

28 November 2011

**The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity, join forces to host major stillbirth seminar – London, 5 December, 2011**

A stillbirth seminar bringing together leading national and international experts to address the clinical issues surrounding stillbirth and its prevention will be held at the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) on 5 December 2011. The seminar will also look at the support and information currently provided for bereaved parents who endure the tragedy of losing their baby.

Hosted by the RCOG in conjunction with Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity, the seminar will appeal to all medical professionals involved in maternity issues. This includes, all consultants and trainees in obstetrics and gynaecology; clinical managers; midwives; perinatal pathologists; specialist trainees; student midwives and staff grades, staff doctors; trust doctors and associate specialists.

Speakers will include leading experts and researchers in the field of stillbirth prevention as well as bereaved parents, who will explore the parents' experience of the death of their baby, and their subsequent bereavement care needs.

Topics covered will include decreased fetal movements, the role of the midwife, the use of ultrasound to detect stillbirth and bereavement care.

Dr Tony Falconer, President of the RCOG said: "This important event brings together a wide range of experts including midwives, obstetricians and parents to discuss the clinical issues surrounding stillbirth, which causes such distress to parents and families.

"There are many factors associated with stillbirth such as increasing maternal age, obesity, ethnicity, congenital anomalies and placental conditions, however, a significant number are unexplained.

Therefore more research is needed to raise awareness of the possible reasons enabling us to reduce the number of cases.

“The stillbirth rate has remained generally constant since 2000 and in addition to any physical effects, stillbirth can have profound emotional, psychiatric and social effects on parents, their relatives and friends.”

Neal Long, Chief Executive, Sands: “This stillbirth seminar provides an unmissable opportunity for a wide range of medical professionals involved in maternity to gain a greater understanding of the issues surrounding stillbirth prevention, as well as an insight into the devastating impact on parents of stillbirth and their subsequent bereavement care needs.”

The day will also include the opening of an exhibition of artwork by bereaved mum, Cordelia Spalding, of babies’ handprints, which will remain at the RCOG after the seminar.

To book a place or to find out more about the seminar, please visit

<http://www.rcog.org.uk/events/stillbirth>. Standard delegate rate for online bookings is £80, and the midwife rate is £40.

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**For further information, please contact Sands press office:**

Lisa Wardle – 07554 454 309  
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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

Sands is a national organisation, with over 100 regional support groups across the UK.

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