



Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership

Local Maternity and Neonatal System Urgent Safety Alert

Situation:	A Regulation 28 Prevention of Future Deaths report has been published following the death of a baby whilst in a sling and breastfeeding.
Background:	<p>A coroner has issued a Prevention of Future Deaths notice following the death of a 6 week old baby boy who died during 'hands-free' breastfeeding.</p> <p>The baby was being breastfed within a baby carrier worn by his mother. After 5 minutes she found that he had collapsed and although immediate resuscitation was commenced, he sadly died 3 days later.</p> <p>The conclusion of the inquest was that the baby died because his airway was occluded due to being too far down the sling and not being held in a safe position whilst within the sling.</p>
Assessment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ There is insufficient safety information available from any source to inform parents of safe positioning in slings, particularly in relation to breastfeeding.○ There is currently no national guidance on breastfeeding in a sling and very little information on safety and positioning of young babies in slings.○ There is no national guidance on breastfeeding hands-free or manufacturer guidance on breastfeeding hands-free whilst in a sling.○ The NCT provide 'tips' on their website but these were deemed by the coroner to be 'unhelpful'. <p>The Section 28 report has been issued to NHSE, Department of Health and Social Care, BSI group and Office for Product Safety and Standards, with a request for a response by 21/02/25 that contains details of action taken or proposed to be taken, setting out the timetable for action.</p> <p>It has also been shared with the Lullaby Trust, ROSPA and the NCT for their information.</p>
Immediate recommendations:	<p>To promote the 'TICKS' acronym when discussing sling wearing with parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Tight○ In view at all times○ Close enough to kiss○ Keep chin off the chest○ Supported back <p>To advise parents that breastfeeding a young baby hands-free in a sling is considered to be unsafe due to the risk of suffocation and not being able to meet every aspect of TICKS.</p>

Response required:	All DoMs/HoMs to acknowledge receipt of this alert and confirmation that it has been distributed to all staff groups within 7 working days of receipt.
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References:

[James Alderman: Prevention of Future Deaths Report - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary](#)

Recommended further learning resources:

[Baby slings - RoSPA](#)

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