

Fact Sheet

Pre-admission Information for Families experiencing Perinatal Loss

The staff caring for you and your family over the next few days understand this is a time of extreme pain and grief. We would like to pass on our heartfelt condolences. This resource has been developed to help you and your family navigate the next few days and help you prepare for the birth of your baby. It includes a list of things to consider prior to coming in to birth your baby.

This is a list of suggestions to help you make memories of your baby and to be prepared for what lies ahead.

Things to consider

The doctors and midwives have discussed with you the time and place for the birth of your baby. You have some choices and decisions to make on how you would like this to happen.

Consider:

- Who would you like to have with you at the birth?
- What is important to you for labour and birth? You may still be able to achieve your birth plan
- What do you want to use for pain relief? You have choices, please ask the staff
- It might be possible to find out why this has happened. Who would you like to be involved in making decisions around options you have?
- Who are you going to tell about your loss? It is your choice if you want to wait or share your experience with others at this time
- Who do you want to meet your baby? The time following the birth of your baby is a precious, limited time. You may wish to keep this time private, or share it with others and introduce them to your baby. The choice is yours
- Do you want to have some time at home with your baby following their birth? Please talk to the midwives at the hospital to discuss your options
- Do you have any religious or cultural practices that staff may need to be aware of or help with, such as organising for your baby to be blessed or a short time before burial?
- What funeral director or service you would like to involve. Sometimes this can be something that you delegate to other family members
- What support might you and your family need at home (e.g. for other children/animals)
- How are you going to get to and from the hospital, including parking options
- Accommodation in Adelaide if you need to have your baby in the city

What do we need to bring into the hospital?

You may be in hospital for 1 – 3 days depending on the time your baby is born.

Please bring:

- Personal items for yourself and your partner – toiletries, hairbrush, shampoo etc.
- Phone and phone charger (and/or camera)
- Comfortable clothes for you and your partner
- Clothes to have family photos with your baby (if you wish, *Heartfelt* provides this free service to bereaved parents)
- Clothes for baby. You may want to consider bringing two outfits and a zip lock bag to keep a set of clothes your baby has worn
- Items to make memories (see list below)
- Maternity pads / Breast pads
- Firm supportive bra (no underwire)
- Note pad and pen
- Medicare card/concession card/private health details



Making memories

Following the birth of your baby you will have time to create memories of their birth and time with you. We encourage you to consider using *Heartfelt's* free photography service to take photos of you and your family with your baby. Your midwife will be able to provide you with more information about this service. You or your midwife can ring them on a 24/7 number – 1800 583 768.

Other options you may want to consider include:

- If you would like to involve other children, grandparents or family
- Who you would like the baby to have photos with – you may like siblings or grandparents in photos with you and your baby
- Books you would like to read to your baby
- Wraps/blankets or clothes that other children in your family have worn
- Clothes to dress your baby in - you can take these home and keep them if you wish
- Footprints/handprints – we can support you to do this yourself or we can take them for you
- Music you would like to play
- Personal items such as a teddy bear or toys you have for the baby
- Organising foot casts or hand casts of your baby
- Items to bath your baby and possibly a hairbrush to brush their hair if appropriate
- If you would like to take your baby outside or home – talk to staff about your options
- Please let us know if there are other family traditions or special things you would like to do and we will try our best to accommodate your wishes

Questions you may want to ask the staff

It is understandable that you will have a lot of questions at this time. While you are at home or awaiting birth, write down any questions that you may have so that you can discuss them with your doctor or midwife when you are in hospital. Some areas to consider include:

- Options during labour and birth including pain relief choices
- How much time you can spend with your baby after birth
- Options that might help to find a reason why this has happened (including different types of autopsy)
- What support is available for you in the hospital and after you go home
- Funeral arrangements: In the hospital you may see a social worker or other staff member that will be able to talk you through the process of birth registration and funerals

You may find remembering questions a little challenging at this time, so you might want to bring a note pad and pen or use your phone to write down any questions you have over the next few days.

For more information

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Telephone: 08 8161 9459
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stillbirth



www.ausgoal.gov.au/creative-commons

