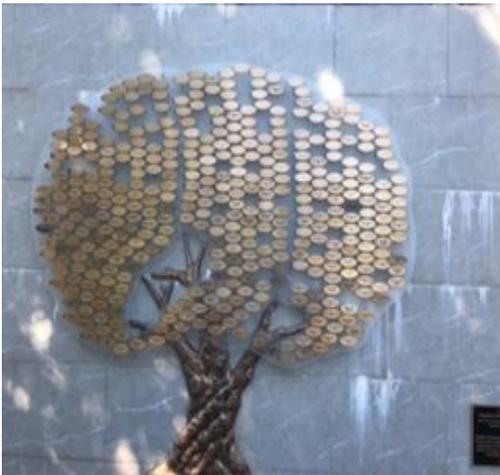


Loving Arms

February 2017

Delaware Grief Awareness Consortium (DEGAC) Agency Spotlight



Bronze Tree



Dedication

By Moonyeen Klopfenstein, MS, RN

During our perinatal loss history, it is sad to say that nurses were not allowed to have a mother hold her stillborn or dying baby without a doctor's order/permission. Today our multidisciplinary Perinatal Bereavement Team educates nurses and doctors about perinatal bereavement and the importance of encouraging families to see, hold, and say goodbye to their baby. Staff is invaluable in providing continuity and compassionate care at this difficult time. They are addressing the unique needs and requests of the grieving family. Patient feedback is encouraged and any concerns are recognized as opportunities for improvement.

The Perinatal Team recognizes the need for staff to have patient resources on perinatal loss and they provide the following; workshops, memorial services, information sheets for staff on caregiving issues, patient handouts (ie: lactation suppression and autopsy information) resources for post partum care of mothers without infants, and resource lists to assist families with funeral arrangements. Families are provided a keepsake memory box and memory item (such as pictures, footprints, tape measure and ID bracelets, blanket, hat, gown or a lock of hair).

The Loving Arms Support Group, founded by Moonyeen Klopfenstein, RN in 1978 when her son was critically ill in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, has supported families continuously for 38 years. The group meets monthly for parents and families after they leave the hospital. Any parent who have had an ectopic pregnancy, miscarriage, stillborn baby or a neonatal death are encouraged to attend the monthly meeting. The hospital chaplain, social worker and nurse offer their services to facilitate the group and Loving Arms also provide a yearly memorial service for those who have lost their baby. The Memorial Garden is near the Graham Center at Christiana Hospital. A beautiful marble wall holds a bronze tree with small leaves that can be engraved with the babies' name. Parents find this comforting and often visit the wall during the years to honor their babies.

Each of our team member's unique contribution is critical to the success of our program and services. We continually collaborate between all departments in the Women and Children's services and encourage feedback from parents. Our Loving Arms Support Group Team and Perinatal Bereavement Team have benefited from our commitment to the grieving patient/families and staff providing their care. Team members, some through personal experiences have been instrumental in helping parents, grandparents and siblings cope with the deeply painful loss of a child and understanding the grieving process. In understanding loss, families and staff find healing, strength and encouragement.