



2019-2022

Bliss Scotland strategy

Giving every baby born premature or sick
the best chance of survival and quality of life

**Bliss
Scotland**
for babies born
premature or sick

Achieving the best outcomes for babies born premature or sick is at the heart of everything we do at Bliss Scotland.



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In 2016, we set our ambition to give every baby born premature or sick in Scotland the best chance of survival and quality of life; a goal we will continue to work towards with this new strategy.

We've made real strides with our work in Scotland over the last three years, increasing delivery of our services to parents and health professionals alongside extensive policy and campaigning work to improve consistent provision of high quality care nationally. We have recruited and trained more volunteers to deliver emotional support to parents with a baby on the neonatal unit; started to roll out the Bliss Baby Charter quality framework to improve family-centred care, with two-thirds of Scottish units already working towards this set of standards; published our flagship Baby Report in early 2017 setting out the improvements and changes needed to neonatal care across Scotland; and influenced the development and delivery of the Scottish Government's *Best Start - A Five Year Forward Plan for Maternity and Neonatal Care*, including campaigning for implementation of the national Neonatal Expenses Fund.

As part of the Bliss group of charities working across the UK, we have also developed and disseminated new and updated information resources for parents with a baby in neonatal care.

This strategy sets out how we intend to build on this progress to deliver even more for all babies born premature or sick across Scotland over the next three years. As we enter our 40th anniversary year at Bliss - and our 10th anniversary year since we were formally constituted in Scotland - we have an opportunity to reflect on the changes and developments made in neonatal care as a result of our work since we were founded. It's also a chance to celebrate the contribution of all those people who believe, as we do, that every baby deserves the best start in life and who make our work possible every day.

Thank you for your ongoing support and for working with us to give every baby born premature or sick the best chance of survival and quality of life.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Caroline Lee-Davey'.

Caroline Lee-Davey
Chief Executive

Our vision, mission and values

Our vision

Bliss Scotland's vision is that every baby born premature or sick in Scotland has the best chance of survival and quality of life.

Our mission

Bliss Scotland champions the right for every baby born premature or sick to receive the best care. We achieve this by empowering families, influencing policy and practice, and enabling life-changing research.

Our values

Our values support a culture at Bliss Scotland which promotes a positive workplace and enables us to recruit and retain a skilled and passionate team. They also set a standard for how we aim to work with parents, professionals and supporters.

Trusted

We are entrusted to give voice to all babies born premature or sick. We believe that trust is earned and our actions must always be based on what is best for babies.

Supportive

We believe that developing supportive relationships is at the heart of what we do, and only by supporting others are we able to achieve our goals.

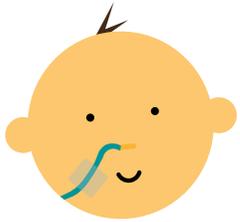
Ambitious

We always go the extra mile to deliver excellence and seek improvement in all we do.

Our strategic objectives



Our strategic objectives



For more babies born premature or sick to survive.



For babies born premature or sick to have well-supported parents playing an active role in their decision-making and care.



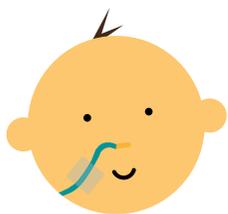
For babies born premature or sick to be cared for in neonatal environments that best support their development.



For babies born premature or sick to benefit from neonatal research that can lead to practical improvements in their care.



For babies born premature or sick to receive high-quality care within a neonatal health system which is appropriately funded, structured and staffed.



For more babies born premature or sick to survive

While Scotland's overall infant mortality rate is now the lowest of all four UK nations, reducing this rate still further remains a core priority of Scottish Government policy and a focus across NHS Scotland. At Bliss Scotland, we will work in partnership with other charities and professional bodies to ensure that there is a sustained commitment to deliver on this – including through effective implementation of the *Best Start - A Five Year Forward Plan for Maternity and Neonatal Care* – and to ensure that the opportunity to learn from every case of neonatal death is taken.

We will:

- work in partnership with other charities to ensure the Scottish Government remains focused on reducing the infant mortality rate.
- work alongside other charities and professional bodies to ensure that lessons are learned from every case of neonatal death and shared at a national level.



For babies born premature or sick to have well-supported parents playing an active role in their decision-making and care

Supporting parents to play a hands-on role in their babies' care has proven health and developmental benefits for babies and can also improve bonding and wellbeing for the whole family. But many parents tell us they find this very difficult in the neonatal environment. This can lead to feelings of helplessness and isolation. Across our services we aim to ensure that parents of babies in neonatal care are equipped and encouraged to play an active role in their care.

We will:

- facilitate the provision of emotional support for parents through both our volunteer-delivered services and online peer communities.
- share good practice in how to involve families in their babies' care with neonatal healthcare professionals through our Bliss Baby Charter programme and Bliss Excellence Network.
- continue to focus on reducing the barriers that prevent many parents from being actively involved in their baby's care on the neonatal unit, including insufficient parent accommodation, facilities and support.
- work with partner charities to promote the delivery of high quality bereavement care, and support for parents in making decisions at the end of their baby's life.



For babies born premature or sick to be cared for in neonatal environments that best support their development

Developmental and family-centred approaches to care bring proven benefits to babies and families. By working hand-in-hand with neonatal units and taking a leading role in training health professionals, we will support them to share good practice and learn from each other.

We will:

- work with neonatal units to improve and increase the delivery of family-centred care, including hands-on parental involvement in care, through support with the Bliss Baby Charter.
- share knowledge and understanding of family-centred care through the Bliss Excellence Network, our online learning portal and peer-to-peer forum for neonatal healthcare professionals.



For babies born premature or sick to benefit from neonatal research that can lead to practical improvements in their care

Achieving the best outcomes for babies born premature or sick – now and in the future – is at the heart of everything we do. By funding and supporting research, we are investing in babies' futures through the continuous improvement of their care. Our focus is on research projects that involve parent perspectives to ensure that babies' needs are represented.

We will:

- support UK-based neonatal research projects to ensure they include input from parents.
- share research findings with neonatal health professionals through our Bliss Excellence Network to embed practical improvements in care.



For babies born premature or sick to receive high-quality care within a neonatal health system which is appropriately funded, structured and staffed

Demand for neonatal services continues to grow as complex births become more common and survival of babies born at lower gestations improves. To ensure safe, high quality care, it is essential that additional resources are invested to build the neonatal workforce needed for the future. It is important that the workforce is sufficient in both numbers and skill mix to ensure babies have the best possible chance of survival and quality of life, and for ensuring parents are supported to be partners in their babies' care.

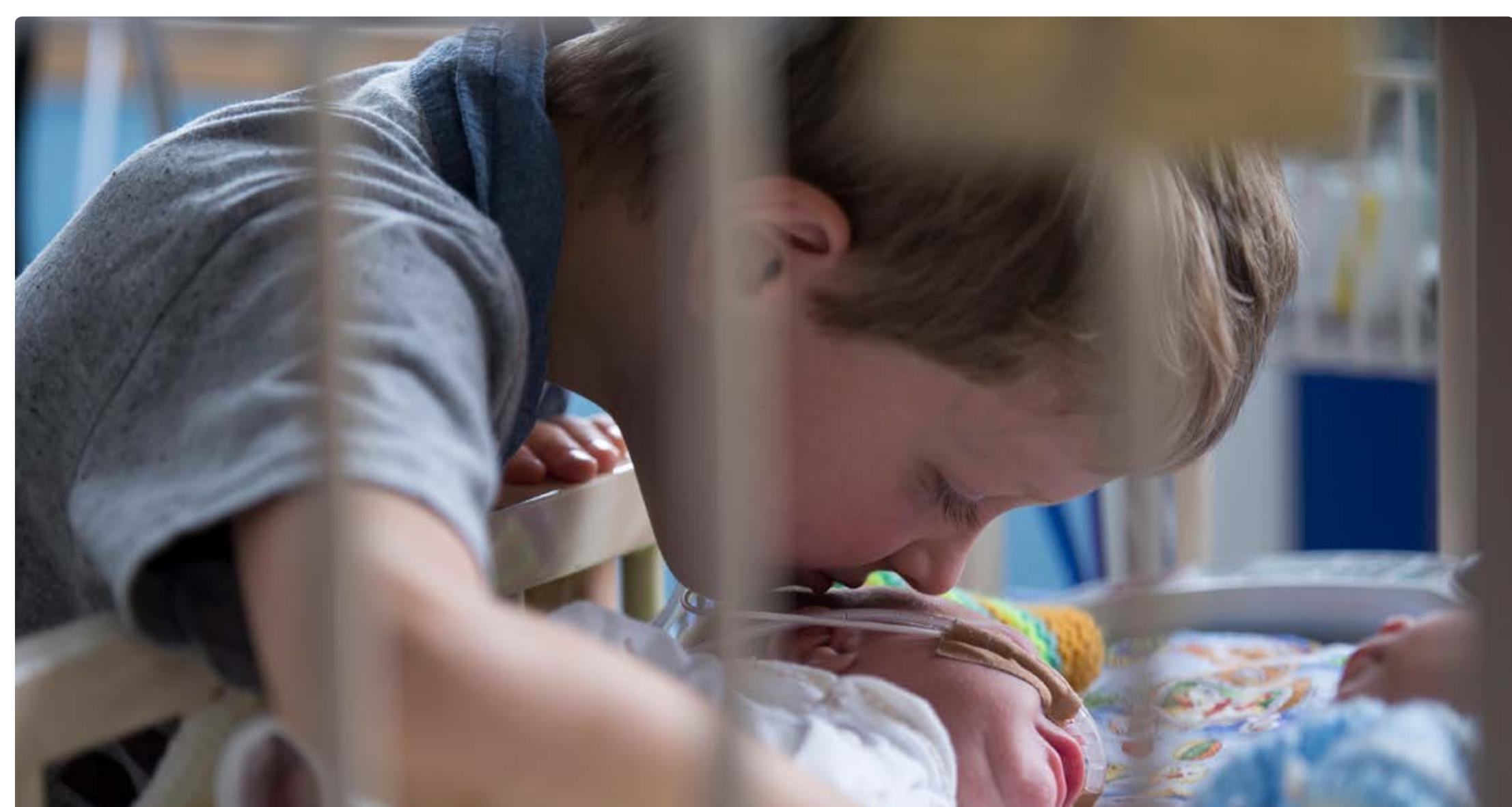
We will:

- work with politicians and decision-makers to ensure that resourcing and staffing of neonatal care is in line with evidence about what is best for babies.
- campaign for effective implementation of evidence-based neonatal quality standards.
- work with politicians and decision-makers to raise the profile and importance of neonatal care.

Our organisational development

As we continue to develop and expand our services and reach in Scotland, over the next three years we will also be focusing on strengthening our governance and sustainability as a charity within the Bliss group of charities. This will involve:

- reviewing our governance model and ensuring that our Trustee Board effectively represents our key stakeholders in Scotland, while maintaining strong links with our Bliss UK Trustee Board
- continuing to develop our Scottish fundraising to ensure that through the generosity of our Scottish supporters, we're able to fully fund all of our activities in Scotland.



Bliss Scotland's vision is that every baby born premature or sick in Scotland has the best chance of survival and quality of life.

We rely on the generosity of our supporters and partners to help us make this a reality. To find out more about what we do and how you can get involved, please get in touch.

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