

PORTFOLIO - PERSONAL REFLECTIVE LEARNING STATEMENT (STEAM)

Name: ██████████	RSPH No: ██████████
Unit number (s): Unit 4:8	Evidence No: Evidence 20
Activity Date: 06/08/2021	Evidence type: Full reflection
Activity Title / Description you are reflecting on: SANDS Webinar- Supporting families Through Pregnancy Loss and the Death of a Baby	
<p>Situation</p> <p>I attended an online Webinar (See IMAGE 1) that was held by the SANDS (Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Charity) to learn how to support families through pregnancy loss and the death of a baby. During this webinar, they discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to sensitively communicate with bereaved parents • How to spot signs of grief and how to adapt communication techniques. • How to give them an informed choice with Post Mortems • How to create memories with the bereaved parents <div style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">  </div> <p>In ██████████ the Bereavement Midwife is very passionate about supporting bereaved parents of babies of all ages. Usually, the process is that a deceased baby is not transferred to the mortuary until the bereaved parents have felt that they have spent suitable time with their baby. However, the mortuary does have a designated sitting room and cot to facilitate Baby Viewings if the parents wish to visit. If we do facilitate a viewing, the Bereavement Midwife is always present and often takes the lead with communicating with the parents. APT's are mainly there to offer support if necessary. It doesn't happen very often but there have been occasions in where the Bereavement Midwife has been unable to attend and the mortuary team have needed to offer full support to the grieving parents.</p> <p>I thought that this webinar would be useful as it would help improve my overall knowledge and confidence when dealing with bereaved parents.</p>	

Thoughts and feelings: What were you thinking? How did you feel?

I found the webinar incredibly interesting. It made me explore elements of my practices that I have not previously considered. For example, with memory making and sensitive communication. The presentations were thorough and included videos of bereaved parents speaking about their own experiences. I found it interesting to hear of how small elements of conversations really stick in their mind and how the choice of words that are used by professionals is vital for their grieving journey.

This webinar really focused on the aftermath of grief that bereaved parents have to adjust to, which is not an area that we get to experience much in the mortuary as we are usually focused on caring for the patient and have minimum interaction with the families.

Advice was given on how to communicate with parents who are dealing with feelings of grief and happiness together in situations for example, where one twin survives and the other doesn't.

Hearing situations where bereaved parents discussed their experiences of unprofessionalism was quite emotional and really made me feel passionate about improving my practices.

Evaluation: Was the learning/activity beneficial? What was good (went well) about the learning subject / activity? What was bad (not so well) about the learning subject / activity?

The key thing that stood out about this webinar was that it included videos of real people who were willing to openly talk about their personal experience with baby loss. Getting this kind of feedback and learning experience, especially in a mortuary setting is quite hard to come by unless it's in the form of a complaint. Unfortunately, there was a lot of negative feedback based around how the professionals communicated during their time in the hospitals. Some of the feedback points that I found disappointing were things like:

- Not giving the parents enough time with the baby
- Not using the baby's name
- Forgetting to consider the fathers emotional needs and support (Always focusing on the mother)
- Generally showing lack of empathy

Of course, I always try and give relatives the best experience and am always trying to show care and sympathy but hearing this feedback allows me to focus on these key areas to ensure that I don't make the same mistakes.

The webinar was interactive and I got involved, when possible, to ask questions where suitable. As this a free webinar offered online, there were a wide variety of people of all differing roles in the audience. Hearing a wide range of their experiences was also quite interesting.

Memory making with the babies was also widely discussed. The importance of this was vital and some mother's expressed regret of not doing this or disappointment that they were not offered this service. Some memory boxes

include keepsakes that can be kept with the baby or items that can be used as part of the grieving (for example forget me not flowers, candles etc). Again, as this service is normally offered in other departments, I have never really reflected how important this can be for the parents.

Analysis: How relevant was the activity / learning to your working practices?

As we do have a large Maternity unit in [REDACTED] and do facilitate viewings on babies, attending this webinar was incredibly relevant and I have recommended that the other APT's within our department consider attending this webinar/ related webinars.

Meaning: What conclusion have you drawn? Will you make any changes to your practice following this? What would you do differently next time?

Listening to the various talks and modules really made me reflect on my role within the mortuary and how much of an impact that we can make on bereaved parents. It made me reflect on how I have communicated with parents in the past and how I can alter my language to be more sensitive and make their grieving process smoother I also feel more comfortable and encouraged to have more active participation when conducting baby viewings.

Hearing how important the memory boxes are to the grieving parents really highlighted that we don't routinely offer them in the mortuary and rely too heavily that they have already been offered on the labour ward/ neonatal unit.

Rather than making assumptions, I think that it would be really beneficial for the mortuary to have spare memory boxes in stock to have on hand so that parents can be offered it whilst visiting. I discussed with the Mortuary manager and Deputy Manager and they agreed that it would be beneficial and encouraged me to progress with this action.

Mentors comments if applicable:

Feed forward action point (level 4 candidates only)

Mentors are to set a supplementary task in response to 'Meaning' (see above) – this must be evidenced and demonstrate that changes to practice have been made.

After attending the SANDs Webinar, I wanted to order some 'memory boxes' for the Mortuary so that we had a supply on hand to offer parents when they were visiting. After seeking some advice from our Trust Bereavement Midwife, she had made the recommendation that '4Louis' (Another Child Loss Charity) has a wide variety of memory boxes and that is where the maternity unit orders from.

I registered on the website to order some memory boxes for the Mortuary; unfortunately, I could not find images of what was included in the various boxes. This made the ordering quite difficult. To overcome this, I picked a small selection so that we could trial the items of what is appropriate and what isn't. As you can see on my receipt email, (See **IMAGE 2**), I ordered a blue

and pink miscarriage memory box, a 5yr-18yr child's memory box, and a Neutral twin miscarriage box. I only ordered one of each for the time been as we don't have a lot of space in the mortuary and are not currently conducting viewings as a result of the Covid restrictions. If we feel that they are received well by the parents and are improving the service offered in the mortuary then I can order more in the future.

4Louis Memory Boxes
 4Louis <noreply@jotform.com>
 If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.
 Sent: Mon 23/08/2021 17:33
 To: RHODES, Zoe (UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST)

Have you ordered from 4Louis before?	No
Name	Zoe Rhodes
Email	zoe.rhodes@nhs.net
Phone Number	(+44) 0203 4473568
Are you from a Hospital/Hospice/Funeral Home	University College London Hospital
Ward (if applicable)	Mortuary
Address	Street Address: University College London Hospital, Podium Lower ground,Mortuary Street Address Line 2: 235 Euston Road City: London State / Province: London Postal / Zip Code: NW1 2BU

4Louis Memory Box-Blue	1
4Louis Memory Box-Pink	1
5-18 Years Memory box	1
Twin Memory Box - Neutral	1
4Louis Id Bands and Cot Card Pink/Blue/Neutral	10

Message Please address and deliver to the Mortuary

This shows that I made the order

This shows what items I ordered

Candidate Signature: [Redacted]	Date: 23/08/2021
Mentor Signature: [Redacted]	Date: 23/08/2021