

### Post mortem

Following delivery medical staff will discuss post mortem examination with you. A short film from Held in our Hearts may help you with the decision. You can find it using this QR code or following this short link.



<https://tinyurl.com/sandsPM>

Post mortem examinations are normally completed within 7-10 days. After this your funeral choice can proceed. However, it can take up to 6 months for the post mortem report to be available.

### Stillbirth Registration

When a baby is stillborn after 24 weeks, this must be registered with the local registrars. We will contact them for you to let them know you need to register your baby. You can do this by phone or in person. Please let us know where you would like to register your baby. Following the registration, the Registrar will give you a form, called a Form 8, which should be given to your Funeral Director if you are making your own funeral arrangements, or be brought back to the hospital Bereavement Service if you have opted for a hospital arranged funeral.

### Further Information and Support

We appreciate that this is a lot of information to take in. If you wish to discuss any of this information further, please speak to your midwife / nurse or doctor. If you feel you need further support following your loss, the following organisations can help:

#### NHS Lothian Bereavement Service

Phone: 0131 242 6995

Email: [bereavement.service@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:bereavement.service@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk)

#### Held in Our Hearts

Phone: 0131 622 6263

Website: [www.heldinourhearts.org.uk](http://www.heldinourhearts.org.uk)

#### Simba

Website: [www.simbacharity.org.uk](http://www.simbacharity.org.uk)

Phone: 0131 353 0055

Please ask a member of the department if you require this leaflet in a different language, larger print, Braille (English only) or audio tape.

## Arrangements following the loss of your pregnancy



Over 24 weeks

## Arrangements following your loss

Please accept our sympathies at this difficult time. This leaflet gives you information on the choices available to you after the death of your baby. You may have a lot of questions and we realise how hard it may be to make decisions. If you would like to discuss any of the information in this leaflet in more detail, please speak to your midwife or doctor.

### Your choices at this time

You can choose to make your own arrangements for individual burial or cremation of your baby, or you can authorise the hospital to organise a funeral. Whatever you choose, please be assured that your baby's remains will be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

### Making your own arrangements

Most families choose to arrange a burial or cremation for their baby. You can ask a funeral director to help organise the burial or cremation at a cemetery or crematorium of your choice. You do not have to have a funeral ceremony, but some parents find this comforting. Family members and friends can attend if you wish. Funerals for children in Scotland are free, but there may be charges for additional items, which your funeral director can advise you on.

If you arrange a cremation, you will also have a choice about what happens to your baby's ashes. The ashes are all that is left in the cremator at the end of the cremation process, once any metal has been removed. Crematorium staff will make every effort to ensure that ashes are gathered following cremation, however national guidance on infant cremation advises that recovery of ashes cannot be absolutely guaranteed. On the very rare occasion ashes are not recovered, the crematorium must notify the family within 48 hours.

You can also arrange a burial, and some cemeteries have special areas set aside for babies.

### Hospital arranged funeral

Some parents prefer to ask the hospital to make arrangements. We can offer cremation or burial. We work with a funeral director to arrange the funeral, so there will still be some decisions you need to make about the arrangements, and we will need you to come back to the hospital to complete some paperwork. We understand that some people find this hard to do, and if you think this would be the case for you, please let us know as it may be more comfortable for you to use your own funeral director who can visit you at home.

### When do I need to make a decision?

You may already know what you wish to choose or you might need a bit longer. Once you've reached a decision, we will ask you to sign a form to confirm your wishes. You do not need to make a decision before you leave the hospital. You can discuss these choices further with a member of your care team after you have returned home. If you would like to do this, please phone the Bereavement Service on 0131 242 6995 to let us know your wishes.

When you leave the hospital, we will contact you again in 6 weeks if we haven't heard from you, to discuss your options.

### What if I change my mind? Who do I contact?

You can change your mind about the decision you've made about cremation or burial in the first week after your loss. To let us know you wish to change a decision please phone the Bereavement Service on 0131 242 6995.

### Record keeping

We will provide you with a copy of the form confirming your decision. NHS Lothian will also keep a record of this. Records of burials and cremations are kept at the appropriate cemetery or crematorium.