

Information Leaflet



Liverpool Women's
NHS Foundation Trust

Post-Mortem Examination – Local Information for Families

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.

The Honeysuckle Team have devised this leaflet to provide you with local information in regard 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> or via the SANDS Bereavement Support App.



Once you have agreed to a PM – The doctor, nurse or 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.

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?

The examination usually takes no more than 5 working days to complete. Your baby can be collected by your nominated funeral director or transferred back to the care of The Honeysuckle Team at Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust (LWH) by the driver. The Honeysuckle Team will keep you up to date of your baby's journey should you wish to know.

When will I receive the results?

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

If you request a gender identification as part of the PM, The Honeysuckle Team will be informed of the gender by Alder Hey, usually within 4 working days. Should you wish to know this result The Honeysuckle Team's bereavement support midwives will contact you with this information. Alternatively, if you have not heard anything please contact The Honeysuckle Team on 0151 702 4151 / honeysuckle@lwh.nhs.uk during their office hours – Monday – Friday 08:00 – 16:00.

Once the results are received an appointment will be made for you to meet with your consultant to discuss the results. Your consultant's secretary will contact you with the appointment details.

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.

We hope this leaflet provides the information needed to explore local information for families in regards to post mortem examination.

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

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