

Sands Position Statement

Storing mementoes in hospitals

The parents of babies who die before, during or shortly after birth have few if any memories or tangible mementoes of their baby.

Mementoes such as photos, hand and footprints, identity bracelets, cot tags, certificates or a lock of the baby's hair help to confirm the baby's existence and can be comforting to families in the months and years to come.

It is therefore essential that hospital staff suggest creating mementoes and help parents to do so.

Most parents want to take these mementoes home with them. But although they have agreed to mementoes such as photos, hand and footprints, some may not want to take them home.

Many hospitals have stored these items in the mother's medical notes. However with the increasing use of paperless notes this may no longer be possible.

Instead, Sands recommends placing the items in a sealed envelope which the parents can take home and either store themselves, or give to a trusted person for safe keeping.

If this is done, Sands recommends that it is recorded in the mother's medical notes.

©Sands 2014

Improving bereavement care team