

Post Description

1. Post Identification

Grade: Practice Midwife

Title: Practice Midwife in Family Support and Bereavement

Scale: 6

Responsible To: Chief Midwifery Manager or her delegate

Accountable To: Director, Nursing and Midwifery Services at Mater Dei Hospital or his/ her delegate

2. Summary of the Post

The Practice midwife will take a key role in providing comprehensive, confidential support to facilitate the process of loss, grief, and bereavement and adverse pregnancy outcomes in the maternity setting, for the woman/couple, baby, their families, and health care professionals involved.

The Practice midwife provides support at both practical and psychological levels to bereaved parents and families experiencing adverse pregnancy outcomes. This includes miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, stillbirth, neonatal death, individuals who have an on-going pregnancy with abnormalities, and/or a poor prognosis, where there is separation from the neonate or when there is a pregnancy subsequent to such events.

The role involves mentoring and training healthcare professionals to enhance their understanding and response to loss, grief and bereavement. It also entails collaborating closely with the interdisciplinary team to assess, plan, deliver, and evaluate immediate and long-term care for dying neonates/infants, bereaved individuals and their families. In addition, the Practice midwife is responsible to carry out research and quality improvement initiatives to enhance safe and effective care in bereavement and maternity services.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Practice midwife shall be responsible to:

- 3.1 Undertake a comprehensive assessment of the physical, psychological, spiritual, social, and cultural elements of care to bereaved parents and families experiencing adverse pregnancy outcomes within the maternity settings.
- 3.2 Plan, deliver, and evaluate care for bereaved bereaved parents and families experiencing adverse pregnancy outcomes, in close collaboration with the interdisciplinary team.

- 3.3 Act as an expert, resource, role model, and an accessible point of contact for staff, bereaved parents and families experiencing adverse pregnancy outcomes.
- 3.4 Encourage and facilitate a holistic process to support and empower individuals and/or families to cope with ectopic, miscarriage, intrauterine death, stillbirth, neonatal death, infant death, disability, separation from their baby and a pregnancy after such events.
- 3.5 Provide professional, evidence-based service to clients.
- 3.6 Provide empathic and compassionate care that facilitates and supports the choices, health, and wellbeing of all individuals and/or families receiving the care while respecting the diversity of culture, beliefs, values, choices, and priorities of the respective individual.
- 3.7 Respect and maintain privacy, dignity and confidentiality in all cases.
- 3.8 Provide ongoing confidential care and support pre and post discharge.
- 3.9 Understand and respect professional boundaries, by ensuring timely referral and collaboration with other specialist services and other members of the interdisciplinary team, for areas that are outside one's scope of practice, experience, and competence.
- 3.10 Promote interdisciplinary collaboration to help individuals and their families cope and identify other professional and/or support services as appropriate.
- 3.11 Educate individuals on loss, grief, bereavement, and adverse pregnancy outcomes, their effect on the relationship of the couple, other siblings, families, communities, future planning, and pregnancies.
- 3.12 Act as an advocate by protecting, promoting, and supporting the physical, emotional, and psychological safety whilst respecting the individual's right to choose whether to follow advice and recommendations about one's care.
- 3.13 Provide guidance and support, such as but not limited to registration of birth, notification of death, funeral and burial options and preparation as permitted by law, social benefits, and leave entitlement.
- 3.14 Consider ethical solutions to complicated issues related to bereaved parents and families experiencing adverse pregnancy outcomes
- 3.15 Assist health care professionals in the assessment, planning and delivery of care for bereaved parents and families experiencing adverse pregnancy outcomes whilst fostering a culture of reflective practice.
- 3.16 Liaise with the paediatric palliative interdisciplinary team in cases of ongoing pregnancies with abnormalities, newborns or infants requiring palliative care.
- 3.17 Work with the interdisciplinary team to optimise palliative care, thus providing comfort and attaining a "good death" experience.

- 3.18 Organise and facilitate viewing of babies, fetuses, and embedded remains to respective individuals to support closure and decision regarding funeral options.
- 3.19 Co-ordinate with other hospitals such as but not limited to Gozo General Hospital (GGH), to identify and organise the transfer of fetuses or babies for private or communal burial in Gozo.
- 3.20 Co-ordinate and organise the communal burial in Malta for fetuses and babies in accordance with current local practices. This involves; the acquisition of the coffin, burial pockets and gowns, flowers, hearse, and other necessities for the organisation of the communal burial ceremony. The identification of fetuses, babies and exceptionally embedded fetuses or products of conception that are to be buried. Coordinate with histopathology and mortuary for the preparations involved. Compile and send letters to individuals that request to be informed. Prepare these fetuses and babies for communal burial at mortuary. Coordinate with public health and cemetery authorities for necessary permits and other matters. Oversee the organization and execution of the mass together with relevant non-governmental local organisations/entities and/or other voluntary organisations. Accompany the coffin from mortuary, to church and gravesite at Addolorata Cemetery for burial..
- 3.21 Build and maintain a collaborative working relationships with other members of the interdisciplinary team, government and non-governmental entities, to ensure optimal care and a smoother journey.
- 3.22 Share information with the interdisciplinary team in accordance with legal, professional, and regulatory requirements.
- 3.23 Evaluate the training needs of the healthcare organisation, focusing mainly but not limited to loss, grief, bereavement and adverse pregnancy outcomes.
- 3.24 Develop and provide education, training and mentorship encompassing the support and communication skills related to bereaved parents and families experiencing adverse pregnancy outcomes, to health care professionals, ensuring high standard of care.
- 3.25 Create an environment which supports a culture of lifelong learning and reflective practice for all staff to ensure that the care provided meets the individuals' needs.
- 3.26 Take measures to develop and maintain competencies required for professional practice by identifying needs and engaging in own continuing professional development accordingly.
- 3.27 Ensure that personal psychological supervision in accordance with the specific responsibilities and remit of the role is achieved and maintained throughout.
- 3.28 Provide midwives and healthcare professionals with ongoing psychological support such as debrief, self-care strategies, etc.
- 3.29 Ensure that an appropriate confidential record system is established and maintained.

- 3.30 Implement audit programmes to ensure the maintenance of good standards of care and identify areas for improvement.
- 3.31 Contribute to the development, reviewing disseminating and ensure adherence of policies, protocols, clinical standards, and guidelines of care.
- 3.32 Enhance general awareness in the community on bereaved parents and families experiencing adverse pregnancy outcomes
- 3.33 Create and provide educational material such as information leaflet etc.
- 3.34 Use of the Information Technology systems which may be in operation within the respective entity.
- 3.35 Any other duties according to the exigencies of the Public Service as directed by the Principal Permanent Secretary or Director General (Nursing and Midwifery Services Division) – office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry of health.

4. Leadership

The post holder should be:

- Visible, accessible, approachable and assertive.
- Able to build effective professional relationships, motivate and lead innovation and expertise in the clinical area.
- Able to inform the interdisciplinary team or clients, including families, through effective communication and to address challenges and conflicts.
- Accept criticism, and feedback constructively.
- Manage change.
- Develop and maintain optimal levels of care delivery.
- Respect and ensure that all policies, protocols and procedures determined by respective authorities are adhered to.

5. Research

The post holder should:

- Be able to identify the need for research activity.
- Be able to develop research initiatives.
- Be able to secure human and financial resources to execute research initiatives.
- Have the ability to disseminate and report research outcomes accordingly.
- Engage the support of the interdisciplinary team and respective authorities towards indicated research initiatives.

6. Staff Development

The post holder should be able to:

- Identify the need for training, education, and mentorship opportunities relevant to the métier of the post holder.
- Develop relevant opportunities accordingly, and secure resources (HR, Funding, etc) accordingly.
- Secure the effective and efficient uptake and participation of the respective opportunities.
- Monitor the outcomes of such opportunities.
- Ensure support by respective authorities, and report accordingly to such authorities.

7. Confidentiality

The post holder is required to respect and maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to the diagnosis, treatment and care of patients, their families, to the individual members of staff, and to the organisation.

8. Data Protection

The post holder is to abide by the Data Protection Act.

9. Health and Safety

The post holder is to uphold all Health and Safety regulations held by the respective authorities in the contexts.

10. Infection Prevention and control

The post holder is required to observe and comply with the infection prevention and control policies held by the respective authorities in the contexts.

11. Other Policies, Protocols and Procedures

The post holder is required to abide by all policies, protocols and procedures held by the respective authorities in the contexts.

12. Person Specifications

Knowledge	• Good knowledge and full understanding of perinatal loss, grief and bereavement and adverse pregnancy outcomes, its complications, and effect/s on the couple and their family. • Good knowledge and proficiency in recognizing children's response to loss and their expression of grief in relation to their developmental stage. • Good knowledge of perinatal palliative care, it's moral and ethical considerations. • Good knowledge and awareness of personal experiences of loss and biases, to prevent negatively impacting on individuals' experience. • Good knowledge and proficiency on the principles of breaking bad news and its impact. • Good knowledge and understanding of fetal anomalies, adverse pregnancy outcomes, and poor prognosis and their impact on pregnancy, delivery and later.
Experience	• Demonstrates ability to translate one's expert knowledge into a vision for the enhancement of care and future practice. • Able to use one's expert knowledge and clinical competence to facilitate clinical supervision and mentorship of midwifery colleagues, midwifery students and others. • Clinically competent in carrying out holistic needs assessment, anticipate needs and act promptly with care, compassion, and commitment. • Proficient in fostering and implementing a change culture that drives to enhance compassionate care and commitment. • Demonstrates experience with the research process. • Able to practice ongoing self-care strategies.
Skills	• Demonstrates sensitive and effective communication skills. • Demonstrates proficiency in the use of helping skills and therapeutic engagement with bereaved parents and families experiencing adverse pregnancy outcomes . • Demonstrates ability to adapt information in accordance with the individuals' needs, religious/cultural background, and understanding. • Demonstrates skills in promoting and supporting the individuals' right of choice.

	• Able to facilitate the creation of mementos and bereavement photography. • Demonstrates good negotiation and consensus-building skills. • Able to develop and deliver educational programmes. • Demonstrates effective writing, computer, and presentation skills. • Demonstrate high levels of organisational, leadership and team management skills. • Ability to carry out audit, analysis, and reporting. • Demonstrates the ability to identify legal and ethical considerations within work practice.
Qualities & Attributes	• Adheres to the midwifery values of care, compassion, and commitment. • Demonstrates an understanding and commitment to equal opportunities and customer care. • Practices in accordance with relevant legislation and regulation. • Able to maintain ethical and professional boundaries. • Maintains a high standard of professional behaviour and is professionally accountable for actions and omissions. • Able to refer to other professionals where appropriate. • Able to be self-directed, work on own initiative and as part of a team. • Is visible, accessible, approachable, and assertive. • Able to motivate and inspire individuals and groups. • Able to accept criticism and feedback constructively. • Able to effectively manage time and case load to meet changing and developing service needs. • Is committed to professional development both on a personal and practice level.