Bereavement care for parents who experience the death of a baby continues to be highly variable across the country. Sands’ recent survey of maternity units suggests that many Trusts and Health Boards across the UK continue to lack resources to provide the level of care that bereaved families need.

38% of maternity units do not have a specialist bereavement midwife based there.

Bereavement care training is mandatory in only 46% of Trusts and Health Boards.

Where bereavement care training is mandatory, 66% of this is annual training.

Of those that have annual mandatory training, 86% of Trusts and Health Boards allocate only an hour or less.

Survey responses were obtained from 79 Trusts and Health Boards across the UK, covering at least 364,216 deliveries, 1453 stillbirths and 543 neonatal deaths in 2015. Data collected June-August 2016.

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1 in 3 Trusts and Health Boards do not have a dedicated bereavement room in each maternity unit they cover.

1 in 10 Trusts and Health Boards have no dedicated bereavement rooms at all.

83% always or usually use trained interpreters, but; 16% always or usually use fathers or partners, and; 17% use children out of hours and/or in emergencies.

It is crucial that Trusts and Health Boards have the right resources and policies in place to ensure bereaved parents receive the personalised care they need, and that staff are properly trained and supported to be able to provide this.