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6<sup>th</sup> November 2014

# **Infant feeding and public health – the challenge for Wales**

Dr. Julie Bishop

# Breastfeeding and child health

- Acute otitis media
- Non-specific gastroenteritis
- Severe lower respiratory tract infections
- Atopic dermatitis
- Obesity
- Type 1 and 2 diabetes
- Childhood leukaemia
- SIDS
- Necrotising enterocolitis

*Ip S et al: AHRQ Review April 2007*

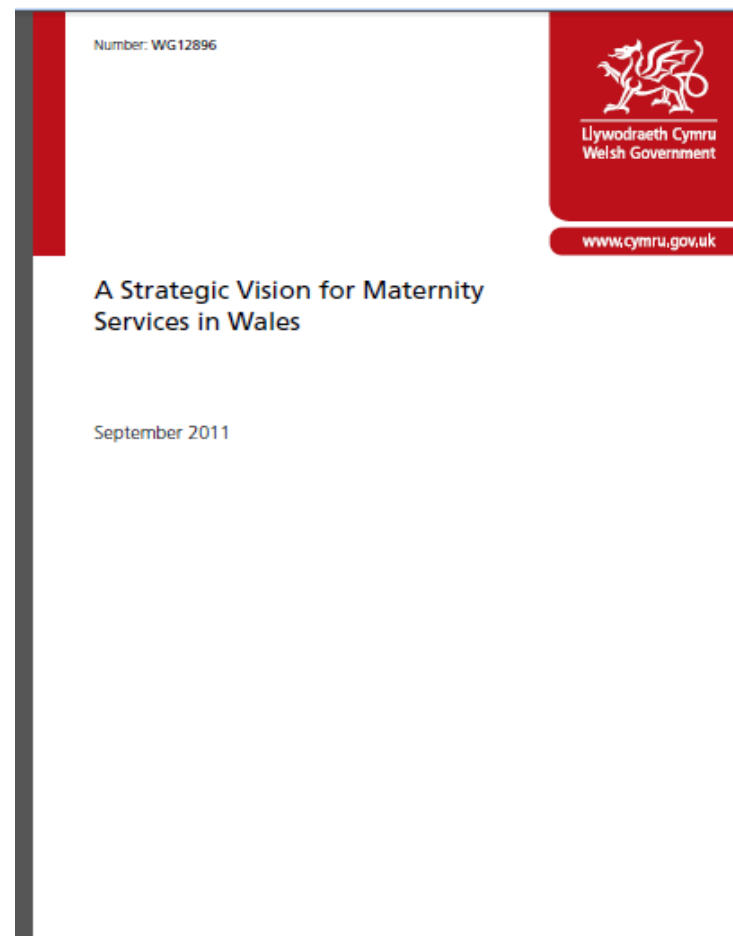
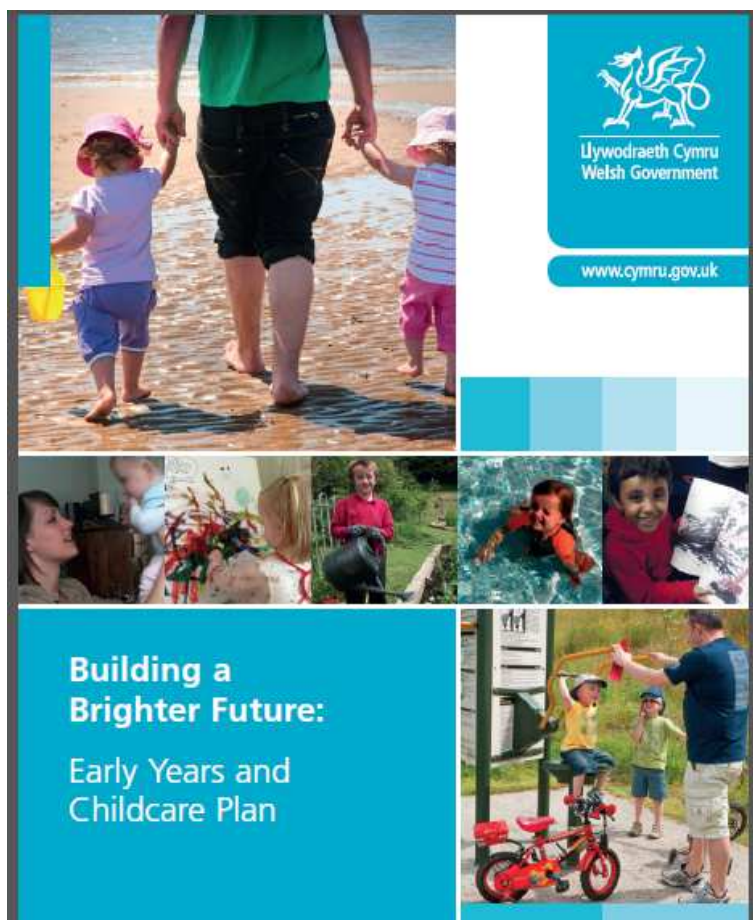
# Policy Context



- Investing in a Better Start: Promoting Breastfeeding in Wales (2001)
- Estimated initiation rates of 46% in Wales at the time
- Short, Medium and Longer Term goals
- Basis of current Breastfeeding Programme in Wales

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# Policy Context – Early Years



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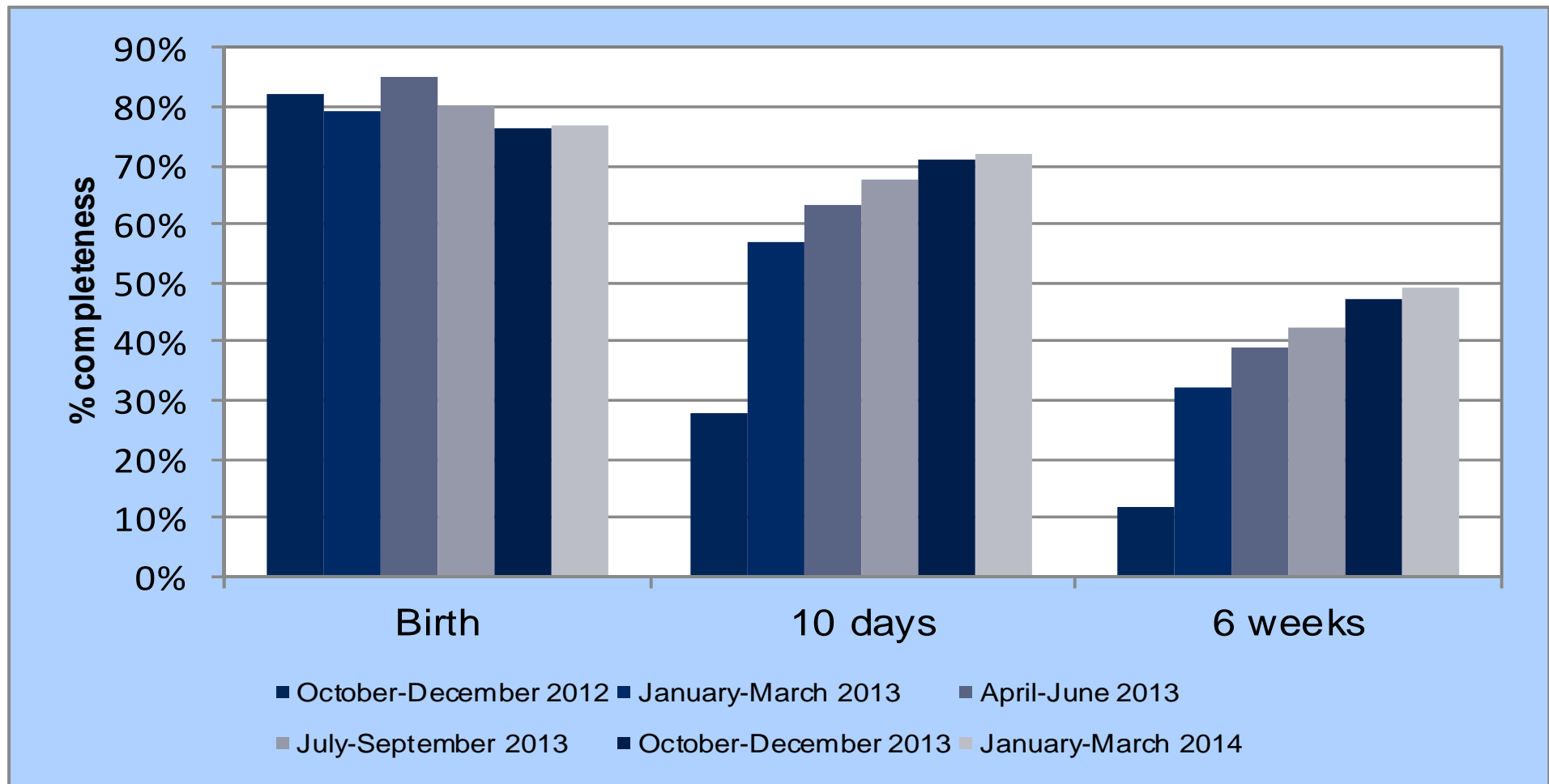
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# Key Achievements

- Breastfeeding rates at Wales level have increased by around 10 percentage points since 2001
- Good progress towards achieving Baby Friendly Status in Welsh Hospitals and Community Services
- Established peer support programme



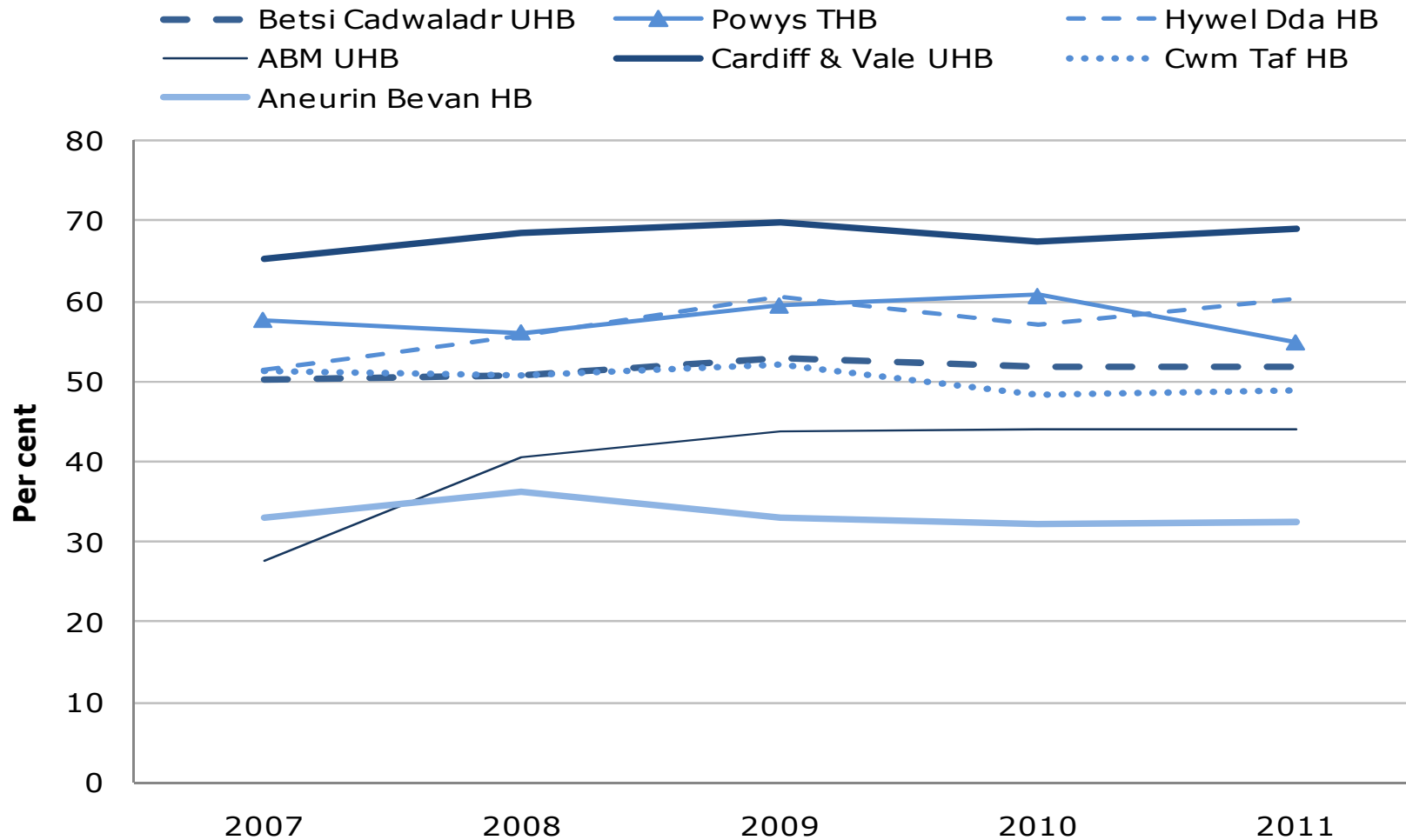
**Chart 1: Completeness (%) of breastfeeding data by quarter, Wales**



Source: NCCHD

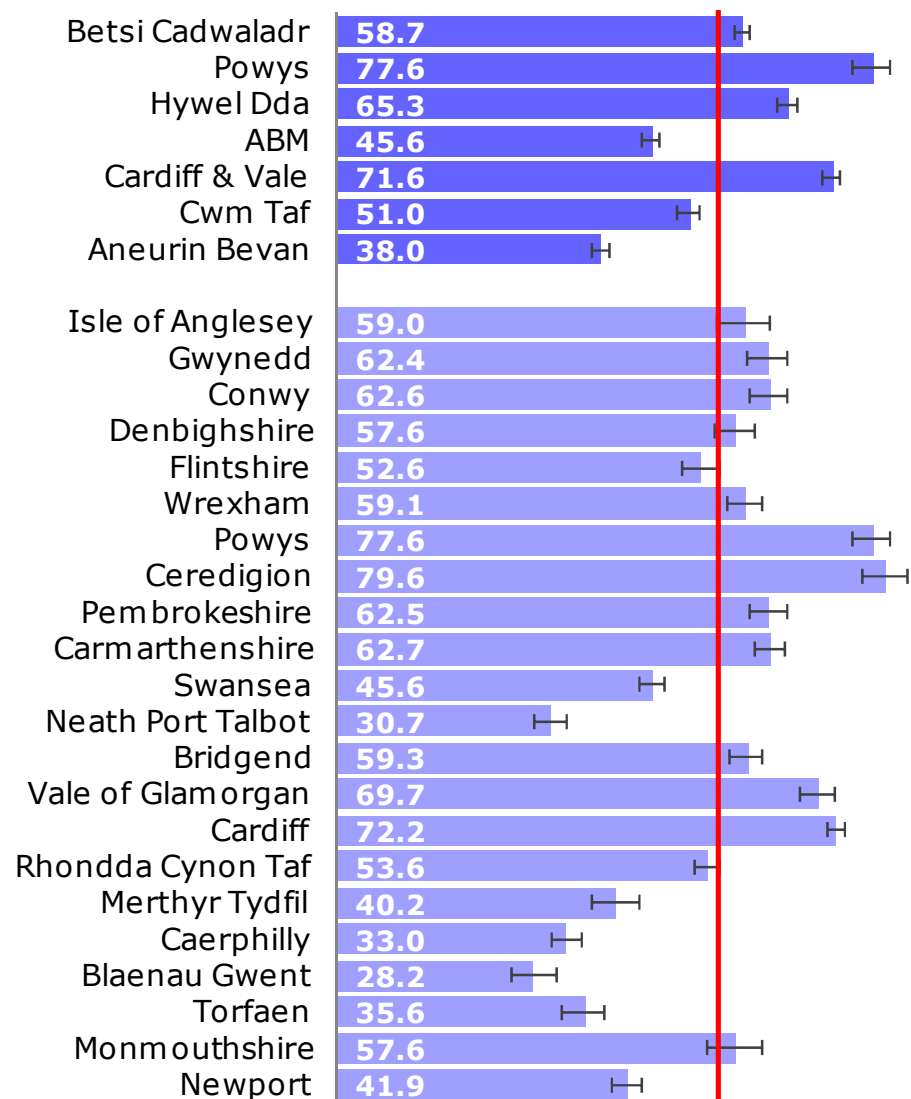
### Percentage of live births (where breastfeeding status recorded) breastfed at birth, 2007-2011

Produced by Public Health Wales Observatory, using StatsWales (WG)



# Breastfeeding at Birth 2011

Wales = 55.5%



Produced by Public Health Wales Observatory, using NCCHD (NWIS)

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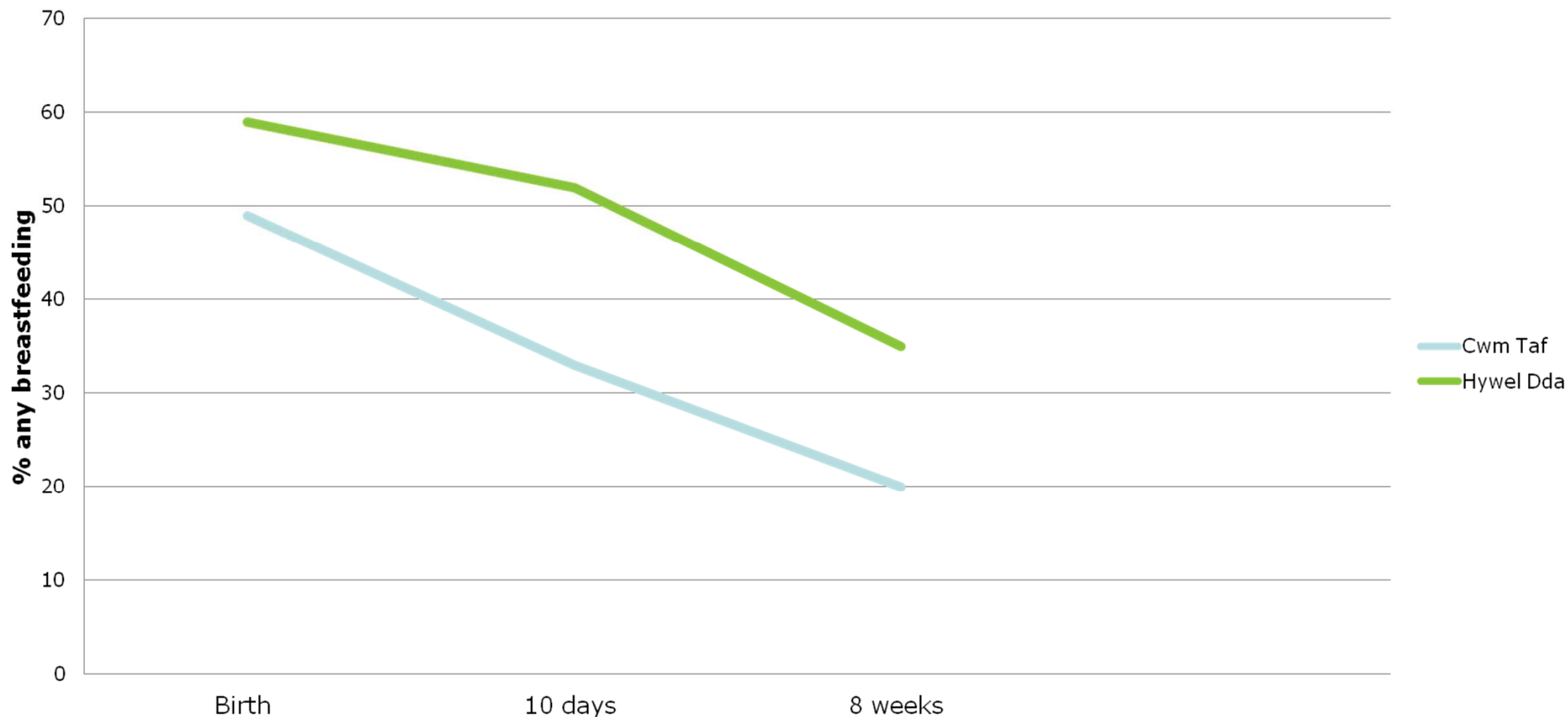
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# Breastfeeding at birth, 10 days and 8 weeks January - March 2014

## *NCCHD database*



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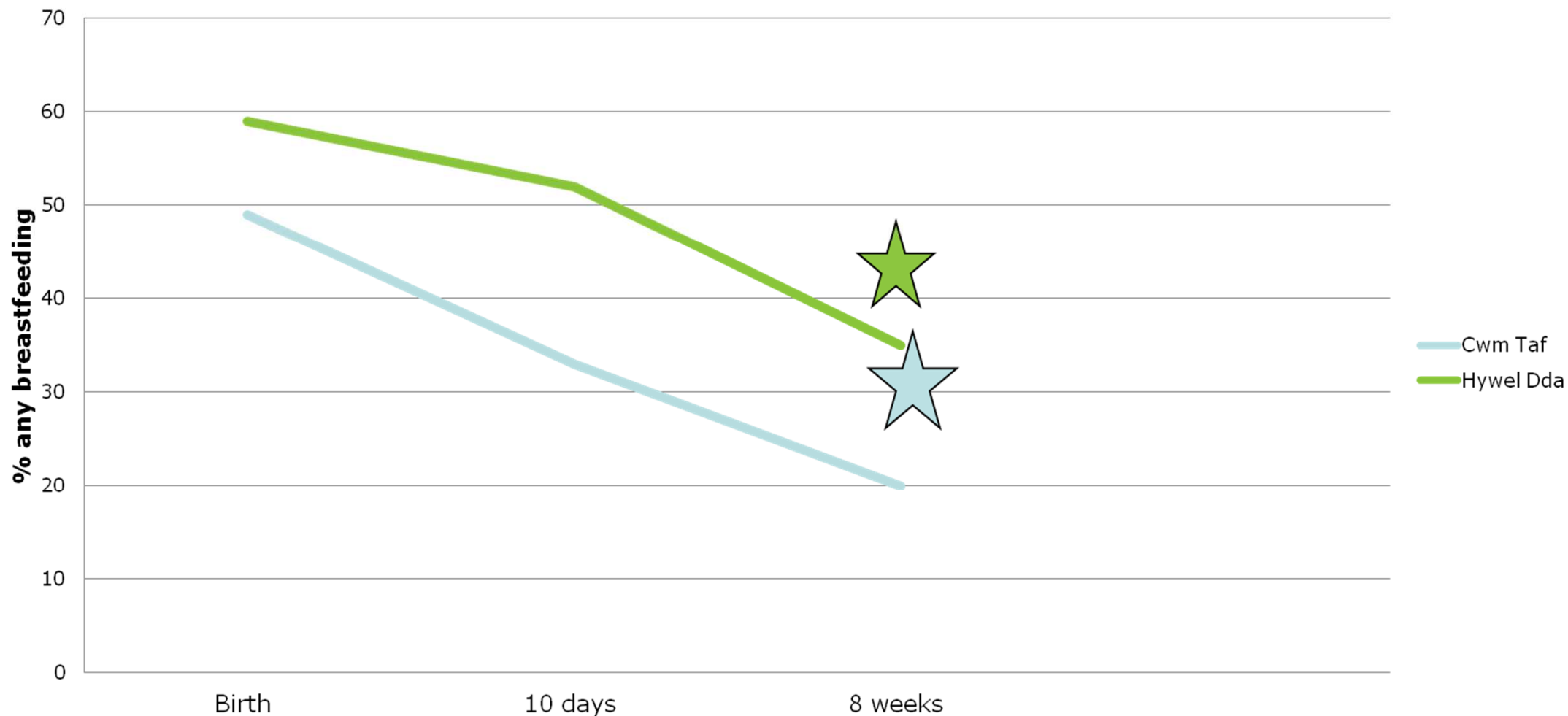


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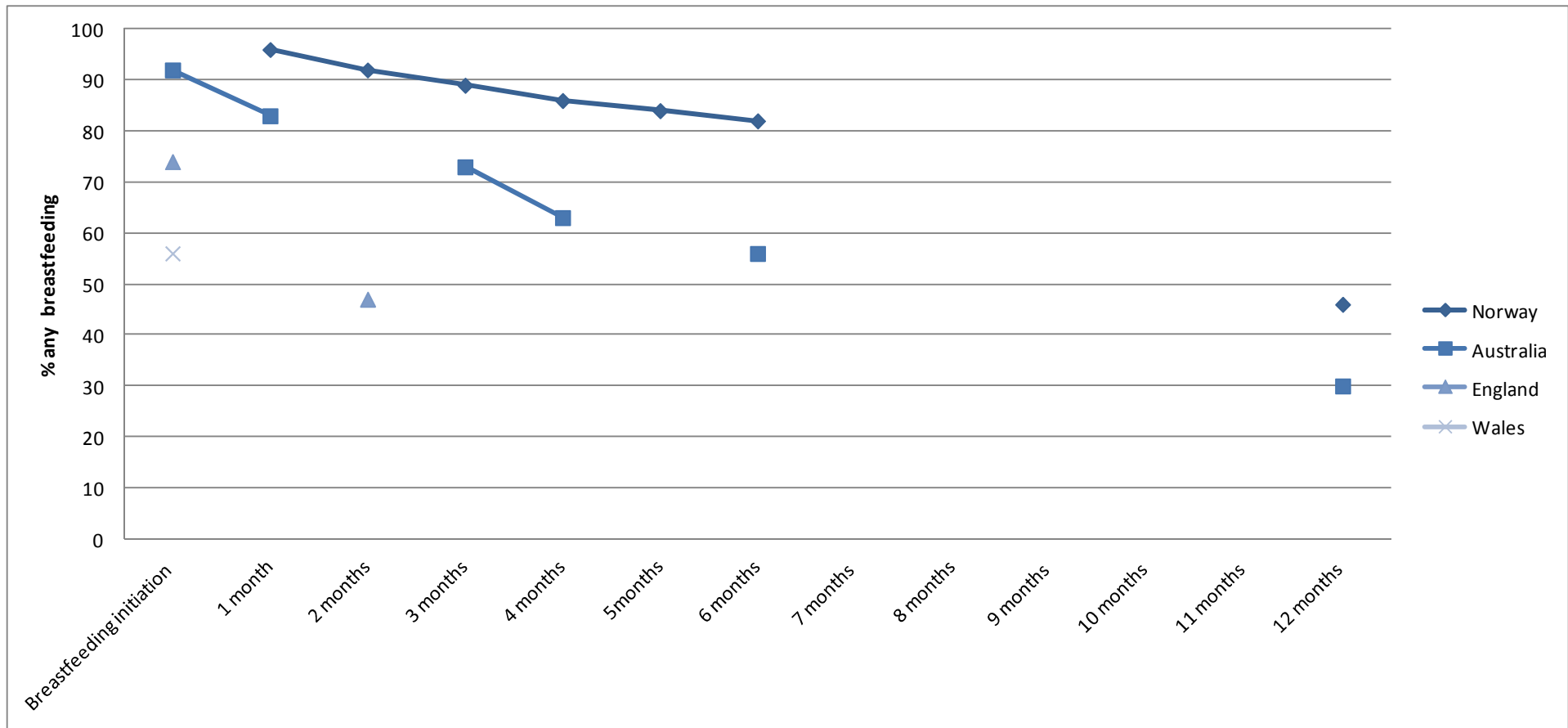
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# International comparisons any breastfeeding NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre (2011) University of Sydney



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# Summary

- In many areas of Wales breastfeeding your baby is not the normal thing to do
- Even in areas where breastfeeding is initiated, maintaining breastfeeding in line with recommendations is not the normal thing to do

# Transforming Health Improvement in Wales

Working together to build a healthier, happier future



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# Breastfeeding Programme Recommendations

- Very supportive of Baby Friendly Programme
- Uncertain about role of peer support
- Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme too small to make an impact, unclear how significant a determinant this is

# Peer Support Programme

- Review undertaken including qualitative interviews with health professionals; peer supporters; parents
- Lack of clarity of purpose and mechanisms for action
- Variation in levels of support across Wales



# Challenges

- Breastfeeding becomes something that most women want to do; the way that most fathers want their children to be fed
- Having made the choice to breastfeed women and their families need ready access to support and help to breastfeed for as long as they choose



# Future Direction

- Need to think differently
- Increase understanding of attitudes and beliefs at a population level and methods for influencing these
- Increase understanding of role of peer support
- Recognise and value good data