



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1464
Ein cyf/Our ref JMHSC/10082/24

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair
Petitions committee

petitions@senedd.wales

08 October 2024

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter of 17 September about Petition P-06-1464 to allow Welsh families who have experienced baby loss before 24 weeks to obtain a certificate recognising this.

I recognise that baby loss at any stage of pregnancy is incredibly distressing, and has an impact on the whole family. The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring every family is appropriately and compassionately supported and we understand the importance for parents to have their pregnancy loss formally recognised.

We want everyone in Wales who has been bereaved to know that help is available to them, and we are working on a number of initiatives to improve support for children, young people and adults in Wales.

Our [national bereavement framework](#), which was published in October 2021, sets out how we can respond to those who are facing, or have experienced, a bereavement. It includes core principles, minimum bereavement care standards and a range of actions to support regional and local planning.

The UK Government launched a voluntary scheme on 22 February 2024 to enable parents whose baby died before 24 weeks of pregnancy to apply for a free certificate to provide recognition of their loss. This is currently available to any parent who has experienced such a loss since 1 September 2018 and are resident in England.

My officials are working closely with their UK Government counterparts to explore how this scheme could be extended to Wales.

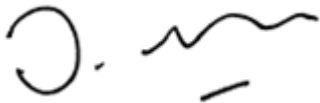
Currently, all families who experience pregnancy loss at maternity units in Wales are supported by bereavement midwives, and in conjunction with the Sands charity are offered memory boxes, which include a commemorative “birth certificate”.

We recognise there are improvements to be made to the bereavement care and support available across Wales, including for early pregnancy loss. We have provided funding to the NHS Executive to work with organisations, including Sands and experts in this area to implement the national bereavement care pathways across Wales specifically for miscarriage, stillbirth and baby loss.

Earlier this year, we commissioned Sands to undertake a series of listening events across Wales with bereaved families and staff who have supported and cared for them. The information gathered will support the development of a Wales-specific national bereavement care pathway. We expect phase two – the development and rollout of the pathways for pregnancy and baby loss – will start in the coming months.

Sands has recently recruited a project officer for Wales who will be responsible for establishing a shared practice network and workshops for healthcare professionals, as well as a parent advisory group.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a circular mark followed by a series of wavy lines and a short horizontal stroke.

Jeremy Miles AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care