

Post Mortem Examination – Local Information for Families Information Leaflet

The Honeysuckle Team are the dedicated baby bereavement team at Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust. We are very sorry for your loss and would like you to know that we are here to offer support and advice where we can.

There are 2 bereavement support midwives within the team: Marie Kelleher and Pauline McBurnie; please contact them should you have further questions. The Team's office is open Monday-Friday 8am-4pm, you are welcome to contact them either by phone 0151 702 4151 or email honeysuckle@lwh.nhs.uk

The Honeysuckle Team have devised this leaflet to provide you with local information in regards to post mortem (PM) examination for babies.

What is a post mortem?

A post mortem (also called an autopsy or PM) is the medical examination to help understand any factors that might have contributed to a baby's death.

Unless it has been ordered by a coroner a post mortem examination cannot be done without parental consent. Post mortems on babies are undertaken by specialist doctors, known as a paediatric or perinatal pathologist.

In order for you to consent to a PM you also need to read SANDS Bereavement Support Book– there is a section called understanding why your baby died. This section provides information regarding PM - enabling parents to make an informed choice. If you have not been given the booklet and would like a copy please advise the midwife, nurse or doctor caring for you or you may wish to access this information using the following link: <https://www.sands.org.uk/sites/default/files/Sands%20-%20Understanding%20why%20your%20baby%20died.pdf>

Once you have agreed to a PM – The doctor or specialist Bereavement Midwife trained in PM consent will discuss this further and complete a consent form with you.

If you have consented to PM your baby will come into the care of The Honeysuckle Team.

Where will the post mortem take place?

The post mortem examination will be carried out at Alder Hey Children's Hospital (AHCH). The Honeysuckle Team will facilitate the transfer of your baby to Alder Hey Children's Hospital using their dedicated driver. Please know your baby will be treated with the utmost care and respect while in the care of The Honeysuckle Team and the pathology team at Alder Hey Children's Hospital.

Once the examination has been completed, your baby will be transferred back to the care of The Honeysuckle Team at Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust (LWH) by the driver, alternatively you can arrange for a funeral director to collect your baby and take your baby into their care.

The Honeysuckle Team will keep you up to date of your baby's journey should you wish to know.

How long do parents have to wait until baby's body is released?

A baby whose parent has consented to PM would usually be transferred to AHCH and returned to LWH within around 72 hours. The Honeysuckle Team will inform you when your baby has left and returned into our care should you wish to be informed.

When will I receive the results?

The results from the examination can take up to 16 weeks to come through from Alder Hey Children's Hospital.

If your baby was delivered following a miscarriage, an appointment will be made for you to meet with your Gynaecological consultant to discuss the results.

If your baby was stillborn, an appointment will be made for you to meet with your Obstetric consultant to discuss the results.

If your baby died on the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), an appointment will be made for you to meet with a Neonatal consultant. If your baby was born at Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust, your obstetric consultant may also attend the appointment.

Your follow up appointment will likely take place within The Honeysuckle Team's office, on the ground floor of Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust – a letter will be sent out to you to confirm the appointment details.

This leaflet can be made available in different formats on request. If you would like to make any suggestions or comments about the content of this leaflet, then please contact the Patient Experience Team on 0151 702 4353 or by email at pals@lwh.nhs.uk