

# Caring for a baby (and family), who is very ill and may die

It can be helpful for families to think about things that are important to them during this time.

At the end of life, the family's preferred place of care, if possible, would be:

- In the Neonatal unit
- At the local Children's Hospice
- At home (with planning and support from the team)

(This may depend on how unwell baby is at the time)

This section is for the family to note things they would like to do.

Spending time with baby

Memory making

Cultural, spiritual or faith wishes

Opportunity to care for baby (e.g. bathing, dressing)

Photographs/Videos

Involvement of wider family

Other

People who are important to be there

Any other important information

## Ongoing care after a baby dies

After the death of a baby, we can continue to support families to spend time together. Baby would be cared for on a cuddle cot, which is a special cool mattress.

It may give you some comfort to know that personal items can stay with baby at all times: (e.g. a favourite toy, teddy, letters, photos or drawings)

We will talk with you about making a plan to manage breast milk production and maintain breast health. Some mothers have found comfort in donating their breast milk. If you would like to, you can learn more about donating your milk to the Scottish Milk Bank, in memory of your baby.

Senior medical staff will discuss the option of a post-mortem with you. (If you are unsure about this, a parent to parent animation about post mortem can be viewed at this website <https://heldinourhearts.org.uk/new-parent-to-parent-post-mortem-animation/>).

Staff may also discuss your wishes about the possibility of tissue donation.

We will talk with you about the hospital review process which occurs after the death of any baby. You will have a key contact person - this is someone to provide ongoing emotional support, help and information while the review is being done and could be your community midwife or someone from the family support team. You can submit questions to the review through your key contact.

When you are ready to leave hospital, your baby can be moved to the care of our colleagues in the hospital mortuary, to your home with you, to the local Children's Hospice or to your chosen funeral director.

Thoughts about the funeral

Any other relevant or important information to note

Local bereavement support