

# Who are health visitors and what do they do?

They are a vital infrastructure, working in partnership with families, communities and professionals



**infant** - /'ɪnf(ə)nt/  
from Latin infant - 'unable to speak'

Health visitors speak up for babies and their families

## Who are health visitors?

- Registered nurses or midwives
- Have additional registered specialist training in public health
- Part of the 'health' workforce
- Work with all families from pregnancy to starting school
- Innovative workforce embracing digital technology



## What do health visitors do?

- Support **thousands** of families every week
- Provide extra support when families need it the most
- Build on families' strengths
- Deliver Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)
- Prevent** costly problems or spot them early
- Connect families to the right support and find solutions together
- Building a fairer society

## Health creation is at the heart of health visiting

"As we recover from the pandemic, we have huge opportunities and challenges ahead...I am convinced that health visitors will play a key role in addressing the crucial issues amongst the families they work with."

Dr Camilla Kingdon, President of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health



### Physical Health

#### Child physical health

- Promoting health and wellbeing
- Coping with a **premature or sick** baby
- Infant feeding difficulties
- Faltering growth
- Identifying and managing common childhood illnesses
- Immunisations
- Newborn screening and genomics
- Childhood obesity
- Promoting oral health
- Complex health conditions** and disabilities such as liver disease and **neuro developmental disorders**
- Foetal alcohol spectrum disorders

#### Adult physical health

- Common and **serious problems** in the postnatal period
- Pregnancy planning and sexual health advice
- Promoting physical activity, healthy weight and lifestyles - smokefree families



### Social needs & safeguarding

- Building community connections**
- Reducing accidents
- Supporting vulnerable families**
- Domestic abuse
- Substance misuse



### Child development

- Sleep
- Speech, language and communication
- School readiness
- Behaviour
- Promoting child development



### Mental Health

- Promoting** good mental health and wellbeing of the whole family
- Identifying** 'red flags' and risk of suicide
- Assessment** of mental health
- Delivering evidence-based **interventions**
- Supporting healthy parent-infant and couple relationships



Adapted in collaboration with NHS Scotland Partners

