

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**MAY 2011**

### **Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity, join with major women's magazine Grazia to launch national stillbirth campaign**

Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity, is joining forces with leading women's weekly magazine Grazia and launches this week a major stillbirth awareness campaign and on-line petition.

In the UK, 11 babies are stillborn every day. New research, published last month in The Lancet, found Britain is ranked second from bottom: 33 out of 35 countries in the developed world for stillbirth rates. Countries like Australia – which have invested heavily in research – have managed to bring their rates down. In the UK, they have remained the same for the past 10 years.

This is simply not acceptable, which is why Grazia has joined forces with Sands, to demand change.

Sands and Grazia want the government to fund research to discover the causes of these deaths, and to develop new ways of screening pregnancies to find out which babies are at risk of stillbirth...and save their lives before it is too late.

Sands, Chief Executive, Neal Long says, *'With 11 babies dying every day, it's a national scandal which has persisted for far too long. One in 200 pregnancies ends in stillbirth and yet, though we understand some of the rare pregnancy risks, we still cannot detect the so-called low-risk woman in the low-risk pregnancy who in fact represents the highest risk of all. Current routine antenatal screening methods aren't working when it comes to preventing many stillbirths.'*

Grazia editor-in-chief, Jane Bruton says, *'It's shocking how many women are going through the pain and devastation of stillbirth every day. We believe research needs to be urgently carried out to discover how improved screening for pregnant women could help reduce the UK's rates... and save more women from the trauma of losing their child.'*

Sands has launched the campaign with a petition, which within only 24 hours of its launch has received over 3,000 signatures, which Sands and Grazia believe already reflects the strength of public opinion on this issue.

The petition closes on 30<sup>th</sup> June, at which point it will be presented to Government for consideration.

To access the petition please go to the Sands website, at [www.uk-sands.org](http://www.uk-sands.org)

The wording of the petition is below:

**PETITION**

**Too many babies die unexpectedly before they are born, shattering the lives of the families planning their futures around a new arrival. Many of these babies are perfectly formed and would have lived if they had been delivered in time.**

**We want the UK government to fund research to discover what is causing these babies to die and to develop new ways of screening pregnancies to find out which babies are at risk of stillbirth and save their lives before it is too late.**

- Ends -

For further information, please contact:

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**Key Information about Sands:**

Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity, was established by bereaved parents in 1978 and obtained charity status in 1981.

Sands core aims are to:

- Support anyone affected by the death of a baby;
- To work in partnership with health professionals to improve the quality of care and services offered to bereaved families; and
- To promote research and changes in practice that could help to reduce the loss of babies' lives

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