

Little Lights: A hospital-based bereavement photography program

Patricia S. Vandergrift, DNP, APRN, NNP-BC; Deneen Bryan, Business Developer/Photographer; Shannon Hanson, PhD, MPH; Christine E. Bishop, MD, MA
Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center
Wake Forest University School of Medicine

Purpose

Little Lights program is a novel, collaborative, nursing-led bereavement photography service created to provide consistent high-quality bereavement photography for families and their dying infants. This collaborative model allows trained staff and professional photographers to give families beautiful mementos of the brief window of time with their infant.

“...knowing we have these pictures is a comfort in this time of dark sorrow.”
-bereaved mother and father



Subjects

- Families with an actively dying or deceased infant regardless of gestational age or physical condition
- Women’s Center staff who volunteer for training and participation in the program



Design

- Hospital staff volunteer for the program
- Training session by a professional photographer with techniques and props
- Quick reference guide and equipment available on unit
- “GroupMe App.” used to coordinate in-house staff response to photo requests
- Photos sent to volunteer professional photographers for editing
- Edited photos sent to parents

“I wish I could tell people how important the pictures of my daughter are to me now. Those are the only things I have left of her.”

-bereaved mother



Results

December 2016 to May 2016

- 29 staff trained
 - Nurses, physicians, respiratory therapists, nurse practitioners, unit secretaries, and volunteers.
- 55 infant deaths
 - All families offered the program consented to photography
 - All requested sessions performed, edited, and dispersed to families.
- Parental and staff feedback has been positive

“ Words cannot begin to express our gratitude... having them now has given me a sense of peace. These photos will keep his memory alive for the rest of our lives.”

-bereaved mother



Implications for Practice

- Little Lights is a sustainable model for the consistent provision of professional quality, compassionate, complimentary bereavement photography
- Addresses common problems experienced by hospitals attempting to provide bereavement photography
- Encourages staff engagement with families during bereavement, participation in the grief process, and may help decrease symptoms of staff burn-out

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