

# Spaces and Places within Maternity Services



Butterfly Room  
Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda



Pregnancy Loss  
Research Group



National  
Women & Infants  
Health Programme

# What is the Butterfly Room?

A two-bedded room at the entrance to the Postnatal Ward had always been used to accommodate bereaved families. However this room was very clinical in its appearance. Following negotiations between the Midwifery Management Team and the Finance and Operational Services Department, it was agreed that we could drop one-bed to allow for this area to be converted into a family bereavement room, called The Butterfly Room. This name was chosen due to the association the butterfly has with perinatal loss.

Situated on our Postnatal Ward the Butterfly Room is a comfortable bereavement suite opened in October 2012. The room has a double bed which allows for the family to spend precious time together. There is also a Moses basket with a cuddle cot ensuring the family can stay together and build precious memories.

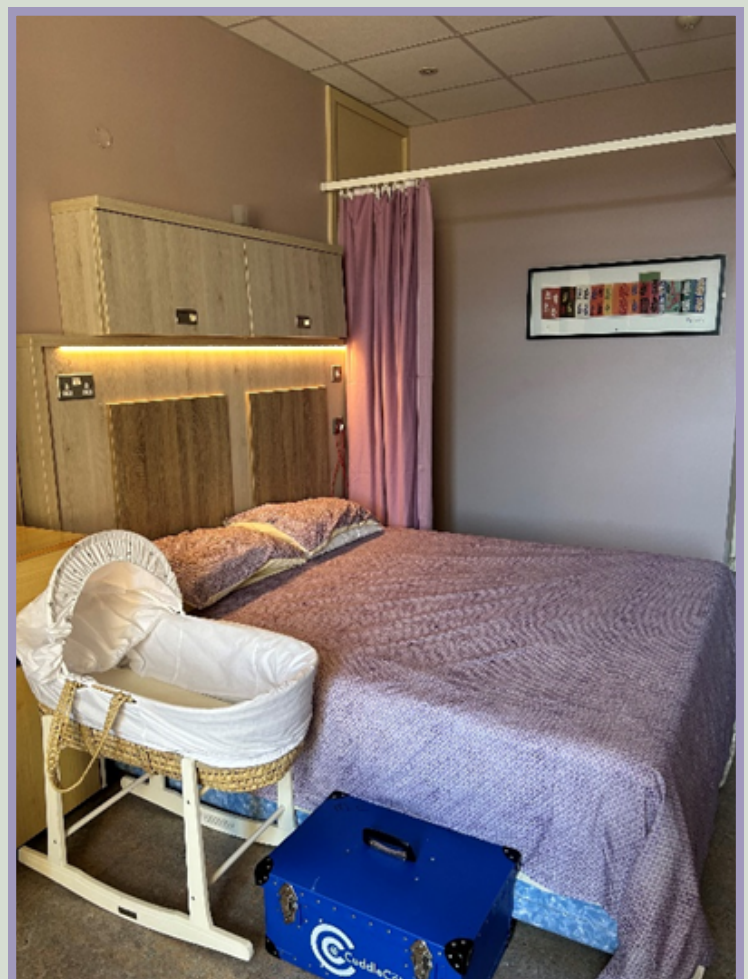
The room also has two couches, one which converts to a bed, with tea making facilities and extra chairs to allow the facilitation of family visits, and comfort of the family. The room is soundproofed and has a television. The lighting in the room can be dimmed to create a warm environment with plantation shutters also in place on the windows. There is an en-suite bathroom with shower situated within the room.

The comfort of bereaved families was considered at every stage of the design process. Soothing colours were used in the furnishings of the room. The Moses basket and cuddle cot, kindly donated to the unit by Féileacáin, ensure the family can spend time together and allows the facilitation of precious memory making. The over bed lighting allows for a peaceful ambiance to be maintained. We aim to change the divan bed to a mechanical one to further improve the comfort of families.

Whilst the comfort of patients is important, patient safety was also taken into consideration. An oxygen point and emergency bell is present and the bed can be moved to make more room if needed.

The room is situated at the end of the Postnatal Ward and is soundproofed. This attempts to ensure grieving families are protected from hearing baby's crying during their stay. The room has the dedicated Irish Hospice Foundation end of life symbol displayed on the door, ensuring staff and visitors are aware there is a grieving family on the ward, promoting an environment of quiet and respect.

The "Flower Room" is situated just across the corridor. This room allows for a resting place for the baby, separate from the parents if they do not wish to have the baby in the room, but also allows quick access to the baby if they change their mind.



# What prompted this development?

Feedback from staff and bereaved parents.

## What does this space achieve?

Staff identified that there was a need to provide a home from home environment for families experiencing pregnancy loss and/or neonatal death.

Providing private and compassionate care to families experiencing perinatal loss is at the heart of the Butterfly Room. It shows women and their families that the unit cares deeply about their loss and wants to provide a high standard of care to them.

The calming colours and well-presented room which promotes family time together, allows for a dedicated and comfortable space in which to grieve.



The room includes comfortable sofas which facilitates visiting from extended family members who are also grieving the loss of a loved family member. The inclusion of these ensures the family feels welcome to spend time with their loved ones. Extra chairs are available if necessary. Tea and coffee making facilities are available. Shutter blinds and curtains promote privacy for the family in their time of grief.

## Who was involved?

Senior Midwifery Management team, Senior Management team, Operational services, Maintenance, CMM2, Obstetricians, Paediatricians, Bereavement Midwife, Staff midwives, Bereaved parents, Finance, and Procurement Committee.

Buy-in from different grades of staff and different disciplines was necessary to ensure the project was both feasible and achievable. Support was necessary from Senior Management within the hospital to get the project started and couldn't have happened without Senior Midwifery Management. Practical elements were supported by operational services and maintenance departments.

By obtaining feedback and insight from bereaved families we were able to ensure the Midwifery team's vision for the room complemented what was truly needed.



Families have expressed informally that they really appreciated the room. They appreciated the opportunity to be able to spend time together and to have other family members be able to visit. They liked that the room was non-clinical looking and a home from home environment. Women have commented “the room is beautiful.”

They have stated how important it was to be together “we were able to spend time together as a family.” Families are especially grateful for the cuddle cot and how it ensures they can have as much time as they need, “having (baby’s name) next to us in the Moses basket was special.”

## Plans for further development

We plan to repaint the area. We have also applied for funding for a double electric bed as the one we have cannot go up and down.

## Learning from this project

- Difficult to keep the special linen- it seems to go missing a lot and needs replacing even though we have a special bag identifying it as linen from the Butterfly Room.
- The mats need replacing frequently as they get quite dirty quickly.
- The current double bed is not an electric bed and cannot go up and down. If a mother is experiencing a pregnancy loss following caesarean section, she cannot go into this room until Day 1 post LSCS as she cannot get from the trolley to this bed. We have applied for funding for an electric double bed.

## Project funding


The room was refurbished and opened with the help of outside sponsors and through the fundraising efforts of staff members. Staff donations of carpets and paintings were also received.

## More information

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 [pregnancyandinfantloss.ie](https://pregnancyandinfantloss.ie)

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