Parents' mental health
- Breast feeding
- Raising a child bilingually

**Would it be useful to you, as professionals, to have information on these topics in the bundle? Is this something that parents would find useful?**

- Prompt: Do you provide information on these topics anyway?
- Prompt: Some professionals recommended re-introducing 'Bump, Baby and Beyond' – do you have any thoughts on this?

**11. Are there any there any issues or challenges which should be considered with providing leaflets or digital resources for parents?**

- Prompt: e.g. English as an additional language, reading and writing support needs, alternative formats required such as Braille etc.

**12. Other than from you / your team where do parents tend to access information relating to pregnancy and parenting?**

- Prompt: Are there specific websites or other sources of information that are used often?

## **REGISTERING FOR THE BUNDLE**

**13. [For midwives and those who work with expectant parents] How are parents usually informed about different resources and services available to them during their pregnancy and after the birth of their baby?**

**14. What types of information do you think would be most important for expectant parents to know about the baby bundles, and how could this information be communicated effectively?**

- Prompt: If during an appointment, which one? [**Facilitator Note - only to be asked if participants suggest MW appointments as an option**]
- Prompt: Are there any issues or challenges in informing expectant parents of the scheme?

**15. In the survey you took part in, many midwives have said midwife involvement in registering parents for bundles would be beneficial and the best approach. On balance, many have emphasised the high workload of midwives.**

**Do you have any ideas for how registration for a bundle could be made as streamlined as possible for both midwives and parents?**

- Prompt: Some ideas already proposed by midwives included:
  - Parents registering themselves but with midwives supporting by:
    - Giving parents a detailed information leaflet
    - Giving parents a QR code for online registration
    - Supporting parents to register where needed
  - Raising awareness of the scheme through posters in ante-natal clinic areas
  - Parents can prove eligibility for scheme by providing a MAT B1 form
  - Looking into possibility of automation by using maternity systems to invite parents to register
- Prompt: What support/information/training would midwives need to help expectant parents to register for the scheme?

**16. Do some of the parents you work with have any support or additional needs which should be taken into account when registering for the bundle?**

- Prompt: How can they be supported?

- Returning to the list / discussion in question 5: are there any particular issues in making sure some groups of parents are able to find out about and register for the scheme?
- Parents not in contact with midwifery service/late to be in contact with the midwifery service?
- Parents of children born by surrogacy, adoptive parents, parents with no fixed address?

**17. Are there any other potential issues or challenges in getting parents to register for the scheme?**

- Prompt: Are there any barriers to online registration which would be a challenge? [**Facilitator note: potential digital illiteracy, digital poverty/exclusion of parents**] If these barriers might be present, how do you think these could be overcome?

**RECEIVING THE BUNDLE**

**18. The most popular weeks of pregnancy suggested by professionals for delivery of a bundle were week 30 and week 36. The most popular week among parents was week 30. What are your thoughts on these suggested dates?**

- Prompt: Any reason week 36 would be more appropriate to deliver a bundle than week 30?

**19. Pregnancy and neonatal loss: In some cases, a parent may be registered for a Bundle or have received it but experienced a pregnancy or neonatal loss. When this happens, the Bundle supplier will need to be informed as soon as possible to make sure a Bundle is not delivered these parents, or a previously delivered Bundle is collected (if the parent(s) so wish).**

**What role do you think midwives and any other professionals should play in this process?**

**ADDITIONAL / OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

**20. How do you think health professionals should be informed about the baby bundles scheme?**

**21. Are there any other specific needs or considerations which we haven't covered that should be taken into account in planning the Baby Bundles Scheme?**

## **BABY BUNDLES: TOPIC GUIDE FOR ORGANISATION/STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- a. Introductions. *Facilitator* to emphasise that we are particularly interested in their insight into the needs of a particular group / groups of parents with whom they work, and to use their expertise to represent these parents in the answers they give.
- b. Baby Bundle Scheme, the pilot and the current research
- c. Confirm receipt of privacy notice – reiterate key points

### **BACKGROUND AND ROLE**

- 1. What is your role? What are your main responsibilities in [organisation]?**
  - How do you / your organisation work with parents, families, or young children?
- 2. What are the main considerations when providing services to, and supporting [the client group]?**

### **BABY BUNDLE CONTENTS – GENERAL**

- 3. The baby bundle will include a range of items, which might include clothing, a changing mat, thermometer and changing bag. Are there any items in particular which your clients would need or like to be included in the bundle?**
  - Prompt: These items may be in the bundle. Do you think the parents in your client group would find these items useful?

- Baby clothing items
- Play mat
- Travel changing mat
- Hooded bath towel
- Sleep sack / Sleeping bag
- Baby thermometer
- Bath and room thermometer in one
- Baby wrap/sling
- Reusable nappy starter pack
- Rucksack style changing bag
- Maternity pads
- Breastfeeding pads
- Condoms
- Breastfeeding cream

- Prompt: Are there any potential issues or challenges with providing any of those items to your client group?
- Prompts: Are there any items which might need to be adapted or explained?
- Prompt: Are there any which might go to waste if they were given to your client group?

**4. Are there any other items which would be useful to your client group and could be included in the bundle?**

- Prompt: If yes, what items and why?

## **CONTENTS – VOUCHERS, ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**5. Vouchers may be provided in the bundle instead of some items. These could be used by parents for purchasing health and personal items and / or seasonal items.**

- Would a voucher be suitable for your client group for some items?
- Thinking about your client group, are there any other items which would be better provided as a voucher rather than an actual item?
- Facilitator note: (i) These items may be given as a voucher instead of being in the bundle; and (ii) not all items will be appropriate for all groups, e.g. those not giving birth.

- Maternity pads
- Breastfeeding pads
- Condoms
- Breastfeeding cream
- Seasonal items e.g. warm sleepsuit or winter jacket
- Baby wrap/sling
- Reusable nappy starter pack

**6. Are there any issues or challenges to providing vouchers as part of the bundle to your client group?**

- Prompt: If yes, what and why?

**7. Some environmentally friendly and/or reusable items may be included in the bundle, such as reusable breast and maternity pads, and reusable nappies. Do you think these items would be used by your client group if they were in the bundle?**

Facilitator note, as above not all items will be appropriate for all groups, e.g. those not giving birth.

- Prompt: If yes, which items?
- Prompt: If not, why not?
- Prompt: What other reusable or eco-friendly items could be included?

**8. Are there any issues or challenges to providing reusable items to your client group?**

## **INFORMATION**

**9. General – The next few questions are about leaflets that may come with the bundle and then about completing forms to register for the bundle. Are there any issues or challenges we should consider when providing written material to [your client group]?**

- Prompt: Accessibility issues?
- Any other considerations, e.g English as an additional language, reading and writing support needs, alternative formats required such as Braille etc.

**10. The bundle may contain some leaflets, or digital resources with topics around pregnancy/parenting. Is this something that parents in your client group would find useful?**

- Prompt: If yes what topics should be included? / What information do you feel would be most useful to new parents in your client group?

**11. The information or advice could be paper leaflets in the bundle, or could be information directing parents to websites or apps with further information and advice. Are there any there any issues or challenges with providing leaflets or digital resources for your client group?**

**12. Where do [client group] usually access information relating to pregnancy and parenting?**

- Any observations on the use of midwives and health visitors
- Are there specific websites or other sources of information that are used often?

## **REGISTERING FOR THE BUNDLE**

**13. Registering for the bundle may done online or a paper form, with or without the help of a midwife. Do your clients have any support or**



**additional needs which should be taken into account when registering for the bundle?**

- Prompt: Are there any potential issues or challenges related to
- (i) completing paper/online forms;
- (ii) accessing the internet
- (iii) engaging with health professionals who may complete the registration?

**14. (If relevant / known) Are any of [your client group] unlikely to be in contact with the midwifery service when pregnant. If so, what needs would they have to register / receive the bundle?**

- Facilitator to tailor question to suit organisations – organisations working with refugee/asylum seeking families; parents of children born through surrogacy; adoptive parents etc.

**RECEIVING THE BUNDLE**

**15. The bundle will be delivered directly to expectant parents during pregnancy. Are there any considerations we need to be aware of with delivering the bundle to parents in your client group?**

- Prompt: Do your clients usually have a fixed address?
- If there are potential issues, what needs to be in place to help [the client group] register / receive the bundle?

**ADDITIONAL / OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

**16. Are there any other specific needs or considerations which we haven't covered that should be taken into account for your client group?**

## BABY BUNDLES: TOPIC GUIDE FOR PARENTS FOCUS GROUPS

**NB** Timings are based on a virtual group of 1 hour; but can be amended to suit if required

### **INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)**

#### **Introductions and welcome to the group discussion**

Facilitator to cover:

- a. Individual introductions
  - b. Facilitator to briefly describe the Baby Bundle Scheme and the research
- Confirm receipt of privacy notice – reiterate key points, including audio/video recording if relevant)

### **Introduction to Baby Bundles**

- 1. Have you previously heard about the Baby Bundles scheme, either in Wales or examples elsewhere? What do you know about it?**

*[slide on screen ] Facilitator note - share an image of a baby bundle, explaining that this is an example from a pilot run in 2021.*



### **BABY BUNDLE CONTENTS – GENERAL (20 minutes)**

- 2. What kind of items would you find most useful?**

➤ Prompt: What would you expect to see? What would be nice to have?
- 3. I'm now going to run through a list of items that might be included in the bundle.** We'll discuss what's useful or not useful and have a quick show of hands. *(Facilitator note – show of hands or poll depending on platform used).*

We'll then briefly discuss each item, but if we're all in agreement then we'll move on to the next one.

- **These items may be included in the bundle. Would you find these items useful?** (*Facilitator to have list of pictures and definitions if needed, as used for the survey, on hand to share on screen if needed*)

- Baby clothing items - Sleepsuits and bodysuits; fleece jacket.
- Play mat
- Travel changing mat
- Hooded bath towel
- Sleep sack / Sleeping bag
- Baby thermometer
- Bath and room thermometer in one
- Reusable nappy starter pack
- Baby wrap/sling
- Rucksack style changing bag
- Maternity pads
- Breastfeeding pads
- Condoms
- Breastfeeding cream

**4. Thinking again of all the items I've listed, are there any surprising items?**

- Prompt: Why?

**5. What's missing? Are there any other items you would like to have in the baby bundle?**

- Prompt: If yes, what items and why?

**6. Do you think any of these items would not be suitable to be included in the baby bundle for you personally?**

- Prompt: If not, why not?

- Prompt, if needed:

- Any items that you would prefer to buy yourself?
- Any items that would go to waste – why?
- Any items that you would prefer not to receive in your bundle – why?

**7. Do you think any of these items would not be suitable to be included in the baby bundle for some families?** (*Facilitator's note – continue previous discussion, but some people might prefer to talk in more general terms and not about own circumstances*).

- Prompt: We want to make sure that the contents are suitable and useful for all parents and babies - do you think the items would suit the whole range of household circumstances, faith communities, ages, geographical locations etc?

**8. Do you think different bundles should be provided to different groups of parents? e.g.** in the case of multiple births a bundle for each baby with some items shared across the bundles, or fewer items in bundles for subsequent births to avoid unnecessary duplication?

- Prompt: If so what would these bundles look like?
  - Which items would be considered essential and universal to all types of parents?

## **BABY BUNDLE CONTENTS – VOUCHERS, ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS AND INFORMATION (15 minutes)**

### **Reusable nappies**

**9. To help us better understand whether including a reusable nappy starter pack as part of the bundle would be useful to parents, we would like to discuss them in more detail.**

- *Facilitator's note: Explain for anyone who has not used / doesn't have knowledge: Reusable nappies are usually made up of an outer waterproof layer (a wrap) and an absorbent inner layer. The outer and inner layers can be put in the wash and reused. It's also possible to use disposable liners with reusable nappies to catch solids.*

**Can I have a quick show of hands for those who have knowledge of reusable nappies?**

*(Facilitator's note: Skip if already discussed in previous section)*

- Prompt: Has anyone used or considered using reusable nappies before?

**10. If they were included in the baby bundle, do you think you'd use them or try them out?**

- Prompt: If yes, why?
- Prompt: If not, what would hold you back from trying them? What would encourage you to try them?
- Prompt: Do you think there are any benefits or disadvantages of using them?

**11. If you were to use / try reusable nappies, how many wraps and how many absorbent layers do you think you would need to start you off?**

- Prompt: Wraps generally need less washing than the absorbent layers

- Prompt: Would you consider buying more liners/wraps and using them instead of switching to disposable liners or disposable nappies?

**12. At what point would you be most likely to start using reusable nappies with your baby? Why?**

- Prompt: Would you prefer nappies suitable for a newborn or a different size group? Would you be likely to use them with your newborn or wait a while?
- Prompt: Up to what size nappies do you think you'd like the starter pack to cover? Just newborn, or a few different sizes?

**13. What types of information, if any, might you need to help you get started with reusable nappies?**

- Prompt: How would you like this information to be given to you?

Reusable items

**14. The bundle may include some environmentally friendly and/or reusable items, such as:**

- **Reusable breast pads** - would you use these? Is there anything that would encourage you to try them?
  - **Reusable post-partum / maternity pads** - would you use these? Is there anything that would encourage you to try them?
- Prompt: If you would not use these, why not?

**Are there any other environmentally friendly items that you think could be included in the bundle?**

- Prompt: for example, bio-degradable disposable nappies.

Vouchers

**15. Vouchers may be provided in the baby bundle instead of some items. These could be used for purchasing health and personal items and / or seasonal items.**

**Some of the following items could be provided as a voucher instead of an actual item. (Facilitator to read/ show list)**

**Would you prefer to receive these items in the bundle or as a voucher? Why would you prefer a voucher/the actual items for each? (Facilitator's note: have visuals / descriptions to hand if needed)**

- Maternity pads

- Breastfeeding pads
- Condoms
- Breastfeeding cream
- Seasonal items e.g. sleep sacks or fleece winter jacket
- Baby wrap/sling
- Reusable nappy starter pack

**Are there any other items that you think would be better provided as a voucher?**

- Prompt: If yes, what items and why?

### Information

**16. The bundles might include further information on some topics for parents, such as, safe sleeping, parents' mental health, breast feeding, and raising your child bilingually. What are your thoughts on receiving these types of information in the bundle?**

- Prompt: Do you think providing information on these topics is important or not important? Why?

**17. Are there other topics or information you think should be included?**

- Prompt: If so, why?

**18. The information or advice could be a paper leaflet or similar included with the bundle, or it could be information directing you to websites or apps with further information and advice.**

- Would you be likely to read any paper resources included with your bundle?

Would you follow-up any web links or similar if included with your bundle?

### **DELIVERY OF THE BUNDLE (10 minutes)**

- **How and when would you like to be told about the baby bundle and its contents?**
- Prompt: When in your pregnancy? From whom?
- Prompt: Where do you usually go to get information about pregnancy, birth and parenting?
  - Online – where?

- Apps – which ones?
  - Friends and family – which relations/groups
  - Health professionals – how and when
  - Other?
- **When do you think is appropriate for the bundle to be delivered to parents? Is there a specific stage / week of pregnancy? (*Facilitator's note: Omit this prompt if parents are adoptive*)**
- Prompt: Is there anything that needs to be taken into account when timing the delivery of the bundle to parents?

**Additional questions / tailored questions for some focus groups (additional 10 minutes, if needed)**

**Is there anything the Welsh Government should consider for [multiple birth / adoptive parents / younger parents / disabled parents [...] community etc as they plan the Baby Bundles Scheme?**

- Are there any items contained in the bundle that would need to be revised?
  - Which items and why?
- Should different arrangement be considered for registering and delivering the bundle? i.e. how to register the address to receive the bundle
- What arrangements and why?

**FINAL (5mins)**

**Is there anything else the Welsh Government should consider when designing the baby bundle scheme?**

## Pictures of Bundle and Contents for Parents Focus Group (Prompts if needed)



These items may be included. Would they be useful?

- Baby clothes. Sleepsuits and bodysuits; a fleece jacket
- Play mat
- Travel changing mat
- Hooded bath towel
- Baby sleeping bag
- Baby thermometer
- Bath and room thermometer in one
- Reusable nappies
- Baby wrap or sling
- Rucksack changing bag
- Maternity pads
- Breastfeeding pads
- Condoms
- Nipple cream

Reusable (washable) nappies: Would you use?





## Annex D: Parents' Survey respondent demographics

Please note where percentages do not sum to 100% this is due to rounding to one decimal place.

**Table D.1: Age of respondent**

	Number of responses	Percentage
Under 18	10	0.9%
18-24	106	9.8%
25-34	671	62.3%
35-44	278	25.8%
45 or older	8	0.7%
Prefer not to say	4	0.4%

Base = all (1,077) surveyed parents – 1 respondent did not provide an answer to this question

**Table D.2: Sex of respondent**

	Number of responses	Percentage
Female	1,057	98.1%
Male	17	1.6%
Prefer not to say	4	0.4%

Base = all (1,078) surveyed parents

**Table D.3: Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?**

	Number of responses	Percentage
Yes	1,052	98.8%
No	8	0.8%
Prefer not to say	5	0.5%

Base = all (1,065) surveyed parents – 13 respondents did not provide an answer to this question

**Table D.4: What is the main language(s) of your home?**

	Number of responses	Percentage
Welsh	84	7.8%
English	978	90.7%
Other language(s)	13	1.2%
Prefer not to say	3	0.3%

Base = all (1,078) surveyed parents

**Table D.5: Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?**

	Number of responses	Percentage
Yes	188	17.5%
No	855	79.5%
Prefer not to say	33	3.1%

Base = all (1,076) surveyed parents – 2 respondents did not provide an answer to this question

**Table D.6: Employment status**

	Number of responses	Percentage
Employed – full time	545	50.7%
Employed – part-time	273	25.4%
Employed – zero-hours contract	10	0.9%
Self-employed / Freelancer	46	4.3%
In education or training	17	1.6%
Not in work or training – looking for work	11	1.0%
Not in work – not looking for work	98	9.1%
Other	43	4.0%
Prefer not to say	33	3.1%

Base = all (1,076) surveyed parents – 2 respondents did not provide an answer to this question

**Table D.7: Do you have a partner or spouse living with you?**

	Number of responses	Percentage
Yes	912	84.8%
No	153	14.2%
Prefer not to say	10	0.9%

Base = all (1,075) surveyed parents – 3 respondents did not provide an answer to this question

**Table D.8: Sexual orientation**

	Number of responses	Percentage
Straight/Heterosexual	1,010*	95.5%
Gay or Lesbian	10*	1.0%
Bisexual	35*	3.1%
Other sexual orientation	5*	0.5%

Base = all (1,058) surveyed parents – 20 respondents did not provide an answer to this question

\* All categories have been rounded to the nearest 5 to reduce the risk of identifying individuals

**Table D.9: Ethnic group**

	Number of responses	Percentage
<b>White</b>		
Welsh, English Scottish, Northern Irish or British	999	92.9%
Irish	*	*%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0	0.0%
Roma	0	0.0%
Any other White background	22	2.0%
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</b>		
White and Black Caribbean	10	0.9%
White and Black African; White and Asian; Any other	6	0.6%
Mixed or Multiple background <sup>8</sup>		
<b>Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British</b>		
Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese <sup>8</sup>	13	1.2%
Any other Asian Background	6	0.6%
<b>Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African</b>		
African; Any other Black, Black British, Caribbean or African background <sup>8</sup>	6	0.6%
<b>Other ethnic group</b>		
Arab, Any other Ethnic Group	*	*%
Prefer not to say	*	*%

Base = all (1,075) surveyed parents – 3 respondents did not provide an answer to this question

\* Small numbers (less than 5) have been suppressed to reduce the risk of identifying individuals

**Table D.10: Religion**

	Number of responses	Percentage
No religion	661	69.7%
Christian (all denominations)	257	27.1%
Buddhist	*	*%
Hindu	*	*%
Jewish	*	*%
Muslim	16	1.7%
Any other religion	9	1.0%

Base = all (948) surveyed parents – 130 respondents did not provide an answer to this question

\* Small numbers (less than 5) have been suppressed to reduce the risk of identifying individuals

<sup>8</sup> Categories have been combined in this row where there are numbers lower than 5.