



Féileacáin

Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society of Ireland
(SANDAI)

Féileacáin was formed by a group of bereaved parents who wished to offer support to other parents whose baby had died.

At Féileacáin our mission is to:

- Offer support to anyone affected by the death of a baby
- Work with health professionals to improve the quality of care and services provided to bereaved parents and their families
- To support research into stillbirth and neonatal death

Please contact Feileacain on

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*Leaving hospital
- going home*



Féileacáin

Leaving hospital - going home

“Leaving the hospital without my baby is the hardest thing I have ever done. Coming home to an empty nursery and packing away her things was heartbreaking. Looking at all the toys that she would never play with, all the clothes that she would never wear broke my heart. However I’m glad that I myself put away all her little things. There would only be so many things I could do for her and this was one of them.”
Mother

Care from your primary health team

Although most parents want to be at home, they often miss the contact they had with the hospital staff who cared for them or their baby. The hospital should tell your GP and public health nurse what has happened so that they can offer you continuing care and support once you are home.

All mothers need normal postnatal care. They may also need advice and help to deal with breast milk or painful stitches. Both you and your partner need support and care as you come to terms with what has happened. If you don’t hear from your GP or public health nurse, within a few days of coming home, it is a good idea to phone the surgery. Tell them what has happened and ask to see a member of your care team. Some GPs will arrange to see you at home if you don’t feel able to go to the surgery.

Practicalities

Getting back into the routines of daily life can be very hard. Many bereaved parents feel exhausted. It may be very difficult to find the energy and motivation to achieve the simplest household tasks or to deal with letters and phone calls. Some parents find it hard to go out; others cannot bear to be at home.

Try to take things gently and don’t expect too much of yourself. You can only cope with so much each day. If friends and family want to help, you could ask them to bring round a ready-cooked meal or to do some

household chores or shopping for you. You might want to ask someone to help with answering letters, to go for a walk with you, or to help with other practical tasks you can’t face just now.

Unfortunately, some bereaved parents receive baby-related mail and this can continue for months. You could arrange for someone to contact these companies and cancel the mail on your behalf if you find the mail too distressing. If you have already bought baby clothes and equipment, you will need to decide what to do with them. Some parents decide very quickly, others wait several weeks or months before they feel ready. Well-meaning friends or relatives may offer to pack the baby’s things away, but many parents prefer to do this themselves and in their own time. Even though it can be a very painful and emotional process, it can also be very healing. Some shops will take back unused baby clothes and equipment when a baby has died.

Remember you are not alone – you can contact Féileacáin by phone or email for support and advice, join our on-line forum and facebook page or attend a parent support meeting.

Details available on www.feileacain.ie

