The Breastfeeding Dilemma

How PeRU funding helped me make friends & influence people

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The Research: The Breastfeeding Dilemma

How do we support and encourage breastfeeding, without subjecting those who are unable, or choose not to, breastfeed to shame and guilt?
First contact

I emailed the NCT to our workshops on “Taking Pregnancy Seriously”
The PeRU Grant: £3000

• Get on NCT Research Advisory Group Programme
• Hold two-way Workshop with key stakeholders, NCT, La Leche League, Mumsnet, Midwives.
• Use notes from workshop to gain a concrete understanding of how our research can be used by NCT and other front line care providers.
• Take first steps towards a memorandum of understanding agreeing a public engagement partnership with the NCT using our research in e.g. NCT antenatal and postnatal classes.
• Disseminate learning about the process of forming a public engagement partnership to the Public Engagement Network via a talk
Breastfeeding Dilemma Workshop

- Planned to bring together academics, policy makers, practitioners and parents
- Used contact at NCT to advise on speakers
- Held in London 23rd March 2016
- Advertised through NCT mailing list and social media
- Followed by ‘Virtual Workshop’ in August
Breastfeeding Dilemma Workshop Feedback

• 80% of respondents indicated that they were likely to use the research in their personal or professional lives.

• “This will inform my tutoring and supervision.” (BfN Tutor, supervisor and supporter)

• “As a student midwife I hope to use this broadening of thought to facilitate my understanding/ empathy when working with individual women that I encounter during my hospital placement.” (Student Midwife).
After effects...

- Invited to present at BFN Annual Conference, where I met...
- ...Alison Thewliss, MP, chair of APPG on Infant Feeding, so I was...
- ...Invited to attend APPG IF
- ESRC IAA application with Laura Dennison, NCT, BFN, RCOM, local HV,..
- Article for NCT Perspective (led to more media coverage)
- Invitation to present at NCT RAG (hopefully!)
- In position to influence NCT and BFN infant feeding policy
Tips?

• Be ready for unexpected hiccups/ opportunities

• Go to as many events as possible.

• Hold events of your own as invitations are a great way to make contact.

• Talk to people at events and ensure you follow up afterwards.

• Be active on social media. Follow people on twitter, retweet relevant material and get in touch to thank people who retweet your messages.