



## Bereavement Rights: What can I do with my baby in the hospital?

### Bereavement Rights of Infant Loss

- You are entitled to be treated with care and respect. Speak up if you feel your wishes or emotions are not being acknowledged.
- You are entitled to spend time with your baby. Hold your baby. Getting to know your child can help with the grieving process. Ask to see your baby any time during your hospital stay. It is in no way “weird”, “abnormal”, or “harmful” to do so.
- You are entitled to create memories so you can look back not only with sadness, but also with priceless mementos of your time spent with your precious child. Your baby is a unique individual who is important and who deserves to be remembered.
- You are entitled to honor your baby in a way that is meaningful to you. Some suggestions include:
  - Naming your baby
  - Performing a newborn ceremony (Christening, Baptism, Blessing, etc.)
  - Creating and sending tribute cards in place of birth announcements
  - Talking about your baby



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- You are entitled to formal recognition and acknowledgement of your child. Your child is a human being and deserves recognition as such.
  - Obtain a Birth and Death Certificate or, in the case of Stillbirth, a Certificate of Stillbirth. (Information on obtaining these items are located in the right pocket of the folder)
  - Hold a Funeral or Memorial Service for your child
  - Hold a Special Dedication (of a plaque, a bench, a tree, etc.)
- You are entitled to bury or cremate your baby according to your beliefs and traditions
  - Use the same funeral home or cemetery that your other family members use
  - If you do not have a family funeral home, use the resources in this folder or on our website to find a place that fills your needs and wishes
- You are entitled to NOT feel guilty. Whether you choose to do all, some, or none of the items listed above, you should not feel any guilt about your choices. You are doing the best you can during a very traumatic and stressful time.
- You are entitled to GRIEVE. Grief is a complicated process and requires you to be kind to yourself without pressure from others to “get over it”. There is no time line associated with grief and is unique to each person. Included in this folder are ongoing resources available to you.