

PROCEDURE FOR: HEAL (Helping Endure Infant Loss): Referral

- POLICY:
1. All families at JDH experiencing the loss of a baby, regardless of gestational age, will be referred to H.E.A.L.
 2. Referrals to H.E.A.L from individuals or health care agencies in other communities are encouraged and accepted.
 3. Families who electively terminate a pregnancy are referred to the HOPE support program.
 4. It is the responsibility of the primary nurse of the mother or baby and/or that of the nurse caring for the mother or baby to complete the H.E.A.L. referral form and inform the family that a H.E.A.L. facilitator will be in touch with them.
 5. H.E.A.L. support group meetings (lasting 2 to 2-1/2 hours) are held on the third Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. in a conference room located in the academic area of the Health Center.

- DOCUMENTATION:
1. H.E.A.L. Referral Form
 2. H.E.A.L. Invitation Letters
 3. H.E.A.L. Invitation Letters

PROCEDURE:

- | <u>ACTION</u> | <u>POINTS OF EMPHASIS</u> |
|---|---|
| 1. Complete the H.E.A.L. referral form and place in the H.E.A.L. mailbox in NICU (ask clerk for location). | 1. Referral forms may be obtained in the neonatal, postpartum and L&D files. |
| 2. Nurse Coordinators mail out a letter of invitation to our monthly support meeting 2-3 weeks following the death. | 2. |
| a. Meeting is informal with no agenda. | a. This forum facilitates open discussion revolving around issues of importance to the group. |
| | b. Nurse coordinators function as facilitators of group process. |
| | c. Discussion topics include: reactions of family and friends, relationship with spouse, future pregnancies, when and if to go back to work, return to ADL, the death experience. |

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3. Letters of invitation to meetings again mailed to parents 8 weeks and 6 months following the death.
 3. a. Six months seems to be a turning point for many families when society feels they should be "over it", and they are not.
 - b. Parents are encouraged by the group facilitators to seek further support.
4. Community Outreach may be done by nurse coordinators to educate both the lay community and health professionals about the need for, and benefits of, bereavement support groups.

APPROVAL: Nursing Standards Committee
 H.E.A.L. Group Coordinators

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/86

REVISION DATES: 9/87, 9/88, 11/91, 11/92, 3/93, 5/96, 2/03, 10/09

REVIEWED DATES: 11/04, 9/05, 11/06, 12/08