

## More NHS trusts join the National Bereavement Care Pathway

Tuesday 17 April, 2018

Partners working on the National Bereavement Care Pathway (NBCP) for pregnancy and baby loss, including Sands, have published a report to coincide with the extension of the pioneering project to a further 21 sites across England.

The report includes a survey of health professionals' perspective on bereavement care issues in their trust and sets out how the Pathway can improve the overall quality of bereavement care for parents and families whose baby has died before, during or shortly after birth.

More than a third of health professionals surveyed for the report agreed that their NHS trust needs to do far more to improve bereavement care for parents, with the most common barriers to providing good quality care including a lack of dedicated bereavement care rooms, a lack of staff resources, and over-complicated paperwork.

The need for better training and support for staff was also highlighted, particularly in discussing bad news with bereaved parents with only around half of all respondents (55%) saying they felt able to do this appropriately.

However, the survey also found that the recruitment and work of specialist bereavement leads was improving their trust's approach to bereavement care.

The new NBCP sites bring the total number of NHS Trusts taking part in the Pathway to 32 – almost tripling the reach of the existing pilot.

Dr Clea Harmer, Chief Executive of Sands and Chair of the NBCP Core Group, said: "Pregnancy and baby loss affects thousands of families each year across the UK, so I am delighted that we have so many NHS Trusts enthusiastically supporting the development of the National Bereavement Care Pathway.

"It is vital to offer consistently excellent bereavement care and support to anyone who has lost a baby or pregnancy, and that's why we are testing the effectiveness of the Pathway in such a wide range of settings; from Health Visiting to GP surgeries, from Neonatal Wards to Paediatric Pathology and from Midwifery to Gynaecology.

"I and everyone on the National Bereavement Care Pathway Core Group are very grateful to all those involved in its development, which will make a difference to so many families."

The new sites will be working with the project team to understand the impact of the Pathway and its effectiveness in improving bereavement care for parents. The sites have been chosen as they are representative of geography, capacity and specialism and will begin to pilot the pathway from April 2018.

Five experiences of pregnancy or baby loss are included in the Pathway including miscarriage, termination of pregnancy for foetal anomaly, stillbirth, neonatal death and the sudden unexpected death of an infant up to 12 months.

For further information visit:

Ends

For further information, please contact Lee Armitt, Press and PR Officer on 020 3897 3449/07587 925411 or email [media@sands.org.uk](mailto:media@sands.org.uk)

### Notes to editors:

Please see the attached for a full copy of the NBCP interim baseline evaluation report.

- 530 health professionals participated in an on-line survey which ran from 26th October to 29th

### Related Sectors:

Charities & non-profits :: Health ::

### Related Keywords:

National :: Bereavement :: Care  
:: Pathway :: Parents :: Stillbirth  
:: NHS :: Trusts ::

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December 2017. The main aim of the survey was to set baseline measures so that changes can be measured in a follow up survey in summer 2018. Qualitative questions were included to further understand professionals' perspective on bereavement care issues in their trust.

- The 21 new NBCP sites are:
  - Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Hospital,
  - Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (Oldham Hospital)
  - Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust
  - University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust
  - Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
  - Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (Health Visiting Team)
  - County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust
  - The Newcastle on Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
  - North Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust (based at Scunthorpe General)
  - Norfolk & Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
  - University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire; NHS Trust
  - Derby Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
  - Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
  - University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust
  - Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust
  - Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
  - Frimley Park Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
  - University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust
  - Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
  - Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust
  - North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust
- The 11 existing NBCP sites are: Wirral University Teaching Hospital, Liverpool Women's Hospital Trust, York Teaching Hospital NHS Trust, Hull & East Yorkshire NHS Trust, Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust, Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust (Barnstaple Hospital), Medway (Maritime) NHS Foundation Trust, West Middlesex, Chelsea & Westminster, Barking, Havering & Redbridge University Trust - Queens Hospital, Romford, Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust.
- The National Bereavement Care Pathway is being led by: Sands (Stillbirth and neonatal death charity), Bliss, The Lullaby Trust, The Miscarriage Association, ARC (Antenatal Results & Choices), Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Royal College of Midwives, Royal College of Nursing, Neonatal Nurses Association, Institute of Health Visiting, NHS England, Representative of the UK health research community.

## About Sands

Sands is the leading stillbirth and neonatal death charity in the UK. They work nationally to reduce baby deaths through promoting better maternity care and funding research. They have a programme of training and a wide range of resources designed to support professionals to improve the bereavement care they provide following the death of a baby, and they provide a comprehensive bereavement support service both nationally through their helpline and locally through around 100 regional support groups based across the UK.

Further information can be found at [www.sands.org.uk](http://www.sands.org.uk)

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