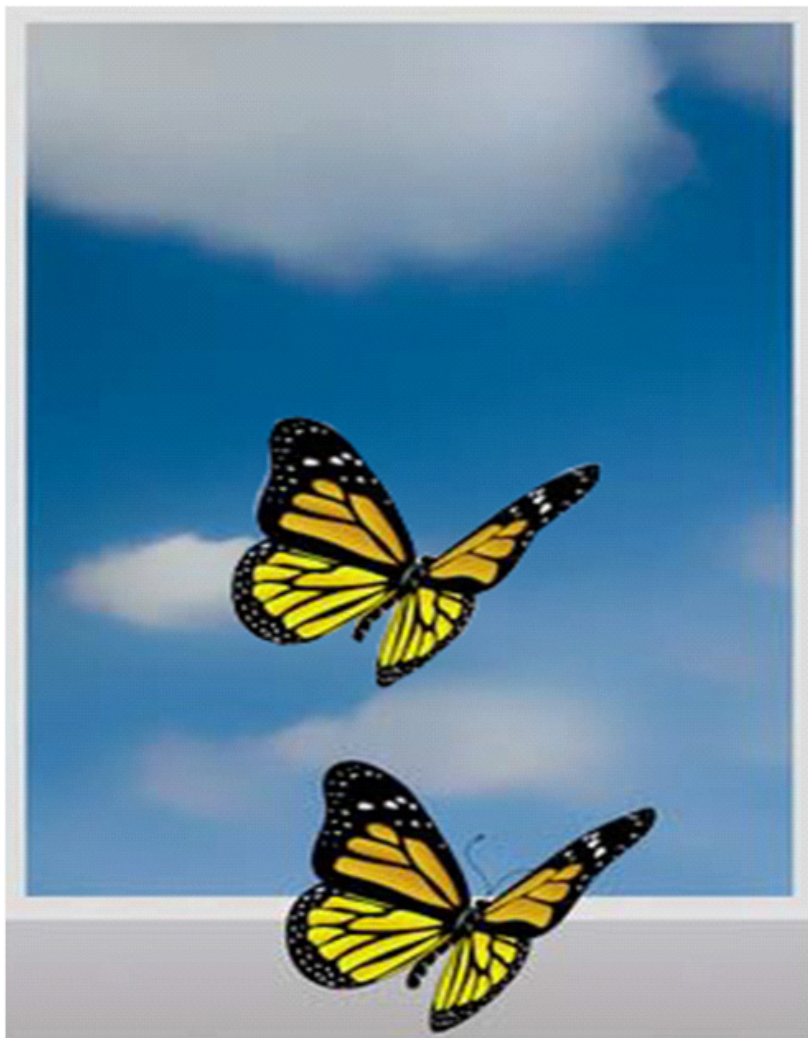


**RUH**

*When your baby has died*



**RUH**



## Caring for you and your baby

---

We know that when your baby dies it is an intensely personal tragedy and we would like to help in any way possible. You may be feeling angry, hurt or guilty about your baby's death and wanting to know why this has happened to you. All of these reactions are normal and each person will grieve in his or her own way.

Here at the RUH, we endeavour to offer the highest level of professional care and support to help you through this difficult time. We will also do our best at all times to ensure your baby is treated with the utmost care and respect.

## Your family and friends

---

If you have other children, they may ask questions, blame themselves or appear quite unconcerned or uncaring. Children need honest answers to their questions and may seek out other family members, friends or teachers to help them try to understand. They will need a lot of reassurance and we encourage you to share your feelings with them and take time to listen to how they feel too.

Family and friends may find it difficult to talk to you about the death of your baby because they may think they will be upsetting you more. You may need to start the conversation yourselves. It is very important for you that you are listened to well and we would encourage you to seek out those individuals who can provide such support for you at this time.

## Additional help and support

---

After you go home from hospital, your GP will be notified of what has happened and will always be willing to spend some time with you. The surgery will be able to put you in touch with other support organisations and services; a list of these organisations is included at the back of this booklet.

## Marking your baby's presence

---

### **Mementos:**

Some parents may wish to retain a memento of their baby; you are welcome to take your own photographs, or the nurse looking after you will be able to do this and can sometimes provide footprints. You may not feel that you want to have any of these things right now but photographs can be kept in your notes, should you wish to have them sometime in the future. In addition, you may wish to leave personal mementoes which will be placed with your baby at the time of the funeral.

### **A service of naming and blessing:**

Giving your baby a name may help to establish their identity. You may have had a name in mind for some time; alternatively, you may now wish to choose a name that could be used equally for a boy or a girl. Before you leave the hospital, the staff can arrange for the hospital chaplain to come to the ward to conduct a short service of blessing or 'act of naming' for your baby. You may wish to include other family members or friends.

### **Book of Remembrance:**

A Book of Remembrance for babies is kept in the RUH Chapel. If you would like to record your baby's name together with a short message, please either leave this with your nurse when you leave hospital, or post it on to the chaplaincy department (address at the end of this booklet). There is no charge for this, although you may wish to make a donation to the 'RUH Remembrance Fund' charity.

## Documentation and registration

---

A baby born before 24 weeks, showing no signs of life, does not need to be registered.

## Preparing for your baby's funeral

---

A chaplain is always available to provide support and guide you through this process, and will visit you whilst you are still in hospital if you wish. Should you not wish to speak to a chaplain, then the following information should cover the essential information you require.

If your baby has died during your pregnancy and is delivered at the RUH, you will be offered a proper funeral service in a manner according to your beliefs and customs.

You may choose either burial or cremation for your baby but it is important that, in making this decision, you understand that there will be no ashes, for babies under 24 weeks gestation.

These are the options available to you:

- You may make arrangements with a funeral director of your choice, to have a service nearer to your home. Most funeral directors conduct this service free of charge or ask for a minimal fee. You need to be aware that some cemeteries make a charge for burial.
- You can ask the hospital chaplain to help you make the arrangements with the RUH contract funeral director, in which case, all basic costs are covered by the hospital. You may choose a service of burial or cremation at Haycombe Cemetery and Crematorium, Bath. Although the service will be taken by a hospital chaplain, it need not be a religious service; you will be fully involved in any decision taken and the planning of the service. Please note that should you opt for a burial in the 'Butterfly Section' of Haycombe Cemetery, you will be asked to sign a declaration regarding the maintenance of your baby's plot.

- If you do not personally wish to attend an individual funeral for your baby, the hospital chaplain will ensure that this is done in a respectful and dignified manner. This option is usually chosen when an early miscarriage has occurred.

If at all possible, please let the ward staff know your choice before you leave the hospital - or if you would like to discuss this in more detail with the Chaplain. If you need more time to consider the options available, please feel free to do so – in which case the Chaplain will contact you within a week of your leaving hospital.

## Post Mortem

---

Please be aware that should you elect for a post mortem examination, this is likely to delay the funeral arrangements by a few days.

## Follow-up arrangements

---

You will usually receive a follow up appointment with your Consultant approximately six to eight weeks after your discharge from hospital. If you do not want this appointment please let the nursing staff know.

You may receive further information i.e. scan dates, following your baby's death. We will endeavour to stop these before they arrive by cancelling all of your future appointments for this pregnancy, but these may already be in the post.



## Useful Contacts:

---

### **Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society (SANDS)**

28 Portland Place  
London W1B 1LY  
[www.uk-sands.org.uk](http://www.uk-sands.org.uk)

Bath SANDS Helpline: 07531 709234  
[helpline@uk-sands.org](mailto:helpline@uk-sands.org)

### **The Miscarriage Association**

c/o Clayton Hospital, Northgate, Wakefield,  
West Yorks WF1 3JS  
[info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk](mailto:info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk)  
Tel: 01924 200799

### **Antenatal Results and Choices**

73 Charlotte Street, London, W1T 4PN  
Helpline 0207 631 0285 [www.arc-uk.org](http://www.arc-uk.org) 85

### **RUH contract funeral director:**

E Hooper & Son  
13 St James Parade  
Bath BA1 1UL  
01225 422040

### **Haycombe Cemetery and Crematorium**

Whiteway Road  
Bath BA2 2RQ  
01225 396020

### **RUH Chaplaincy**

Combe Park  
Bath BA1 3NG  
01225 824039