

# What Happens Now?

## Practical advice and guidance for families opting to end a pregnancy for medical reasons... (compassionate induction)



Deciding to end a wanted pregnancy because there is a problem with you or your baby can feel very isolating and painful. The staff caring for you understand that this is a difficult time for you and want to help support you through what happens next. This booklet has been written to support you in making the decisions that are right for you, your baby and your family. If anything is unclear, please do not hesitate to ask a member of staff caring for you.

### Why has this happened to me?

Sometimes a reason can be found to explain why a problem has happened in the pregnancy, but in a lot of cases we do not know why some problems occur, even with testing. In most pregnancies complicated by an abnormality in the baby, these occur spontaneously and usually do not happen again in another pregnancy. Most couples are likely to have a successful pregnancy in the future, particularly if test results are normal.

You may have already had some tests performed prior to the making your decision and following the birth you may be offered additional tests including blood tests and swabs, investigations on the placenta, genetic testing on the baby and a post-mortem examination. We offer 2 types of post-mortem examination, and these will be discussed with you during your stay.

### What happens during a termination for medical reasons?

If you have opted to end your pregnancy, a member of the Screening team or a Senior doctor will discuss with you what happens next. Medical induction involves the administration of medication to prepare your body for labour and then start contractions. This is done in 2 stages.

Once you have decided to go ahead, you will be given a tablet called Mifepristone, which works to prepare your body for labour and reduce pregnancy hormones. After a short period of observation, you will be discharged home and asked to return 36-48 hours later to begin the labour process. If you begin to feel unwell, experience pain or contractions, have any vaginal bleeding, persistent vomiting or diarrhoea after taking the Mifepristone tablet, we encourage you to ring the ward for further advice. Occasionally, after taking Mifepristone, labour may start on its own.

## What happens during my stay in hospital?

You will usually be cared for on the Labour ward at Calderdale Royal hospital. Family members and friends are welcome to visit you during your stay, and we have facilities to make hot drinks and for someone to stay with you overnight.

When you are admitted onto the ward, a midwife will care for you and explain what will happen next. When you are ready, your observations will be taken and then prostaglandin (misoprostol) tablets will be given to you either by mouth or vaginally until you have regular contractions and the baby is born. If after 5 doses of medication baby has not been born, there will be a short period of rest before a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of medication is given. In a small number of cases the afterbirth (placenta) does not deliver after baby is born, and you may need further medication or for it to be removed in theatre.

## Will I be able to have any pain relief?

We aim to keep you as comfortable as possible during your labour and birth, and there will be a range of pain relief methods available to you including paracetamol, gas and air, injectable medications and in later gestations, epidural anaesthesia.

## After the Birth

### What do I need to bring into hospital with me?

It is difficult to predict how long your stay in hospital will be and will usually depend on your physical wellbeing and how you feel after the birth. Some families wish to go home a few hours after baby is born, others prefer to be with their baby for a few days. We suggest that you bring an overnight bag with toiletries, nightwear, a change of clothes and plenty of underwear and sanitary towels. You may wish to bring something to read, some light snacks and drinks and a camera or mobile phone if you want to take your own photographs of baby. If you have any clothes, blankets or special items which you want to leave with baby, you are welcome to bring these, although we have lots of tiny clothes, hats and blankets you can use.

## After the Birth

### Can I see/hold/touch my baby?

The staff caring for you will support you to see, touch and hold your baby if you want to and make memories for you to take home. These include hand and footprints, casts and photographs and the opportunity to have a lock of hair, your baby's name band and cot card. You are welcome to bring your own camera, and photographs can be taken with you and other family members. Your baby can be washed and dressed in any clothes that you provide and any blankets, teddies, family photographs can stay with baby once you leave the hospital. We can provide you with a Memory Box and we have tiny clothes, nappies, blankets and wraps which you are welcome to use and then take home with you.

We aim to accommodate any other requests you may have about how your baby is cared for and can assist you with any other memories you wish to make.

We have Ibraheems Gift packs for families of the Muslim Faith who do not want any traditional memory making and can provide white cloth for shrouding of baby before burial.

The time you have with your baby is very precious and you may stay with him or her for as long as you wish. We have a cold cot (Abi cot) and special cooling mattresses' available which allow your baby to remain with you for the entirety of your stay if this is your preference.

If you do not wish to see or hold your baby, you will not be pressurised into doing so, and the taking of any mementoes will be with your consent.

## Can my baby be blessed?

The Chaplaincy staff are always available to offer comfort and support you, regardless of whether you have a faith or not. You may wish your baby to be welcomed, named or blessed during your stay in the Hospital, and we aim to facilitate this depending on the availability of the pastoral team. Your own minister is welcome to attend.

For those of the Islamic faith we have Muslim chaplains (male or female) who can offer support.

## Can I have a birth certificate for my Baby?

If baby was born before 24 weeks of pregnancy and there were no signs of life at birth, there is no legal requirement for the birth to be registered. The hospital staff will offer you a certificate with baby's details on for you to keep.

If your pregnancy was more advanced, your baby may be born with a faint heart rate or other brief signs of life and in these cases the birth and death will need to be registered at the Registry Office.

If your baby is born after 24 weeks, it is a legal requirement that the birth is registered. The staff will complete the appropriate documentation before you leave the hospital and notify the Registry Office of baby's birth. We can make an appointment for you to register the birth if you are ready before discharge, or you can arrange the appointment later. The birth will need to be registered in 6 weeks.

### Births can be registered at:

The Calderdale Register Office  
Spring Hall Mansion  
Huddersfield Road  
Halifax  
HX3 0AQ

Tel: 01422 288080

Once this has been done, you will be given a Certificate of Stillbirth, and a burial/ cremation certificate will be sent to the funeral director who is arranging the funeral.

Births can also be registered at a Registry Office closer to your home and the appropriate documentation sent out to you, although this may cause a small delay in funeral arrangements.

### Who can register?

If you are married, then either of you can register your baby's birth. If not, you both need to attend if the father's details are to be included on the birth certificate.

## Can I hold a funeral for my baby?

Saying goodbye to your baby is an important part of acknowledging your loss and beginning to grieve, and attending a funeral can be part of this. All families who lose a baby at the time of birth are offered a hospital burial or cremation and given the option to attend or not. Each funeral is for an individual baby and there is no cost to families for a basic funeral.

You can opt to have your baby cremated without attending the service but still have the cremated remains (ashes).

A hospital funeral includes the services of a funeral director with the option of a hospital Chaplain. Funerals can be religious or non-religious in character (and are often somewhere between), and we will work closely with you to ensure the funeral expresses your wishes and beliefs. You are encouraged to choose your own music and readings or poems, and bring along pictures, teddies and flowers. If other children are in the family and are going to attend, you may wish to consider how to involve them.

Our Muslim chaplains are experienced in supporting you with appropriate burial arrangements for Muslim babies.

Hospital burials will be at **Lockwood Cemetery, Huddersfield, Stoney Royd** or **Exley Cemetery, Halifax**.

Cremations will be held at **Parkwood Crematorium, Elland**.

Once you have decided on the right funeral for your baby, it usually takes place within 1-6 weeks, but this will depend on what investigations you have chosen. If a post-mortem examination has been performed and you want to include the tissue taken for testing in the funeral, this can delay the funeral process for up to 3 months.

If you do not wish to be involved in the funeral service, your baby will still be treated with the utmost of respect according to your wishes and faith.

Alternatively, you may wish to make private funeral arrangements for your baby, and you will need to contact a funeral director and clergy of your choice who will instruct you further.

There is also the option of taking your baby home and arranging your own burial and further guidance is available from the hospital.

## How will I feel physically afterwards?

Following the birth, you will have vaginal bleeding for around 4-6 weeks. In the early days, this bleeding can be quite heavy, and you may experience some mild cramping. This should become lighter after the first 3 or 4 days. It is advisable to use sanitary towels rather than tampons to reduce the risk of infection. If the bleeding becomes very heavy with clots, you experience a lot of abdominal pain or the discharge becomes offensive smelling, it is important that you contact your GP or Maternity Assessment Centre.

If you have had any stitches, it is important to look after them and maintain good hygiene to prevent any infection. These may be uncomfortable for the first week and a mild painkiller should help. They usually dissolve in 4-6 weeks.

It is important to try and look after yourself and your general wellbeing, and although you may not feel like eating or drinking, trying to have something little and often will help in your physical recovery.

You may produce breast milk in the days following the birth and we will have a discussion with you regarding your breast care options while you are in hospital. You may opt to take medication to reduce breast symptoms, wait for natural suppression, or consider the option of donating breastmilk to our local breastmilk bank in memory of your baby.

## Will I have any follow- up?

Following discharge from the hospital, you will be offered a home visit or phone call from a community midwife. Telephone support will be provided by a bereavement midwife according to your needs and wishes, and the Chaplaincy staff are available to support you if you wish. You will be given contact numbers and support leaflets when you are discharged home.

A follow-up appointment with a Consultant Obstetrician will be offered to you usually 2-6 months after the birth of baby. This appointment may be delayed if you opted for a postmortem and we are waiting for results. The appointment will give you the opportunity to discuss what has happened, find out the results of any investigations performed and discuss future pregnancies and is optional.

## Is there any ongoing help after I go home?

The emotional impact of baby loss is long lasting. Losing a baby is an experience that many will share, but everyone experiences grief differently. For some, expressions of grief will be overwhelming and public, for others grief may be private but no less deeply felt.

Feelings of shock, grief, depression, guilt, loss and anger are common. Grief may produce physical symptoms as well as emotional ones. Disturbed sleep, lack of appetite, nausea, anxiety and palpitations are normal and may be eased by discussing them with your partner, friends, with a doctor or midwife, or with someone who can listen and understand. When you are discharged, the staff will provide you with a list of helpful organisations and support leaflets.

Local support can be provided by the Forget me Not Children's Hospital and counselling can be arranged through Talkthru. Other options are available both locally and nationally.

The Chaplaincy department can also provide support and guidance irrespective of your Faith.

## Contact Numbers

<b>Bereavement Midwife</b>	Tel: 07500761111
<b>Screening Midwives</b>	Tel: 01422 222123
<b>Labour Ward</b>	Tel: 01422 222129
<b>Maternity Assessment Centre</b>	Tel: 01422 224392
<b>Calderdale Royal Hospital</b> Switchboard	Tel: 01422 357171
<b>Huddersfield Royal Infirmary</b> Switchboard	Tel: 01484 342000
<b>General Office Calderdale</b>	Tel: 01422 222088

## Help and support

**Chaplaincy Department:** Contact via HRI and CRH Switchboard  
Tel: 01484 342000 or 01422 35717

**Talkthru:** Revenue Chambers, St Peters Street, Huddersfield, HD1 1DL  
Tel: 01484 515137  
Email: [office@talkthru.org.uk](mailto:office@talkthru.org.uk) Web: [www.talkthru.org.uk](http://www.talkthru.org.uk)

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

Tel: 0808 1643332  
Email: [helpline@sands.org.uk](mailto:helpline@sands.org.uk)

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Sarah Hall  
Bereavement Midwife  
Calderdale Royal Hospital  
Telephone No: 07500 761111  
[Sarah.hall@cht.nhs.uk](mailto:Sarah.hall@cht.nhs.uk)

Ann Frost  
Maternity Matron  
Calderdale Royal Hospital  
Telephone No: 01422 222947  
[Ann.Frost@cht.nhs.uk](mailto:Ann.Frost@cht.nhs.uk)

[www.cht.nhs.uk](http://www.cht.nhs.uk)

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

ਚ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ,  
ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਾਫ਼ੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور فارمیٹ طرزبان میں درکار ہوں، تو  
برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم  
المذكور أعلاه"