

# Providing excellent community and primary care in partnership with others

Tower Hamlets 0-19 Service  
Family Nurse Partnership  
Supporting Mothers in a Trauma Informed Way



## Population served:

The service caters to first time parents living in Tower Hamlets who are aged 21 and under and 22- to 24-year-olds who have additional vulnerabilities.

## Tower Hamlets 0-19 Service Family Nurse Partnership

The Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) is a voluntary home visiting programme for first-time young mums and families. It has been in Tower Hamlets since 2007. A specially trained family nurse visits the young mum regularly from early pregnancy until their child is one to two years of age. The team supports mothers in a trauma informed way, which means having a complete picture of their life situation — past and present — to provide effective care.

## How do we support primary care?

The service in Tower Hamlets is notified by Barts Health hospital of expectant parents who meet the FNP eligibility criteria. GPs are often the first point of contact for maternity care and so are key stakeholders in the service, however, anyone can refer into the service.

The Healthy Child Programme is embedded within the FNP service. The FNP programme is delivered by specialist nurses who have midwifery / health visiting and nursing backgrounds.

## Key highlights of the FNP service

Young parents on the programme are given an opportunity to give feedback and to share their experience with commissioners and the wider stakeholder audience during the yearly FNP annual review. They are also involved in the interview process for new Family Nurses joining the programme.

With the support of the commissioning and provider organisations, the service has adhered to the key features of the programme called core model element (client eligibility and enrolment; Family Nurse recruitment and working practices; supervisor recruitment and working practices; local organisational infrastructure, resources and administrative support) required to faithfully reproduce the programme that has been rigorously tested.

Future commitment from the borough's Public Health team and the GP Care Group will enable ongoing provision of this valuable service for some of the most vulnerable families in Tower Hamlets.

## What do our residents say?

Mum aged 20, joined the Family Nurse Partnership programme when she was 25 weeks pregnant, booked late for antenatal care.

History of being taken into care at birth; adopted aged 4 years; back in care aged 13; multiple foster placements. Problems with trust, difficulty building relationships and suspicion of professionals.

With the support of her Family Nurse (FN) who worked skilfully through the therapeutic relationship she overcame her anxiety and has engaged well on the programme.

Her child is now 19 months, she will graduate at 2 years. The ending of the relationship with her FN is bringing up a lot of difficult feelings and emotions related to her childhood history when relationships ended abruptly. To avoid re-traumatisation the Family Nurse is using Family Nurse Partnership communication skills and programme material to model a good ending which she will hopefully internalise for future relationships.

## What makes the FNP service great?

The spirit and ethos of FNP readily lends to being trauma informed. Trauma is an increasingly recognised aspect of care, both for those accessing and those delivering care. Poverty, deprivation, domestic abuse, teenage pregnancy, adolescent crime and violence often shapes the lives of the young parents receiving the FNP service.

The FNP national unit provides strategic oversight and is responsible for the training programme which includes trauma informed awareness / practice linked to the underlying FNP attachment and human ecology theories.

FNP is a relational programme. Family Nurses know that relationships are key to healing trauma. They understand the barriers that clients experience engaging with services, that situations often feel threatening to them and pose potential challenges to building relationships.

