

TFN Impact Report

Name of your Organisation:	The Human Milk Foundation
Name of the project TFN funded:	Milk donor screening programme
Date Funded by TFN:	05/12/2019
Were you able to undertake your project as planned?	Yes
If no, please outline how the project has changed.	
Can you describe and/or demonstrate the specific impact that TFN funding has had against your initial objectives?	<p>At the time we pitched to TFN we had to turn away many of the mothers who approached the Hearts Milk Bank wanting to donate their milk. This was due to a lack of funding as the process of screening each potential milk donor costs £100. The primary objective behind pitching to TFN was to raise funds to enable us to screen more of the women who wanted to donate their milk - which would in turn result in a higher quantity of milk coming through our milk bank to be pasteurised, enabling us to help more families and save babies' lives.</p> <p>Since the TFN event we have recruited 336 donors, pasteurised 2977 litres of donor milk, issued 2415 litres (up from 1506 in 2019), and supported 104 families in the community. We have also hired a new lactation consultant who will be able to support new parents using a new digital platform called Virtually which will enable us to reach more people who need our service particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic which has resulted in many isolated parents in times of crisis. The funds from the TFN event made a vital contribution to this growth at a truly critical time.</p>
What portion of the project did TFN fund?	25%
How many direct beneficiaries did the TFN funded project reach?	The TFN funding enabled us to recruit 85 new milk donors, whose donated milk would on average feed 1700 babies.
How many indirect beneficiaries did the TFN funded project reach?	The impact of receiving donor milk for the babies who receive it is life-changing, but additionally this has a positive impact on parents' mental health and the wider family which is very significant. We therefore estimate that over 5000 people have directly benefited as a result of this funding.
Were you able to leverage further funding as a result of TFN support?	Yes
If yes, how much were you able to raise?	Yes - the charity has raised £209,662 since April in grants and donations, including grants from Comic Relief, the National Lottery and our first Clinical Commissioning Group award. TFN support undoubtedly enabled us to build credibility and confidence in our pitches and grant applications and to be considered as a fundable organisation by other major Trusts and Foundations.

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Did you receive any pro-bono support, volunteer offers or introductions as a result of the event?	Yes
If yes, please can you provide details of the support you received?	Yes. Several individuals at the TFN event spoke to us personally and offered their time and support to the charity which was most kind. Caroline Swanson who sponsored us for the event has given us considerable support over the last year for which we are incredibly grateful.
Has the training you received from TFN better prepared you in pitching your organisation to potential funders?	Yes
Has TFN increased your capacity to raise further funds?	Yes
How important was TFN funding in helping you achieve your objectives?	We wouldn't have been able to achieve our objectives without TFN funding
Since presenting at TFN, has your organisation undergone any other significant changes?	<p>We have had a very eventful year since presenting at TFN - please watch our short video on the link here which shows a summary of our year: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SzuK-wB4QJY</p> <p>Only two months after we pitched to TFN, the COVID-19 pandemic began. The pandemic has resulted in us having to make a number of significant changes to the organisation. We have seen a 100% increase in the need for our service, and have had to recruit 10 additional milk donors a week, providing donor milk to scores of families in hospital or at home. Due to this increased need and the extra safety measures we have implemented due to the pandemic, we have needed to bring in an additional member of the office team and increase the hours of our existing team just to stay on top of this heightened level of need. We've also had to bring in new equipment to enable us to pasteurise more donor milk to keep up with demand. Our funding has been drastically cut as all fundraising events for the year have been cancelled. The COVID-19 restrictions have meant many isolated parents are not able to access feeding support, so many families have contacted us in crisis. The UCL COVID-19 New Mum Study completed by over 2000 mums revealed that nearly half of mums who delivered during the lockdown felt they had not received enough support with feeding their baby. More than half of mums who gave birth before the lockdown reported a decrease in support with infant feeding. We are now looking at larger premises, with a view to expanding our capacity even further and have ambitions to provide donor milk further across the UK, with new hospitals coming on board such as Newcastle which presents challenges in the transportation of donor milk in an environmentally sustainable and time-sensitive way. We're hoping to partner with an</p>

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	<p>organisation that can help us reduce our carbon emissions whilst developing a system that will enable us to transport donor milk to and from our hubs as we expand. Our Norfolk donor milk hub opened last year and is supporting families across East Anglia. We have two further hubs in Kent and South Wales due to open this year and are looking at establishing one in the north of England as well.</p> <p>Global collaboration, communication and sharing of data has become even more urgent and meaningful as we face the COVID-19 pandemic. The HMF formed The Global Alliance of Milk Banks and Associations (GAMBA) in 2020 - a collaborative network of human milk bank leaders, doctors & scientists with more than 100 members from 40 countries around the world, to collaborate and share best practise. We also launched a campaign for World Day of Human Milk Donation, working with Alive & Thrive Vietnam, Irish Aid, PATH, HMBANA and members from GAMBA we pulled together over 100 messages and photos from 36 countries in the shape of a milk drop with a campaign video that was widely shared globally. This was the first time that the day had been celebrated on a global level.</p> <p>This and our national campaigns have resulted in extensive media coverage with the work of the HMF / HMB featured by Channel 4 Dispatches, Sky News, BBC News, ITV News, Channel 4 News, The Conversation, Huffington Post, The Guardian, Metro, Good Morning Britain, Women's Hour, The Jeremy Vine Show, as well as regular local press coverage in the Herts Advertiser, Watford Observer, Hemel Hempstead Gazette, Three Counties Radio. You can watch the piece about us on Sky News here: https://youtu.be/gUuuCyyWg7E</p> <p>We continue to raise the importance of our work with policy makers - HMF Co-Founders Dr. Natalie Shenker and Gillian Weaver regularly present our work at the APPG on Infant Feeding & Inequalities. Natalie and Amy Brown were invited to Number 10 Downing Street in February 2020 and we continue to make headway with Ministers in DHSC. Our work published in the BMJ on the environmental impact of infant feeding directly led to the #WABA2020 campaign, Supporting Breastfeeding for a Healthier Planet.</p> <p>In 2020 Dr. Natalie Shenker continued her excellent work as a Future Leaders Research Fellow with Imperial College London, leading vital research into the importance of milk banking during COVID-19, the presence of COVID-19 antibodies in human milk and the published work in The BMJ, The Lancet, Journal of Maternal and Child Nutrition, Infant, RCPCh, RCM, and British Association of Perinatal Medicine.</p>
<p>Do you have any other comments or feedback on the experience of the TFN process?</p>	<p>The TFN event was a real highlight for the charity in an eventful year. We thoroughly enjoyed pitching and meeting the wonderful individuals who supported us, and it was also great to learn about the work of the other good causes who pitched alongside us on the night. TFN is a fantastic initiative and the experience is one that we have often reflected upon as a turning point for the charity. We would love</p>

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	<p>the opportunity to present to your members to further show the impact of the funding we received from TFN, or the opportunity to pitch again at a future event. If you'd like any further information please do not hesitate to get in touch.</p>
<p>Can you tell us any personal stories to highlight the value of the project?</p>	<p>Kim, 38, from London received donor human milk from The Hearts Milk Bank following her baby's battle to survive. Her baby, Indigo was born during lockdown and spent the first few weeks of his life in neonatal intensive care following serious health complications that arose during a difficult birth. Kim said:</p> <p>"When I lost my uncle to Coronavirus in March, I became terrified of the thought of giving birth in a hospital and decided to have a home birth. My labour was slow to progress but I was comfortable and felt safe at home. This was until my baby had a bowel movement before being born. I was rushed to hospital and my little boy, Indigo, was seriously unwell with Meconium Aspiration Syndrome. It was heartbreaking to see him fighting for his life. I was only able to hold him once during this entire time and I couldn't breastfeed him at all. After three weeks of him being wired up to machines in hospital and fed through a syringe, he was finally strong enough for us to take him home. I was desperate to breastfeed and give him the strength and immunity he needed through my own milk. I'd been breast pumping to help increase my supply while Indigo was recovering but I just wasn't producing enough milk. Indigo couldn't stomach formula and he was starting to lose weight quickly. My midwife mentioned donor milk and this is when we found The Hearts Milk Bank. We received our first delivery of donor milk a matter of days later and it was a game changer. It gave me time for my milk supply to build up and gave Indigo the strength he needed to get through those difficult first few weeks at home. The service you provide is so important to so many of us that words can't really say enough. What you have done for us as a family goes beyond supporting just Indigo, it's outstanding and we feel very blessed. Thank you so so much.!</p> <p>Emma from Hemel Hempstead received donor milk for her baby Laurel last year:</p> <p>"Around my 36th birthday, I was diagnosed with an aggressive form of breast cancer. My treatment plan included chemotherapy and a double mastectomy. The chemotherapy took its toll and I was advised that it would be a miracle for me to conceive naturally. This was a devastating blow for my husband and I. So, when I fell pregnant naturally with our first child three years later, it was a real-life miracle! And very welcome surprise! However, I would not be able to breastfeed my baby and give her the best start, due to my double mastectomy. I investigated donor breast milk and came across the Human Milk Foundation, who provide screened donor milk to sick, premature babies in NICUs, and to families where breastfeeding is impossible. I am very grateful to HMF and the donors for giving my</p>

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	daughter, Laurel, the best start."
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