

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What do Peer Supporters do?**

Peer Supporters aim to provide support with breastfeeding, in an accessible and non-judgmental way. They can provide encouragement and understanding, a listening ear, plus information and suggestions if asked for. They may provide support in a range of ways; via facebook, by txt or phone conversation, email, at HBC coffee mornings, or somewhere else mutually convenient.

## **What education or training have Peer Supporters received?**

HBC Peer Supporters have graduated from a nine-week course, based on La Leche League New Zealand's Peer Counsellor Programme, taken by a HBC Lactation Consultant. Peer Supporters endeavor to keep up to date with breastfeeding information through their own learning and attending HBC Peer Supporter meetings.

## **Are Peer Supporters medically qualified?**

No. HBC Peer Supporters have received over 20 hours of breastfeeding education, but it is not a medical qualification. The information or suggestions a Peer Supporter might make does not replace guidance from your medical professional. If a Peer Supporter is unable to help you with a problem she will be aware of local options available for professional help.

## **How much does it cost to get support from a Peer Supporter?**

There is no charge to you.

## **Who can contact a Peer Supporter?**

Anybody is welcome to contact a Peer Supporter.

## **Can I contact a Peer Supporter if I am not currently breastfeeding?**

Yes. Peer Supporters will support you and your family/whanau anywhere on your feeding journey.

## **Can I contact a Peer Supporter about *stopping* breastfeeding?**

Yes, you can be assured of non-judgmental help and support whatever the reasons, or whatever timing, to meet your goals

## **Can I contact a Peer Supporter if I am still seeing a health professional?**

Absolutely. Peer Supporters are just one part of your important support network.

## **When is a good time to contact a Peer Supporter?**

You can contact a Peer Supporter while pregnant or at any stage of your feeding journey.

## **Have all Peer Supporters breastfed?**

Yes, and breastfeeding journeys can differ widely. Many have experienced difficulties along the way, so they understand the challenges.

## **Do Peer Supporters get paid?**

No. Peer Supporters kindly volunteer their time and energy.

## **How can I become a HBC Peer Supporter?**

Please contact Debbie [lc@helensvillebirthingcentre.co.nz](mailto:lc@helensvillebirthingcentre.co.nz)

## **What information is recorded about me?**

Peer Supporters report on the number of mothers they interact with, and how many times they interact. No personal details are reported or discussed with anybody else. Occasionally a Peer Supporter may want to share your details with the HBC Peer Supporter Administrator, or other health professional if they need help with an issue, but this will only ever be done with your agreement first.

## **What if I don't get on with the Peer Supporter I talk with?**

No-one will be upset if you would prefer to talk with another Peer Supporter. We all know we connect differently with different people. There are many Peer Supporters available, all from different walks of life and with different experiences.

## **How do I give feedback?**

All feedback is welcome. Please contact Michelle [manager@helensvillebirthingcentre.co.nz](mailto:manager@helensvillebirthingcentre.co.nz) or (09) 420 9616