

## Pregnancy loss over 16 weeks gestation including stillbirth and early neonatal death Information Leaflet

---

### Introduction

The Honeysuckle Team are the dedicated baby bereavement team at Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust. The team consists of 2 bereavement support midwives, Marie Kelleher and Pauline McBurnie, and a bereavement support officer, Sarah Martin. We are very sorry for your loss; please accept our sincere condolences at this very sad time.

**In the light of the current (COVID 19) Corona virus sadly some of our services may be limited.**

We have designed this leaflet to ensure that you and your family are fully aware of the choices available and the formalities involved at this difficult time.

The Honeysuckle Team's office is currently open Monday – Friday 08:00 – 16:00, during these hours you can contact the team via telephone and email 0151 702 4151 / [honeysuckle@lwh.nhs.uk](mailto:honeysuckle@lwh.nhs.uk) We aim to respond to enquiries within 2 working days, however given the current situation this may not be possible. If your enquiry is of an urgent nature we would encourage you to contact Liverpool Women's main switchboard and ask for bleep 109 or 104.

You may also wish to download the SANDS bereavement support app onto your smart phone or tablet. This app offers guidance on various topics such as saying goodbye to your baby, examinations/testing, funeral arrangements, support for children in your family.



## **Making Memories**

The Honeysuckle Team are passionate about promoting positive memories for bereaved families.

When a baby dies, there are few happy memories to help the grief that parents and other family members experience. This section discusses various ways in which you can make memories of the time that you had together and honour the memory of your baby. Your nurse / midwife will support your choices for memory making.

We would encourage you to consider memory making before you have been discharged as unfortunately Liverpool Women's' NHS Foundation Trust currently have strict guidelines in place in regards to visiting the hospital and therefore it may not possible for you to return to LWH should you change your mind regarding memory making at a later date.

### **Memory Box**

Your nurse / midwife should offer you a memory box, should you not be given one please ask staff. Memory boxes can help capture the time you had with you baby. The box is a special place for keepsakes to remember your baby by. This could include a scan picture, photographs, hand and foot prints, a lock of hair or any cards that you might receive. For babies born very early it may not always be possible to take hand and foot prints or have a lock of hair, but you may still like to have a box for other memories. A memory box can help you acknowledge your grief and talk about your pregnancy /baby with family and friends.

### **Blessing**

A short blessing or naming ceremony can be arranged while you are in hospital. LWH has an on call chaplaincy team who would usually provide this service. Ask your nurse or midwife to make contact with the chaplaincy team. If the chaplaincy team are not available another staff member at the hospital can conduct a blessing on their behalf – your nurse or midwife will support you with this. You may wish to record or stream this for family and friends to watch.

### **Memorial Book**

There is a book of remembrance located in the chapel at LWH. If you would like your baby's name to be added to the book please email our hospital chaplain [Christine.dickinson@lwh.nhs.uk](mailto:Christine.dickinson@lwh.nhs.uk) with the following details of your baby: baby/babies name, the date that you delivered or the date your baby was born and the date baby died. Christine will then be able to place these into the book of remembrance. Should you wish to visit the chapel and review your entry this could be arranged at a later date.

### **Memorial Garden**

There is a garden dedicated to our honeysuckle families, this is located in the courtyard behind main reception of LWH. Within the garden there is a metal love lock tree. You or members of your family may wish to purchase a padlock with your baby's name or a small message inscribed to hang on the tree. Unfortunately at present the garden is closed, please email [honeysuckle@lwh.nhs.uk](mailto:honeysuckle@lwh.nhs.uk) if you wish to be notified when the garden is reopened.

## **Naming Your Baby**

Some parents decide to give their baby a name, as this gives them their own identity and can make it easy to talk about them. Some parents use a nickname they may have chosen during their pregnancy. It can sometimes be hard to determine their gender and you might like to choose a name that fits either gender. You do not have to name your baby if this does not feel right for you.

## **Seeing and Holding Your Baby**

Once your baby is born, you may begin to think about the choices you want to make, for example, you can think about whether you want to see and hold your baby. You might have already started thinking about these decisions in the time before you delivered. Your nurse or midwife will support you with this. If you are not sure about seeing your baby or anxious about how your baby will look you could ask your nurse or midwife to show you a photograph or ask them to describe your baby to you. If you would like to see your baby and this is not suggested please ask the staff caring for you.

## **Hand and Footprints**

When possible your nurse or midwife will offer and if accepted will try to take ink prints of your baby's hands and feet. You may choose to incorporate the prints into images, tattoos and jewellery. You may want a few sets of these prints to give to family members who are not able to meet your baby.

## **Photographs**

Your nurse or midwife will usually offer to take photos of your baby. You can also take your own photographs of your baby. Some parents like to have photographs of their baby's hands and feet, others may also wish to have a photo of them holding their baby.

Should you agree to photographs being taken but you do not wish to look at the photos you can request for them to be given to you in a sealed envelope. You can then look at them at a later date if you wish, or you can give them to family members or friends. If you do not wish for photographs to be taken then please inform the nurse / midwife caring for you.

## **Washing and Dressing Your Baby**

You may want to wash and dress your baby, or you could ask your nurse or midwife to assist you with this. You could bring something from home for your baby to wear; alternatively the hospital can provide clothing for your baby. If your baby's condition makes dressing them difficult, you may want to wrap them in a blanket or something similar.

We have suitable clothing, wraps, blankets and angel pouches for all gestations and your nurse / midwife can support you with your choices.

## **Hospice care**

For babies who have died or who are stillborn local hospices such as Claire House and Zoe's Place can provide support to families if facilities are available. They have bereavement suites where you are able to take your baby and stay with them for a few days. If you would like your nurse or midwife to make enquiries about this please ask them.

## On-going keepsakes

In addition to the keepsakes you collect from your pregnancy or soon after your baby is born, there may be other things that form valuable keepsakes in the future. Among these things could include poems, letters, emails, cards and jewellery.

## Attending events

Attending remembrance events can be a meaningful way of honouring your baby's memory alongside other bereaved families and a helpful part of your grief journey. Sharing this time with other families might help you feel less isolated in your grief.

The Honeysuckle Team at Liverpool Women's Hospital holds two types of remembrance events every year for all our families, which are The Service of Remembrance and Hope and The Honeysuckle family picnic. **Unfortunately this year's family picnic in the park has been cancelled due to COVID19.**

Baby loss awareness week is held every year between 9-15th October and ends with an international wave of light at 7pm on 15 October for parents to remember their baby at the same time as others across the world. It is during this week's we usually hold Liverpool Women's memorial service of Remembrance and Hope. For up to date information on this year's service please follow Liverpool Women's on social media or via their website.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list please email your details to [honeysuckle@lwh.nhs.uk](mailto:honeysuckle@lwh.nhs.uk) and we can ensure you are invited and advised of all future events.

## **Information for families following pregnancy loss under 24 weeks gestation where baby has not shown signs of life**

If your baby died before birth and had not completed 24 weeks of pregnancy (legally described as a miscarriage), their death cannot be officially registered.

Parents should be offered an unofficial 'certificate of birth' or 'certificate of pregnancy loss. These are available for all miscarriage families and are provided in the miscarriage memory boxes. If this is something you would like please ask the nurse / midwife caring for you who can provide this, alternatively should you wish to make your own you can download a template from SANDS website [www.sands.org.uk](http://www.sands.org.uk)

There is no legal requirement to have a funeral for a baby born **under 24 weeks gestation where baby has not shown signs of life**: the following section discusses the choices available to you. Please note that in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic Liverpool Women's has suspended all but essential patient visiting across the Trust until further notice, in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Because of this we kindly ask that you make your decision regarding arrangements for your baby prior to your discharge from hospital as you may not be able to return following this to complete appropriate paperwork.

## **Communal Cremation**

A communal cremation is where the remains of 12 babies are cremated together at Springwood Crematorium, Springwood Avenue, Liverpool, the ashes are scattered within the crematorium's grounds in a special remembrance garden for babies and children.

When you are discharged your pregnancy remains / baby will come into the care of The Honeysuckle Team and the team will make arrangements for the communal cremation. You are not able to attend the communal cremation.

Please rest assured your baby will be looked after and that the communal cremation is carried out in a dignified and respectful manner.

Should you choose this option; the nurse or midwife caring for you will ask you to complete a consent form prior to your discharge.

## **Arranging burial or cremation via a funeral director**

Some families decide that they want to honour their baby's memory by arranging a burial or cremation. It is possible to have a funeral for a baby born at any stage of pregnancy.

The hospital does not arrange individual funerals, therefore you will need to approach and appoint a local funeral director. Most funeral directors in the local area do not charge any fees when making arrangements for a baby or child's funeral – please ask when you are speaking with the funeral director.

Due to the current situation there will be limits as to what type of service can be held and who can attend. Please ask the funeral director to contact The Honeysuckle Team on 0151 702 4151 to make arrangements for bringing your baby into their care.

Should you choose this option, the nurse or midwife caring for you will ask you to complete a consent form. It is important that you appoint a funeral director prior to discharge to ensure they are able to make arrangements for your pregnancy remains/baby.

**During these extremely challenging times the transmission of the coronavirus at funeral gatherings cannot be overlooked. You are also requested to consider that funeral directors are currently extremely busy and you might face long delays in organising a funeral for your baby.**

## **Taking baby's remains home from the hospital under 24 weeks gestation where baby has not shown signs of life**

Some families decide to take their baby's remains home from the hospital to bury in the garden or in a planter with flowers or a shrub; this is a personal choice and there are no regulations to prevent you doing whatever feels right for you.

Having said this there are certain requirements that need to be met. It is advisable to think carefully about what you will do with the remains and consider any associated restrictions which might exist, for example in relation to burial on a home property. For further guidance please visit <https://www.hta.gov.uk> The local Environmental Health Department or the Environment Agency is also a good source of advice on this matter.

The nurse / midwife caring for you will ask you to sign a consent form and provide you with a letter to confirm your miscarriage and your request to take home your pregnancy remains/ baby.

Please note that due to current visiting restrictions if you decide to take your baby's remains home you must do this upon your discharge as you may not be able to attend the hospital site after this.

**During these extremely challenging times the transmission of the coronavirus at hospitals cannot be overlooked and therefore it may not be possible for you to change your mind and return your pregnancy remains / baby for alternative arrangements.**

## **Information for families following stillbirth or neonatal death**

### **Registration**

If your baby was stillborn at 24 weeks or later, or died after birth, you are legally required to register this with the local registrar of births and deaths.

In the case of a **stillbirth** the midwife or doctor will complete a medical certificate of stillbirth.

In the case of a **neonatal death** the doctor will complete a medical certificate of death.

The required documentation to register a stillbirth / death will be stored in your medical notes. The Honeysuckle team will collect and will liaise with Liverpool Registry Office to make arrangements for the registration. Please ensure when you leave the hospital that you have provided us with your preferred contact number.

The Honeysuckle Team will call and advise you of the date and time of your registration.

The registration will take place at Liverpool Registry Office, St George's Hall, St George's Place, Liverpool, L1 1JJ. When attending for your appointment use the visitor centre entrance on St George's Place – this is near The Marriott Hotel and Queens Square Bus Station.

If you are not contacted to conduct the appointment within 5 working days please liaise with Liverpool Registry Office via Liverpool City Council website - <https://liverpool.gov.uk/births-marriage-deaths/deaths/register-a-death/>

### **Funeral choices**

**If your baby was stillborn at 24 weeks or later, or died after birth, you are legally required to have a burial or cremation for them.**

The hospital does not arrange individual funerals, therefore you will need to approach or appoint a funeral director. The Honeysuckle Team are happy to guide you through this process. Most funeral directors in the local area do not charge for a baby or child's funeral – we advise you confirm this when you are speaking with the funeral director.

Due to the current situation there will be limits as to what type of service can be held and who can attend. Your funeral director will guide you through this.

Please ask the funeral director to contact The Honeysuckle Team on 0151 702 4151 to make arrangements for bringing your baby into their care.

**During these extremely challenging times the transmission of the coronavirus at funeral gatherings cannot be overlooked. You are also requested to consider that funeral directors are currently extremely busy and you might face long delays in organising a funeral for your baby.**

Should you wish to take your baby home you must ensure the funeral director can offer you support at home. You will be asked to complete a consent form to confirm that you wish to take full responsibility and make your own arrangements via your chosen funeral director.

It is important to acknowledge that funeral directors are unfortunately extremely busy at present and may not be able to assist with this request.

If they are able to assist with your request the nurse or midwife caring for you will complete your discharge and ensure you are provided with a letter to confirm you have chosen to take your baby home. This letter will provide details of who to contact at Liverpool Women's' Hospital should you have any concerns. Should you opt to take your baby home and wish for a cremation the documentation for cremation will be given to you to pass onto the funeral directors.

## **Support for you and your family**

The Honeysuckle Team run a monthly support group for parents and grandparents, with guest speakers, a library of books, craft table and refreshments provided.

Unfortunately at present there will be limited places available at the meetings and COVID-19 measures will be in place. If you would like to attend an upcoming meeting please email [honeysuckle@lwh.nhs.uk](mailto:honeysuckle@lwh.nhs.uk) with your interest to book a place. If a space is available you will receive confirmation via email with the date, time and location of the meeting, including details of the measures that will be in place.

The Honeysuckle Team are active on social media. We have our own Facebook page Honeysuckle Bond and two private closed Facebook pages one for families and one for Dads who have suffered the loss of a baby. To join one of the private groups, go onto our Facebook page and request to join Honeysuckle Community Page or Honeysuckle Dad's Group. If you request to join one of the private groups please also send Honeysuckle Bond a direct message so the team can ensure you are added.

Joining social media groups can be a meaningful way of honouring your baby's memory alongside other bereaved families and a helpful part of your grief journey. Sharing time with other families might help you feel less isolated in your grief.

Should you wish to contact the team to discuss anything in this leaflet further, please contact us by telephone or email or if you are an inpatient and wish a face to face visit please discuss this with your nurse or midwife who will contact the team on your behalf.

There are lots of organisations that The Honeysuckle Team work with who can offer you and your family support. Please note at present organisations are not offering face to face appointments.

However organisations can still be contacted via telephone or online.

Child Bereavement UK is particularly helpful if you have children in your family and are concerned with speaking to them about what has happened. They have devised leaflets available on their website for help in talking to children about bereavement.

**Helpful organisations – Please note at present due to the coronavirus organisations are not offering face to face appointments. However organisation can still be contacted via telephone or online. Please see details below:**

**Liverpool Bereavement Services** – provides counselling support in Liverpool for under 20 weeks gestation 0151 236 3932 / <https://liverpoolbereavement.com/> **Open Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm**

**Love Jasmine** – provides counselling support in Liverpool for over 20 weeks gestation 0151 252 3145 / <https://www.lovejasmine.org.uk/> **Open Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm**

**Antenatal Results and Choices ( ARC )** – Offers information and support for parents making decisions around antenatal testing, including when a baby has a significant anomaly. <https://www.arc-uk.org/>

**Child Bereavement UK** National organisation providing support to families when a baby or child has died and offers support for children faced with bereavement. 0800 028 8840 / <https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>

**Children of Jannah** – Organisation providing support to Muslim families after the loss of a baby or child <https://childrenofjannah.com/how-we-can-help/>

**The Compassionate Friends** – Organisation of bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents that offer support to other after the death of a child. [www.tcf.org.uk](http://www.tcf.org.uk)

**The Ectopic Pregnancy Trust** – Provides support and information for people who have had or been affected by an ectopic pregnancy. 020 7733 2653 / <https://ectopic.org.uk/>

**Fertility Network UK** – Provides support to people dealing with infertility and/or who are facing involuntary childlessness. [www.fertilitynetworkuk.org](http://www.fertilitynetworkuk.org)

**Little Things and Co** – Baby Bereavement Charity, this has lots of downloadable leaflets on various topics for all members of the family. <http://www.ltandco.org/>

**The Miscarriage Association** – National organisation offering support and information for individuals affected by pregnancy loss. 01924 200 799 / <https://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk/>

**Multiple Births Foundation ( MBF )** – Provides support and information for multiple birth families, including bereavement support. [www.multiplebirths.org.uk](http://www.multiplebirths.org.uk)

**Muslim Bereavement Support Service** – Provides support and information to Muslim families following a bereavement 020 3468 7333 / <http://mbss.org.uk/>

**Samaritans** – Offers confidential support, available 24 hours a day to people who need to talk. Telephone 116 123 / <https://www.samaritans.org/>

**SANDs** – Provides support and information for anyone affected by the death of a baby, before or after birth. 020 7436 5881 / <https://www.sands.org.uk/>

**Twins Trust** – offers support to families who have lost one or more children from a multiple birth. <https://twinstrust.org/bereavement.html> / [bereavementsupport@twinstrust.org](mailto:bereavementsupport@twinstrust.org)





**Liverpool Women's**  
NHS Foundation Trust

Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust  
Crown Street  
Liverpool  
L8 7SS  
Tel: 0151 708 9988  
Ref: Hon/2022-310-v2  
Issue Date: 30.11.2020  
Review Date: 30.11.2022

© Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust