



## Patient Information

## After the Loss of your baby: Going Home

This guide is to provide you with some useful local information to help you with things that need to be thought about sometime soon. There is no rush to make any of these decisions right now.

A member of the Hospital Chaplaincy team will usually come to see you while you are in hospital and talk about the various choices you have in relation to a funeral for your baby

Along with this guide you should also receive a pack of leaflets from SANDS, where you can find a lot of very useful information. If you have not received this please ask the Midwife looking after you.



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## **Registering the birth and death.**

If your baby is under 24 weeks' gestation and stillborn, the birth does not need to be registered. You can make the funeral arrangements as soon as you are ready to do so – please follow the guidance below.

If your baby is over 24 weeks' gestation, the stillbirth will need to be registered with the Registrar of Births and Deaths within 42 days of your baby's birth.

If your baby died after they were born, the birth and death must be registered within 5 days.

To make an appointment with the registrar call 01793 521734 between 9am – 4pm, Monday - Friday.

The address is:

**Swindon Register Office, Civic Offices, Euclid St, Swindon SN1 2JH.**

The midwife looking after you will give you a Medical Certificate of Stillbirth, or if your baby died after they were born, a Birth certificate and a Medical certificate of death. You should take the certificate(s) to your appointment with the registrar.

The Registrar of Births and Deaths will give you a Certificate for Burial or Cremation. Once you have this certificate, and you are ready to make the funeral arrangements, you can follow the guidance below.

## **If you decide that you would like to make your own arrangements for the funeral:**

Once you have registered the birth, (if applicable) you will need to make an appointment to meet with a Funeral Director of your choice, they will discuss funeral arrangements with you.

Some Funeral Directors undertake funerals for babies at little or no cost, so it is worth asking when you call them before making your decision.

## **If you decide that you would like the hospital to arrange the funeral:**

Make an appointment to meet with a member of the Bereavement Services team at the Great Western Hospital to discuss funeral arrangements.

01793 604809 or 01793 604392 between 10am and 4pm Monday - Friday.

Bring the Certificate for Burial or Cremation that you were given by the Registrar of Births and Deaths with you to this appointment. This will enable the hospital to proceed with the necessary arrangements on your behalf.



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## **Follow up appointment.**

You will receive a letter in the post offering you an appointment at the hospital in Willow clinic; here you will meet an Obstetrician. This appointment will be in around 12 weeks' time; at this point any pending test results and if applicable Post-Mortem results will be available to be discussed.

There may be questions you would like to ask, it can be helpful to write these down; it is easy to forget them.

## **Photographs.**

If you gave consent for photographs to be taken, you will receive them when you attend Willow clinic.

If you would like to receive them sooner or you decide you would rather not have them at this time, please be assured they will be stored securely at the hospital and can be requested at any time by calling the Maternity support service 01793 605133 to arrange this.

## **Annual memorial service.**

This takes place in Baby Loss Awareness Week in October each year. It is run in conjunction with Swindon SANDS.

You will receive a written invitation in the first year following your loss. In subsequent years the event will be advertised on Swindon SANDS website.

## **Book of remembrance.**

The hospital has a book of remembrance especially for babies and children; it is kept in the Chapel at the Great Western Hospital.

If you would like your baby's name entered; please complete the attached form.

Every year on the anniversary of your baby's death the page will be open for you to see their name. If you wish to see your baby's name at any other time please contact the hospital Chaplain and this can be arranged for you.

## **Post natal care.**

On your first day at home you can expect a visit from a community midwife, if you have not received a visit by 4:00pm please call 01793 604020 Maternity bleep holder. After your initial home visit your midwife will plan your ongoing care and any further visits.



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If you experience **any** of the following please contact your midwife or GP immediately:

- Sudden and heavy blood loss or persistent increasing blood loss.
- Fever, shivering, abdominal pain and /or offensive vaginal loss.
- Calf pain, redness or swelling. Shortness of breath and/or Chest pain.
- Headaches accompanied by one or more of the following symptoms within the first 72 hours following birth:
  - Nausea/vomiting.
  - Visual disturbance.

## Reducing the risk of infection:

It is important that you have good personal hygiene; washing your hands properly **before** and **after** visiting the toilet or changing your sanitary pad. Also take care to wash your hands after sneezing or blowing your nose.

## Vaginal Blood loss (Lochia):

Expect your blood loss to be quite heavy for the first 2-3 days, requiring several changes of sanitary pads a day; it will then become less. If you are concerned about sudden, heavy blood loss or your bleeding becomes offensive, smelly or you pass any large clots, it is important to contact a midwife or GP for advice

## Passing urine:

If you have any stinging or burning when you pass urine, need to pass urine frequently, are unable to pass urine or feel you are not completely emptying your bladder, please discuss this with a midwife or GP.

## Haemorrhoids (piles) and Constipation:

If you are experiencing discomfort please discuss this with a midwife or GP. Constipation and piles are common. Piles can be treated with good personal hygiene, haemorrhoid cream (available from the chemist), laxatives and pain relief. A high fibre diet including fresh fruit and vegetables, and drinking plenty of fluids can help to prevent constipation. Some women find it more comfortable to hold a clean sanitary towel over their perineum when opening their bowels.

Occasionally women may have urgency of wind and motions or have difficulty in getting to the toilet in time. This is not normal and you can get help, your GP can refer you to a specialist if these problems occur.



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## **Perineum (the area between your vagina and anus):**

Regardless of whether you had any stitches, you may experience some perineal discomfort. Bathe or shower the area regularly, without soap and change your sanitary pad regularly. Rest on your side and use a cold compress for pain and take pain relief if needed. Pelvic floor exercises will aid healing. Stitches take about two weeks to dissolve. Let your midwife or GP know if your stitches are painful or not improving, or if you have any worries.

If you have had a third or fourth degree tear you may be contacted by the hospital with a follow up appointment.

## **After Pains:**

These feel like strong period pains; they are quite common and usually last 2-3 days. Regular pain relief will help; a midwife can advise you on what to take. **However** if the pain persists or becomes constant and your tummy feels tender, contact a midwife or GP the same day.

## **Breasts:**

Following giving birth women's breasts will naturally produce milk. Some women find this quite distressing, as it is a reminder that you do not have a baby to feed. The production of milk usually lasts 2-3 days and may be uncomfortable. Regular pain relief will help; wear a supportive non under-wired bra, and sleep with it on. To ease very full uncomfortable breasts you can express off a small amount of milk, this is generally best done by hand expressing, please ask your midwife for advice about hand expressing. You may find you leak some milk for several weeks, this is normal; wearing breast pads will help. You can continue to eat and drink as normal; don't reduce your fluid intake.

## **Sleep:**

You may find it difficult to sleep despite the fact that you feel exhausted. This is quite a common experience for many bereaved parents following the death of their baby; speak to your midwife or GP for advice.

## **Six week post natal check with GP:**

It is important that you have a postnatal check up with your GP, this is usually done about six weeks after giving birth.

Your GP may contact you regarding your six week post natal check; if you do not automatically receive an appointment, please contact your GP's surgery and arrange an appointment.



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## **Useful contact numbers at the Great Western Hospital.**

### **Maternity and Paediatric Support Service**

To contact a Bereavement Midwife.

01793 605133 or email [rebecca.king7@nhs.net](mailto:rebecca.king7@nhs.net) or [emma.frayne1@nhs.net](mailto:emma.frayne1@nhs.net)

### **Maternity bleep holder – 24hrs a day**

01793 604020 and ask for bleep 1465

### **Hospital Chaplain**

01793 604020 and ask for on call Chaplain.

### **Bereavement Services**

01793 604809 or 01793 604392 10am - 4pm Monday - Friday.

## **Organisations that might be helpful.**

Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society (SANDS)

SANDS is an organization which can offer you support when your baby dies during pregnancy or after birth. Their website has a wide range of helpful information.

The telephone helpline is free to call from landlines and mobiles on **0808 164 3332**

The team is available to speak to from 9.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday and 6pm to 10pm Tuesday and Thursday evenings

The helpline team can also be contacted at [helpline@sands.org.uk](mailto:helpline@sands.org.uk)

More information at: [www.uk-sands.org](http://www.uk-sands.org)

### **SANDS Swindon Branch**

The local Swindon branch of SANDS also organises a support group that meets regularly; please contact them for details.

Helpline: Swindon: 07519 832642

Devizes: 07933 396992

Email: [support@swindonsands.org](mailto:support@swindonsands.org)

Website: [www.swindonsands.org](http://www.swindonsands.org)

### **TAMBA BSG (Twins and multiple births association bereavement support group**

The Bereavement Support Group (BSG) exists to support all parents and carers who bereaved from a multiple birth whether it was during pregnancy, at birth or afterwards.

**Contact via website:** <https://www.tamba.org.uk/bereavement>



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## **The Lullaby Trust.**

Support for those affected by the sudden and unexpected death of a baby or toddler.

Helpline: 0808 802 6868  
Email: [support@lullabytrust.org.uk](mailto:support@lullabytrust.org.uk)  
Website: [www.lullabytrust.org.uk](http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk)

## **Miscarriage Association**

If you have been affected by miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy or molar pregnancy, you will find here the information and support that you need to help you through. The website has a wide range of free printable information leaflets, some of which are available in different languages.

Helpline: 01924 200799 Monday-Friday 9am-4pm  
Email: [info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk](mailto:info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk)  
Website: [www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk](http://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk)

## **Antenatal Results and Choices (A.R.C)**

ARC is the only national charity which provides non-directive support and information to expectant and bereaved parents throughout and after the antenatal screening and testing process

Helpline: 0845 077 2290  
0207 713 7486 (From mobile)  
Website: [www.arc-uk.org](http://www.arc-uk.org)

## **Child Bereavement UK.**

Child Bereavement UK believes that all families should have access to the support and information they need when a child grieves or when a child dies. Through understanding their grieving process and receiving help in dealing with bereavement from appropriately trained professionals, families can learn to live with their grief and begin rebuilding their lives.

This website has wide range of helpful information; particularly about how children deal with bereavement and talking to children about death and dying.

Helpline: 0800 02 888 40  
Email: [support@childbereavementuk.org](mailto:support@childbereavementuk.org)  
Website: [www.childbereavement.org.uk](http://www.childbereavement.org.uk)



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Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
Book of Remembrance.

I wish to have my baby's name entered in into the book of remembrance.

Name of Baby

.....

Name of parents

.....

.....

Your address:.....

.....

.....

.....Postcode:.....

Date of Birth

Date of Death

.....

.....

Please return this page to:  
The Chaplains Department  
Great Western Hospital  
Marlborough Road  
Swindon  
SN3 6BB

I enclose a donation to help with the cost of placing my baby's name in the book of remembrance (please tick)

The Chaplaincy Team Leader and staff wish to extend their heartfelt sympathy to you in your time of great loss.



## After the Loss of your baby: Going Home

From 1st January 2019 smoking will not be permitted on any NHS site in England. Smoking will not be permitted within any of our buildings or anywhere outside on our sites. Smoking facilities will not be provided. Please be considerate of others when vaping in hospital grounds.

**This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email [gwh.pals@nhs.net](mailto:gwh.pals@nhs.net)**

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