

Section: Division of Nursing

* **PROTOCOL** *

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HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

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MATERNAL SERVICES
(Scope)

TITLE: GRIEVING PARENT, POSTPARTUM SUPPORT OF

PURPOSE: To provide a process for support of the patient by allowing her to express her feelings freely and to help prepare her for post hospital contacts with friends, relatives and neighbors.

LEVEL: Independent Dependent Interdependent

SUPPORTIVE DATA: Physician will explain medical aspects of the baby's death. Nurse will also be in attendance to provide emotional support.

CONTENT

KEY POINT

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| 1. Offer the patient the opportunity to be moved from OB floor if she desires. | To allow patient to be away from other mothers and babies. |
| 2. If she chooses to be moved, have a maternity nurse visit her daily. | Patient will have an opportunity to start grieving process and ask questions if she desires. |
| 3. Offer photos, ID bracelets, baby hat, souvenir footprint sheet and any other items parent may desire, save in 'Memory Box' supplied by OB unit. | Items related to the baby's birth may be important to the patient in months and years to come and may aid in grieving period. |
| 4. Make baby available to grieving parents (if possible) even if it means retrieving body from morgue. If possible wrap in blankets or present baby in clothes from memory box. | To make baby appear as presentable as possible to provide lasting memory for parents |
| 5. Offer chaplain services and arrange for chaplain to see patient and her family or contact a clergyman of their choice. | To provide spiritual support and comfort in their time of grieving. |
| 6. If patient does not desire chaplain services, offer grief counseling. Offer baptism by nursing staff. | To provide spiritual support. |
| 7. Be available and supportive to "listen" to patient and her family. | Talking can be therapeutic to patient. |
| 8. H. O. P. I. N G information should be given to patient before her discharge. Obtain patient's phone number and provide to maternity units HOPING staff member. | Group meetings with other grieving parents lend support. |