

DML Excellence Awards 2016 Report

Project No: 337 – Wexford Maternity Bereavement

Address: Wexford General Hospital

Location: Ireland East Hospital Group

Brief Description (up to 200 words)

In 2012, 3 midwives felt passionate to update guidelines to be able to enhance the practice that the staff were providing for bereaved families.

Our project commenced by introducing a Memory box to give parents a method to create memories of their baby. The staff in Maternity held a cake sale which raised over €2000, this enabled us to purchase a cuddle cot to allow parents to have their baby with them. Since then, two cots have been donated allowing parents to have the choice to bring their baby home for longer.

We created a methodical way to approach the documentation and care required with a staff folder, including a checklist that all disciplines of providers may use.

We developed several new initiatives such as a butterfly sticker for the woman's notes and door to denote sensitivity and loss, for all HSE employees. We also developed two booklets for the woman, information of what happens and post mortem information, to enhance the information being relayed at a difficult time. We paid for these with the fund raising.

A consent form for Post mortem and retention of organs was developed.

We visited the hospital angels plot. The plan at the time was to create an album to show parents an option for a hospital burial. Sadly, the plots were not well maintained. We have managed to renovate the existing plots and developed a new memorial area of which we are very proud.

Main goal(s) and aims of the Project

1. To create a positive experience for a woman and her family when a baby dies or an abnormality is diagnosed
2. Maintain dignity for the woman and her baby at all times
3. Formulate a pathway of documentation in six sections that makes it easier for staff and avoids error
4. Renovate the Angel's plot

Outline of Approach – main steps taken to implement the Project

The main steps taken to implement this project was from the check-list developed. This check-list was divided into 6 sections. The three midwives met on their own time and divided the work and supported each other in developing the project

Section 1 involved developing

- A new Wexford booklet of information to the parents
Cuddle cot information for staff and parents
- Investigations, guidelines for Doctors and Midwives
Memory box: hand-prints, photographs, sibling involvement
- Anniversary cards, 6 and 12 month sent to parents

Section 2 involved

- Postnatal care involving all multidisciplinary team to give high standard of care
- Community welfare entitlements

Section 3 involved

- Working with the chaplaincy for the blessing/baptism and burial of a child
- Working with the Mortuary to organise coffins/plaques and sensitivity to baby and parents requirements

Section 4 involved

- Registration and legality of births and deaths

Section 5

- Lactation for the bereaved parent

Section 6

- Post mortem information booklet developed
- Consent forms developed and pathway if consents for post mortem