

You will find it useful to have a discussion with a member of our team prior to meeting with a Funeral Director. We integrate regularly with the funeral industry and are able to offer and discuss a range of options that you might not otherwise be aware of for planning a funeral or memorial service for your baby. This way when you do contact a Funeral Director you will be better placed to ensure that your needs are met.

Funeral options include religious and non-religious services that can be very simple, small and intimate or involve extended family and friends.

Pastoral Care Services are available to conduct a service for your baby in the Hospital chapel or an alternative venue of your choice such as a crematorium chapel, church, or gravesite.

Whether or not you choose to use us or our chapel or facilities, please contact us to benefit from our considerable experience. Please remember that there is no hurry, and it is crucial that however you choose to encompass the experience of physically separating from your baby it must be according to your needs.

While referral to our services should be routine, if you want us to contact you, or if you have any questions or concerns we can be contacted by telephoning the Pastoral Care Services Department on 08 9340 1036.

Your Pastoral Care Representative is:

Disclaimer: The advice and information contained herein is provided in good faith as a public service. However the accuracy of any statements made is not guaranteed and it is the responsibility of readers to make their own enquiries as to the accuracy, currency and appropriateness of any information or advice provided. Liability for any act or omission occurring in reliance on this document or for any loss, damage or injury occurring as a consequence of such act or omission is expressly disclaimed.

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Pastoral Care Services

Following the Loss of Your Baby



Pastoral Care Services

Pastoral Care, also known as Chaplaincy, is an integrated part of your care at King Edward Memorial Hospital following the loss of your baby.

Our services are available to you and likely to be of benefit whether you are "religious" or not and regardless of what religious tradition you belong to.

This information comes to you at a time of loss when you may be feeling overwhelmed, unsure of what you need, what is available to you, or what decisions you will have to make.

A representative from the Pastoral Care team can meet with you to provide support, resources and options including:

- Help to meet the spiritual and religious needs of you and your family during and following your stay in Hospital.
- The offer of appropriate rituals and services to commemorate your baby and give expression to the many meanings that your baby will have for you.
- Help with decisions regarding funeral arrangements and requirements, including KEMH cremation options.
- A range of opportunities for creating lasting memories of your baby
- Help with many other practicalities surrounding your loss.

A Ritual of Remembrance

This is a monthly service of healing following the loss of a pregnancy before 14 weeks gestation. The early loss of a pregnancy often occurs quickly and unexpectedly, leaves few reminders, yet is an experience of immense and lasting grief. This short ritual provides an opportunity to reflect, remember and acknowledge those who passed so briefly into and beyond our experience.

Services are held on the second Monday of each month at 12.30pm. Dates are on a separate brochure normally provided to you by nursing staff. If you do not receive this brochure please contact Pastoral Care Services.

A Service of Naming or Blessing

This is a short ritual, held at the bedside or in the hospital chapel, available to all who experience the loss of a baby. A "Recognition of Life" certificate is given, stating both yours and your baby's names and the date of your baby's birth. This provides an acknowledgment of your baby's existence (not a legal document) which may particularly benefit those experiencing a loss of under 20 weeks gestation where there is no formal registration of birth or death.

KEMH Interment of Ashes Service

This is a monthly memorial service for stillborn babies of 14-28 weeks gestation where the cremated remains of many babies are interred in the KEMH Memorial Garden. (Perinatal Pathology needs parental consent to cremate your baby's body and retain the cremated remains to inter at the next service following your loss).

The names of each of the babies are read and parents and family members are encouraged to inter a portion of the ashes in the site prepared within the garden. The names of all the babies interred are recorded in a register within Pastoral Care Services.

The service is held on the last Thursday of each month (except December) at 12:30pm and is provided free of charge. If you are attending the service, an information brochure with your baby's interment service date should be provided to you by nursing staff before you leave Hospital. If you do not receive this brochure please contact Pastoral Care Services.

Other KEMH Cremation Options

While the Interment of Ashes Service is the favoured option and routinely offered there are variations available. In some circumstances it may be more appropriate to collect the separate ashes of your baby instead of interring them within the Memorial Garden. You can still choose to attend the monthly service and have your baby's name acknowledged. Pastoral Care can help you to clarify your choices and discuss the various options and alternatives available. You will be given time to consider the most appropriate option for you.

Funeral or Memorial Services

If your baby was stillborn at more than 28 weeks gestation or died any time after birth, the Hospital (by law) is unable to cremate your baby's body and the services of a Funeral Director will be required. It is important for you to have a member of the Social Work team meet with you to discuss resources and support available to you.