

## Contact Numbers

If you would like any further information, do not hesitate to contact any of the following:

A Funeral Director

Ward 26 Labour Ward: 01270 612146

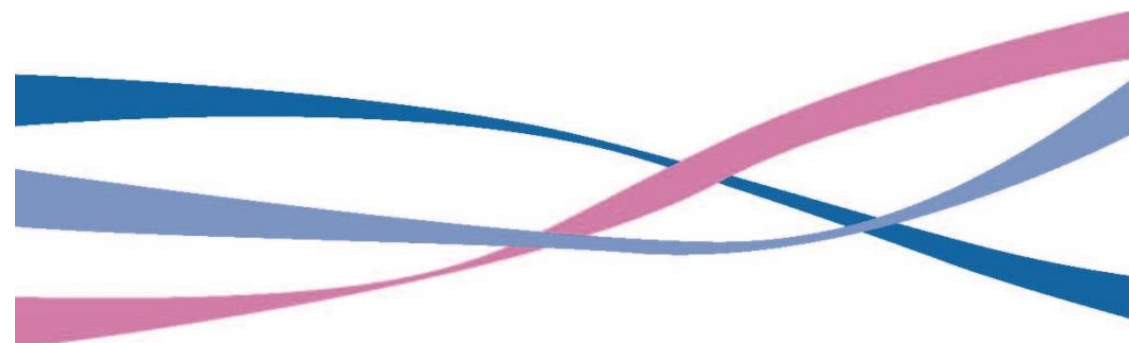
Bereavement Manager: 01270 273882  
8.30am – 4.30pm, Monday - Friday

This leaflet is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please telephone 01270 612284.



# Taking your baby home from hospital when delivered between 12 and 24 weeks gestation

## Important information for patients



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## How should I care for my baby at home?

Caring for your baby at home is a special time for you and your family and gives you the opportunity to share some quiet time together.

The following are ways that will help you:

- If you have other children it will help them if you talk to them and explain how the baby looks and that he or she will feel cold to touch. Let your other children be involved as much as they or you think is enough for them.
- If you have pets it is advisable to keep them in a separate room.
- When somebody dies the body begins to change and it can release an odour. This is the same with babies; if this happens we recommend that you open a window, and / or you could burn scented candles, or use essential oils with or without a burner.
- It is important to keep the baby and the room where the baby is to be kept cool. We recommend that you turn the heating off and, if necessary, use icepacks placed underneath the bottom sheet, to keep your baby cool.
- The baby must not be kept in places where foodstuffs are stored, such as a domestic refrigerator or freezer.
- If you are burying the baby yourself, we recommend that the burial takes place within 24 hours of discharge from hospital.

Babies cannot be taken home on public transport. Parents sometimes feel it is hard to drive themselves, if you feel like this, arrange for a relative or friend to drive you and your baby home. When you leave hospital a member of staff will walk with you to your car.

If you are unable to arrange transport, discuss it with a funeral director who will be able to arrange to bring your baby home for you. A funeral director may bring your baby home in a small coffin. Please inform staff of the name of the funeral director and the time they will arrive. This will help to keep to a minimum any delay in you having your baby home.

The hospital requires that the person who takes the baby from the hospital sign a release notification form to authorise the hospital to release your baby. If you are not able to do this, a named member of your family or your funeral director can do this for you.

### **I want to take my baby home but do not know how I will feel**

We hope that you feel comfortable with your decision to bring your baby home. This may be an extremely emotional time and it is normal to experience a wide range of emotions. When you have taken your baby home you may find it too distressing for you or your family. If you feel like this, please contact your funeral director straight away and they will be able to arrange to come to take the baby back to their premises, and you can still go to see your baby if you wish.

## **Introduction**

This leaflet refers to babies that are not born alive between 12 and 24 weeks gestation.

Taking your baby home can seem quite frightening and parents worry about what they need to do. This can seem a very hard decision to make when you are feeling so sad.

This information leaflet is to explain what will happen and what you will need to do if you decide you would like to care for your baby at home before you make arrangements with a funeral director for a funeral service, or when you decided that you would like your baby to be buried on a piece of land that is not a recognised cemetery.

If you would like to talk to someone further about your decision, then please speak to the nursing or midwifery staff or alternatively you can contact the Bereavement Manager.

## **Are there any legal requirements?**

There is no legal reason why you cannot take your baby home, however it will not be possible if your baby is having a post mortem examination.

If your baby was not born alive before 24 weeks gestation then you are not required to register the birth.

The hospital recommends that the funeral arrangements are handled by funeral directors, and the baby is buried in a cemetery or the service is held in a crematorium.

There are no specific legal requirements when thinking about burial in your own garden or other premises. The Planning and Environmental Health Office of the City Council or your local council can inform you of any by-laws or local regulations that may affect the burial.

There are a number of recommendations and points to be considered when thinking about where to bury the remains. These are:

- Danger must not be caused to others.
- It must not interfere with any rights that others have on the land.
- There must be no danger to water supplies or water courses.
- There must be no chance of fluids leaking into or onto adjoining land.

- The burial should take place at a depth greater than 24" / 60cms.
- Permission should be gained from the landowner.
- You may want to consider including details of the burial in garden on the deeds of the property.
- The value of the property may decrease.
- If the site is to be marked, consideration must be given to neighbours who might find this distressing.
- You may also wish to give careful thought to having a burial in a residential garden.
- The main points to consider are: what would your wishes be for the grave if you were to move house, or if in the future the land were to be used for a new purpose.

## **How will I take my baby home?**

Although it is a sad time, taking your baby home is a really important decision. Your baby is a very special part of your life.

As parents you have some choices in how you take your baby home, and these choices can be influenced by the gestational age of the baby. Staff will talk to you about the options that are available to you for example you could take baby home in a blanket, or if you have a Moses basket etc.