Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

The loss of your baby

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The Loss of Your Baby

Patient Information

Obstetrics & Gynaecology Service

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The Loss of your Baby

We understand that the loss of your baby is both upsetting and traumatic and that you will be experiencing feelings of loss. Please feel free to express your feelings and concerns to the midwives, nurses or medical staff. If you would like to talk to a qualified counsellor or hospital chaplain this can be arranged, please ask staff for information.

This leaflet is intended to answer questions you may have, following the loss of your baby. It outlines the choices you have and gives you details of where you find help and support.

What will happen to the baby?

You have the following choices

- The hospital can arrange the cremation of your baby for you. Your baby will be taken to Wigan Crematorium, Ince; arrangements for cremation can take up to 3 weeks. Your written consent will be required for cremation to proceed.

- You may wish to arrange an individual burial or cremation through a Funeral Director of your choice.

Hospital Arrangements – below 24 weeks gestation

Your baby will be placed in a coffin with other babies (each baby is individually contained) and taken to Wigan Crematorium, Ince and cremated.

The hospital Chaplain conducts a simple committal ceremony lasting approximately 20 minutes. If you would like to be informed of the date of your baby's cremation, please inform

a member of staff who will arrange this for you. Due to the multi-cultural society within the area no specific religious ceremony is performed. You are welcome to attend the service if you have indicated that you wish to be informed and you will also be invited to the 'Bond of Love' Service which is a remembrance service held in the Chapel at Wigan Infirmary (see Bond of Love Service). Following the cremation ashes will be scattered on a 'scatter bed' in the Garden of Remembrance at Wigan crematorium, Ince. The scattering is undertaken by the staff at the crematorium, in the presence of the hospital chaplain. Information on the specific 'scatter bed' location can be obtained from Wigan Cemeteries and Crematorium.

You can discuss alternative individual arrangements, if necessary, with the nursing/midwifery staff.

What will happen to the baby if I choose/it is recommended that further investigations are undertaken?

Please be advised that if investigations have been requested it can take a minimum of 12 weeks for this to be completed and results received. This may mean that cremation of your baby can only happen after this period of time. If you change your mind regarding any of the arrangements that are in place and your wish to be notified during this time period, please contact: Lauren Topping. (01942 778678).

On occasion at early gestation there is very little tissue and following testing there may be no tissue to cremate: the possibility of this can be discussed with the nursing staff who will advise you.

Hospital Arrangements – above 24 weeks gestation

The hospital can arrange for the cremation or burial of your baby. Your hospital midwife will inform Wigan Registrars who will then contact you to arrange an appointment to obtain a stillbirth certificate. You will need to arrange an appointment at the Registrar's Office to register the baby's birth and death. The Registrar's Office will issue a yellow form which you must give to the Funeral Director. The hospital will complete a form and fax it to:

Bate & Holland Funeral Directors, who will contact you to arrange your baby's funeral.

What will happen to the baby if I choose to have a postmortem or further investigations?

Please be advised that if you decide to consent to a postmortem being undertaken, consent will be obtained by a trained member of staff. The results of the postmortem can take a minimum of 12 weeks to be received and an appointment with your consultant will be made to discuss any findings.

Private Arrangements

You may wish to make other arrangements, this may either be a burial or cremation, and can include a religious ceremony.

You can arrange this through a Funeral Director of your choice. You can find Funeral Directors listed in either the Yellow Pages, Thomson Local Directory or on the Internet. All will be happy to discuss their services and charges with you.

The Funeral Director will require a form from the hospital to enable collection of the baby, so if you are considering an individual funeral, please inform a member of staff.

The hospital Chaplain is available to discuss any questions you may have about a funeral and can be contacted on 01942 822324.

Hospital Remembrance Service – Bond of Love

You may wish to attend 'The Bond of Love' service. You will be given information about this service if you wish to attend. Now usually twice yearly. This is a simple service that is led by a hospital Chaplain, usually on the last Monday of each month. The service is held in the Chapel at Wigan Infirmary at 2.00pm. Please ask a member of staff for a list of dates.

At this service, babies who have been lost are remembered, and prayers are said for those affected by pregnancy loss. There is an opportunity to light a candle for your baby at this service or to place a ribbon of remembrance on the memorial tree. No names are used unless this is specifically requested.

You are warmly invited to attend this service – or one in subsequent months. You are welcome to bring family members and friends to this service. You do not have to inform the hospital of your attendance. You can attend as many services as you wish there is no limit. The service has some religious elements and is inclusive of different faiths and beliefs but also open to people of no belief. If you would prefer a non-religious ceremony, the hospital chaplain can help you arrange this.

Sources of help

Different people have different needs following the loss of a baby.

Listed here are some of the organisations you can contact for help and support. Your GP, midwife or nursing staff may be able to suggest further sources of help.

As well as the staff from the ward, there is also a trained counsellor to offer support after your loss. You may prefer to talk things over with a hospital chaplain. Please ask if you would like to talk to someone, either whilst you are a patient or after you have been discharged home.

Contact numbers for the hospital chaplain and counsellor are listed at the end of this leaflet. There are a number of other organisations that can offer you support.

Bereavement Midwives **07909 002 712** or **07384 878590**

Hospital Counsellor **01942 264308**

Chaplaincy & Spiritual Care **01942 822324**

The Miscarriage Association

c/o Clayton House

Northgate

Wakefield

West Yorkshire, WF1 3JS

01924 200799 (Monday – Friday 09:00 – 16:00 hours)

(Can put you in touch with a local group)

www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk

ARC (Antenatal Results and Choices)

73 Charlotte Street

London, W1P 1LB

Helpline: 0171 631 0285

www.arc-uk.org

SANDS (Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society)

28 Portland Place

London, WN1 4DE

Tel: 0171 436 5881

www.uk-sands.org.uk

Compassionate Friends

0845 123 2304

www.tcf.org.uk

Child Bereavement UK

0845 347 1000

www.childbereavement.org.uk

Babyloss

www.babyloss.co.uk



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