

You will find it useful to have a discussion with a member of our team prior to meeting with a Funeral Director. We regularly work 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's chapel or an alternative venue of your choice such as a crematorium chapel, church, or gravesite.

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

While referral to our services for losses above 14 - 15 weeks is routine, if you want us to contact you further, 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.

Compiled by: Pastoral Care Services

Email: robert.anderson@health.wa.gov.au

Website: <http://wnhs.health.wa.gov.au>

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WOMEN AND NEWBORN HEALTH SERVICE

King Edward Memorial Hospital

374 Bagot Road Subiaco WA 6008

Telephone: (08) 9340 2222



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

Pastoral Care Services

Following the Loss of Your Baby



Pastoral Care Services

Pastoral Care, also known as Chaplaincy, is an integrated part of bereavement care at King Edward Memorial Hospital.

These services will be of benefit whether you are 'religious' or not or regardless of what religious tradition you may 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 will meet with you to provide information, options for your baby, support and resources according to your need.

These include:

- Options meeting legal requirements according to the circumstance. These include KEMH cremation or funeral information where required.
- Help to meet any spiritual or religious needs that you may have especially in relation to your loss.
- 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.
- 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 small monthly service of healing following the loss of a pregnancy before about 14 weeks gestation. The early loss of a pregnancy often occurs quickly and unexpectedly and leaves few reminders, yet, for many, 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 would like to attend this service and do not have the 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's chapel, available to all who experience the loss of a baby. A certificate is given, stating both your 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 gathering for stillborn babies up to 28 weeks gestation, at which cremated remains are interred in the KEMH Memorial Garden. Signed consent for cremation and inclusion in this gathering is required. A chaplain will complete this with you. There are no costs attached to this service.

When requested, the names of each of the babies included in the service 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 gathering is held on the last Thursday of each month (except December) at 12.30pm in the Memorial Garden on the corner of Railway and Barker Roads in Subiaco. A chaplain will provide you with an information brochure showing your baby's interment service date 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 routinely offered, should you choose not to inter your baby's ashes in the Memorial Garden you are able to receive your baby's ashes in order to keep them or choose other alternatives for them. You can still choose to attend the monthly service and have your baby's name acknowledged. A chaplain 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 and the services of a Funeral Director will be required. A chaplain will ensure you have information in regard to this.