

# Following the loss of your baby before 24 weeks of pregnancy

## Introduction

This leaflet provides information for bereaved parents who have suffered the loss of a baby before 24 weeks of pregnancy. Please accept our sympathy at such a difficult time. We hope you find the following information helpful.

## A blessing for your baby

When your baby is born your midwife or nurse, with your permission, can contact the hospital chaplain or your own religious leader. Even if you do not have a particular religious faith, you may find it helpful to talk to one of them, and you may like a blessing for your baby.

## Hospital certificate in memory of your baby

As your baby was less than 24 weeks gestation you are not required by law to register your baby's birth, but a hospital certificate can be arranged as a tribute if you wish.

## Private funeral arrangements

If you would like to make private funeral arrangements for your baby, then you can contact a funeral director who will make sure that everything is done in line with your wishes. You will find that many funeral directors offer their service free of charge but there will be a charge for the crematorium. There is a bereavement support midwife in the Trust who will give you more information if you would like it.

Reference No.

**GHPI0502\_10\_17**

Department

**Maternity**

Review due

**October 2020**

**Patient  
Information**

## Burial on private land

You may take your baby from the hospital for burial in ground that you own (not in council or common ground). You would need to contact agencies, such as the Environment Agency or your local council for official guidance and advice. The hospital Bereavement Office staff would be able to advise you.

## Hospital cremation service

If you do not wish to make your own arrangements, the Trust will make sure that your baby is cremated with dignity and respect. This will be carried out at a crematorium following a short religious service carried out by the Hospital Chaplain. There will be a number of other babies included in the service as part of a communal cremation and for reasons of confidentiality, we are sorry to say that you will not be able to attend. A record of the event will be kept at the hospital and the hospital chaplain can let you know when the service has been carried out. You will not be able to have any ashes from a communal cremation. You will be asked to sign a form giving your permission for the cremation of your baby. We would encourage you to take time to decide which option is right for you.

If you have made the decision for a communal hospital cremation and then wish to change your mind, please contact the Bereavement Office or bereavement midwife within 5 working days following the delivery of your baby.

## Remembering your baby

Losing a tiny baby means you have few memories or mementoes. This can bring added sorrow. You will be offered as much help as possible with this. Your nurse or midwife will talk about the options available to you. There is a book of remembrance in the hospital chapel in which you are very welcome to enter a message in memory of your baby. The ward staff will give you a form to do this if you wish. Please do not hesitate to ask. Each year, there are services of remembrance held at Cheltenham General and Gloucestershire Royal hospitals. Information about these services is available from the hospital chaplain.

**Patient  
Information****Further support for you**

If you are already booked with a community-based midwife she will visit you at home if you wish. Your GP may also be able to offer you support and will be informed about the loss of your baby. The bereavement support midwife is also available to give you support if needed.

**Contact information****Gloucestershire Royal Hospital**

Bereavement Support Midwife

Tel: 07799 060 328

Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 7:30am to 3:00pm

Your call will be returned by the bereavement midwives during the next working day.

**Hospital Chaplains**

Tel: 0300 422 6200 Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

**Bereavement Officer**

Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

Tel: 0300 422 6742 Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:00pm