

# Patient Information Leaflet

## Guidance and Information for Parents following the Loss of Your Baby - Neonatal



As a teaching hospital, we conduct education and research to improve healthcare for our patients. During your visit students may be involved in your care, or you may be asked to participate in a clinical trial. Please speak to your doctor or nurse if you have any concerns.

Chief Executive: Joe Harrison  
Chairman: Simon Lloyd

## **We are very deeply sorry that your baby has died and we would like to offer our condolences at this painful and difficult time.**

We know that you are likely to experience a range of emotions, and these emotions can make it difficult to know what to do.

We hope that this booklet will help you to know what will happen next, and to help you make some necessary decisions.

Please do not hesitate to ask whatever questions are on your mind. We will do our best to answer them.

Our midwives, nurses and doctors are here to help you in any way that they can. If you wish, we can also put you in touch with people who can offer you continuing support when you return home.

Our local Coroner is informed of all Neonatal deaths. A Neonatal death is the loss of a baby who has shown signs of life following their birth. This is regardless of how many weeks pregnant you were at the time of your loss. The Coroner may decide they want to investigate the death of your baby and if so, they will contact you directly.

### **Can I See My Baby?**

You can spend as much time as you want with your baby before leaving the hospital. We have a cold cot that can be provided so that your baby can stay with you for as long as you want.

After you have left the hospital, your baby will stay on the ward before they are then taken to the mortuary. You may leave personal items (such as teddy, blanket, photographs) with your baby. Your baby will always be cared for in a sensitive environment.

If you would like to see your baby again after you have left the hospital, it is best to arrange a visit through your funeral director.

### **Photographs and Mementos**

You may wish to take photos of your baby using your own camera or mobile phone. We can also take some for you, for example a photo of you holding your baby. We can take photos and give you a 'SD' memory card, which you can keep and take away.

If possible, we can take your baby's hand and footprints, and a cast of your baby's foot. Your midwife or nurse will talk to you about capturing some memories of your baby for you.

Sometimes families decide to not have any mementos of their baby. The choice is very personal and there are no right or wrong choices. You may like us to take a photograph and keep the memory card so if you ever change your mind, you have it.

## How You Might Feel

You are likely to feel a range of emotions after the loss of your baby.

Losing your baby is devastating. You may feel overwhelmed by the range of emotional and physical reactions you experience. These may include feelings of sadness, disorientation, loneliness, anger, guilt, and exhaustion.

Grief is very individual – how you react will vary from person to person. Grief is a long process, and everyone grieves differently. Sometimes this may put a strain on your relationship. You are likely to find that you have bad days and better days.

The days immediately after losing your baby are likely to feel raw and numb. Many parents find that they need a bit of time to make decisions, so try to make some space to consider the possibilities that are available to you.

## Registering your Baby

You will need to register your baby at the Registry Office.

If you have not already registered your baby's birth, you will need to register both the baby's birth and death.

If the baby's parents are married, either partner may register the birth. If you are not married, the mother must register your baby's birth. The partner must also attend if they would like their name on the certificate.

You must attend the Registry Office in person. We understand that this will be a very difficult task to do; it is best if you telephone the Registry Office on 01908 372101 or email [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/registrars](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/registrars) to make an appointment with them. The bereavement midwife can make the appointment for you.

We will give you a Medical Certificate of Death, which you will need to take to the Registry Office.

Registering your baby is a legal requirement. The registry office will provide paperwork to give to your chosen funeral director so funeral arrangements can be made.

If you would like help or support with registering your baby, please contact the bereavement midwife on 07833482243 between 08:00 to 16:00, Monday to Friday.

## Contact details for the Milton Keynes Registry Office:

Civic Offices  
1 Saxon Gate east  
Central Milton Keynes  
MK9 3 EJ  
(based to the right-hand side of the building)  
Tel - 01908 372101. Press 1

The Registrar will give you:

- A Certificate of Birth
- A Certificate of Death (if you wish)
- A Green Certificate for Burial or Cremation

## Arranging Your Baby's Funeral

You may start organising a funeral service once your baby has been registered.

*Please note that if a post mortem needs to be carried out on your baby, this will need to have been completed before the funeral can take place. This can take about 1-3 weeks for your baby to come back from Oxford.*

You will need to contact funeral directors to plan your baby's funeral. There is a list of local funeral directors at the end of this booklet. Some parents find it easier to ask another family member or a friend to make the initial calls for them. If you would like support or advice from the hospital chaplains, you are more than welcome to contact them on 01908 996061. If you have met one of them you may want to ask them to take the funeral. They will do this without any charge.

Children's funerals are free and funeral directors can support and advise. Please look on this link: <https://www.gov.uk/child-funeral-costs>

You can decide who attends the cremation or burial. Some people decide only they will attend, whereas others will invite family and friends. This is your choice; think about what is right for you at this time.

## After Care

Your community midwife and GP will be told that your baby has died and we will answer any immediate questions you may have.

The community midwife or bereavement midwife will contact you and arrange to visit you. The midwife will be able to discuss with you things like leakage of breast milk, vaginal blood loss, contraception, and any concerns you may have.

You will also need to make an appointment to see your GP for your postnatal emotional wellbeing check-up at six weeks. You may be able to arrange a home visit from your GP under the circumstances.

An appointment will be made for you to see a Consultant at about ten to fourteen weeks after your baby has been born. The purpose of this appointment is to discuss the results of any investigations that have been carried out and any implications it may have for future pregnancies. You may ask any questions you have about the birth and death of your baby that you like. It may be helpful to write a list of questions you would like to ask the consultant so that you do not forget anything.

## Counselling and Advice

We all cope with grief differently. Some people might like to talk about things, while others don't. These preferences might change from day-to-day.

The bereavement midwife will personalise her support to your individual needs.

## Bereavement midwife

Monday to Friday 08:00 to 16:00  
Mobile 07833482243  
Contact via Hospital Switchboard: 01908 660033  
Ask for Bleep number 1981

**Hospital Chaplain** (you don't have to be religious to speak to the chaplain – you are very welcome to contact them for a chat).

Monday to Friday 08:00 to 16:30  
Direct Line or Answer phone: 01908 996061/996062  
Contact via the Hospital Switchboard: 01908 660033  
Chaplains are available 24/7

## Labour Ward

The ward is open seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Call 01908 996478 / 01908 996480.

## Available support

- The Forget Me Not Support Group, every first Tuesday of the month. Contact the bereavement midwife on 07833482243 for place and time.
- The local charity Jessica Sherman Foundation <http://www.tjsf.co.uk/>
- The Child Bereavement UK <http://www.childbereavementuk.org/> offers additional support. MK branch: 01908 550895
- National SANDS Helpline 0207 4365881 or for details of local SANDS groups call 0207 4367940 [www.uk-sands.org](http://www.uk-sands.org). Northampton Sands: 07541 115698
- Baby Loss Awareness 07900 495436 [www.babyloss-awareness.org](http://www.babyloss-awareness.org)

## Other Information

### Maternity and Paternity Leave

Mothers are entitled to maternity leave. If your partner or spouse is entitled to paternity leave this entitlement still stands.

For further information please call the free legal helpline 0800 013 0313  
[www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)

### Hospital Charity

Mementos of your baby are provided free of charge.

If you would like to make a donation in your baby's memory, these are gratefully received. Donations should be made payable to: "The Baby Bereavement Fund".

Please send to:

The Fundraising Manager  
Healthcare Charity: MK  
Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust  
Standing Way  
Eaglestone  
Milton Keynes  
MK6 5LD

## Funeral Directors in the Milton Keynes area:

Co-operative Funeral services Wolverton 01908 311355	H.W. Mason and Sons Bletchley 01908 642700
Co-operative Funeral Services Bletchley 01908 646424	H.W. Mason and Sons Stony Stratford 01908 561561
Co-operative Funeral Services Leighton Buzzard 01525 370272	H.W. Mason and Sons Newport Pagnell 01908 611112
Cowley and Sons Ltd Stony Stratford 01908 565353	Heritage (Matthews and Sons) Bletchley 01908 372700
Churchills Wolverton 01908 313040	Heritage and Sons Winslow 01296 713341
Dillamore Ltd Leighton Buzzard 01525 372210	Muslim Funeral Services Wolverton 01908 221341/07930663129
Finch and Sons Bletchley 01908 367777	The Funeral Company Ltd Wolverton 01908 225222
Fennemore and Son Bletchley 01908 586940 / 375715	The Green Burial Company Plc Olney 01234 241805

**We ask for information about you so that you can receive proper care and treatment. This information remains confidential and is stored securely by the Trust in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018/GDPR. Further guidance can be found within our privacy notice found on our Trust website: [www.mkuh.nhs.uk](http://www.mkuh.nhs.uk)**

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