

*When your
baby has died*

Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
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Email: ask@ydh.nhs.uk

Some people attend the group regularly, while others come once or twice. Either is acceptable – it is whatever suits you.

The group meets between 7.30pm - 9.30pm at the Marwick Centre, Dampier Street, Yeovil on the first Wednesday of every month. There will be always somebody there to welcome and talk to you.

National Support

SANDS (The Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society)

28 Portland Place

London

W1N 4DE

Helpline: 020 7436 5881

www.uk-sands.org

The Child Bereavement Charity

Aston House

West Wycombe

High Wycombe

Bucks

HP14 3AG

Tel: 01494 446648

www.childbereavement.org.uk

The Compassionate Friends

53 North Street

Bristol

Avon

Tel: 0117 953 9639

www.tcf.org.uk

Miscarriage Association

c/o Clayton Hospital

Northgate

Wakefield

01924 298834

www.miscarriageassociation.org

Antenatal Results and Choices

73 Charlotte Street

London

0207 6310285

www.arc-uk.org

There are three options:

- You can appoint an undertaker and make all the arrangements yourself without the hospital being involved at all.
- The hospital will appoint a local undertaker and you will be fully involved in the funeral. You can use the services of the hospital chaplain if you wish.
- It may be that you do not wish to be involved or attend at all and you would like the hospital to arrange a simple service

The Hospital Bereavement Officer or Hospital Chaplain can discuss all the options with you so that whatever you choose will be right for you.

Book of Remembrance

The hospital Book of Remembrance is in the hospital chapel and parents and relatives may wish to have an inscription inserted in the book.

If you wish to remember your baby in this way please contact the Hospital Chaplain or the Hospital Bereavement Officer.

Support Organisations

Local Support - The Snowdrop Group

The Snowdrop Group is a self support group for parents and families, who have suffered the loss of a baby as a result of a miscarriage, termination for fetal abnormality, stillbirth, neonatal death or cot death.

The group includes midwives, nurses and the Hospital Chaplain together with parents who have suffered the death of a baby in the past. Their aim is to befriend parents who have lost a baby more recently in a safe and confidential environment where you can share experiences and support each other.

It is affiliated to many national support groups and has access to information and newsletters which may be helpful and of interest to you.

The staff at Yeovil District Hospital would like to express their sympathy to you at this very sad time.

This leaflet explains the formalities that have to be dealt with following the loss of your baby. It can be very hard to cope with such arrangements when you are grieving and in distress, but it does help to know what has to be done and what your choices are.

This booklet is not intended to replace personal help and advice, but is intended to offer you practical assistance during this very difficult time.

Taking time

Doing things in your own time and at your own pace is important. When your baby dies you are suddenly faced with having to make decisions that you never expected to make and it may feel hard to know what to do first.

Most parents need time to talk with each other. It's important to reach decisions together and this can't be done quickly. If you are alone it may help you to talk over what you want to do with someone else who you feel will help and support you.

Registration with the Registrar of Births and Deaths may have to be completed within a certain time of your baby's death, and this is explained below. Otherwise there is no need to rush.

Is there anyone I can talk to?

Midwives or ward staff are available to provide guidance and answer queries and concerns. The Bereavement Officer, Alan Green, is also available at the hospital during office hours to provide support and practical information and can be contacted on **01935 384706** or **07990671855**

Hospital Chaplains are available at all times to offer religious or non-religious support and can be contacted via the hospital switchboard 24 hours a day. The Hospital Chapel is on Level 4 and is open from early morning until evening time for personal reflection and prayer. The Hospital Chaplain will also put you in touch with ministers of other faiths if you require.

There are a number of local and national support organisations which you may find helpful and details are included in the back of this booklet.

Paperwork

Miscarriage – there is no requirement to register the birth or death of a baby born before 24 weeks gestation unless the baby has shown signs of life on delivery.

Parents who decide to hold a funeral or cremation for their baby will need a certificate from the doctor or midwife who attended the delivery stating the baby was born before the age of viability and showed no signs of life. The hospital doctor, midwives or ward staff or the Hospital Bereavement Officer will assist you with this.

If the baby was Stillborn – if your baby was 24 weeks or more gestation and then died before birth then it is necessary to register the stillbirth at the local Registrar of Births and Deaths office. The hospital doctor will give you the Medical Certificate of Stillbirth to take to the Registrars office.

A Stillbirth must be registered at the Registrar Births and Deaths office within six weeks so you should have plenty of time. In Somerset, details can be registered at any Registrars office within the County if you wish. The telephone number for the Registrar of Births and Deaths in Yeovil is **01935 411230**

Most stillbirths are registered at the local office covering the area where the baby is delivered and a list of the Registrar Offices is available from the Hospital Bereavement Officer or the Registration Services page on Somerset County Council web site at www.somerset.gov.uk.

You will have to telephone the Registrars office to arrange an appointment with an office that is convenient for you before you attend.

If you wish you can ask the Registrar to register your baby's first name as well as the surname, so you may wish to give some thought to names for your baby before making an appointment to register.

Also, if the father of the stillborn baby is not married to the mother both parents must attend the Registrar office if you want the baby to be registered in the father's surname.

If the baby was born alive and then died –for babies who die after birth, even if they live for only a very short time, both birth and death must be registered at the Registrar of Births and Deaths office.

Providing the hospital doctor knows the reasons for your baby's death you will be given a Medical Certificate of Death which must be taken to the Registrar of Births and Deaths within five working days. The Registrar will register your baby's birth at the same time as the death so may wish to give some thought about your baby's name before you attend.

Most neonatal deaths are registered at the local office covering the area where the baby is delivered and a list of the Registrar Offices is available from the Bereavement Officer at the hospital or the Registration Services page on Somerset County Council web site: www.somerset.gov.uk.

You will have to telephone the Registrars office to arrange an appointment with an office that is convenient for you before you attend.

Post Mortems

Sometimes it is not possible to explain the cause of death for your baby and it may be necessary to undertake a post mortem . Generally, you will be asked to give your consent to a post mortem and you can take your time to think about this before you agree. In some circumstances however, your consent to a post mortem is not required and hospital doctors will explain the reasons for this if it is appropriate.

The results of this examination are not available immediately afterwards. An appointment will be made for you to discuss this with a senior doctor six to eight weeks after the birth. If you do not feel that you can face attending the hospital again so soon then the appointment can be postponed.

Funeral

A funeral can be almost anything you want it to be. It can be religious or non-religious and for many parents it is a meaningful way of saying goodbye to their baby. As you read this you may not be feeling ready to make any decisions about the funeral of your baby.

We understand this so please take whatever time you need. You may wish to talk to others in your family about the funeral or perhaps with your minister, priest or other religious advisor before you decide what to do.