Patient Information Leaflet

Guidance and Information for Parents following a Stillbirth or Termination of Pregnancy

(over 24 weeks)

**We are 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 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 stillbirths and terminations of pregnancy after 24 weeks. 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 is always 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 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. However, we can give you a memory box and you can keep the mementoes safe in case you change your mind

**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.

A midwife will give you a stillbirth certificate, which you will need to take to the Registry Office.

If you are married, either partner may register the birth. If you are not married, the mother must register your baby’s birth. Your 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 to make an appointment with. The bereavement midwife can make the appointment for you.

Registering your baby is a legal requirement. The registry office will provide you with 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 Registration
* A white 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 for 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 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.

**After Care**

Your community midwife and GP will be told that your baby has died and 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. 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 hours a day.

**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:**

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| --- | --- |
| Co-operative Funeral servicesWolverton01908 311355 | H.W. Mason and SonsBletchley01908 642700 |
| Co-operative Funeral ServicesBletchley01908 646424 | H.W. Mason and SonsStony Stratford01908 561561 |
| Co-operative Funeral ServicesLeighton Buzzard01525 370272 | H.W. Mason and SonsNewport Pagnell01908 611112 |
| Cowley and Sons LtdStony Stratford01908 565353 | Heritage (Matthews and Sons)Bletchley01908 372700 |
| ChurchillsWolverton01908 313040 | Hertitage and SonsWinslow01296 713341 |
| Dillamore LtdLeighton Buzzard01525 372210 | Muslim Funeral ServicesWolverton01908 221341/07930663129 |
| Finch and SonsBletchley01908 367777 | The Funeral Company LtdWolverton01908 225222 |
| Fennemore and SonBletchley01908 586940 / 375715 | The Green Burial Company PlcOlney01234 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**

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**Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust**

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**Milton Keynes, MK6 5LD**

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