

Flexmort's Cold Cot featured in the Burton Mail on 21/10/11

Burton Mail

Published: 21/10/2011 08:00

Cold comfort for grieving parents

by KATIE BOWLER

BURTON'S Queen's Hospital is one of the first hospitals in the country to have a cold cot — a specialist piece of equipment used following the death of a baby through a miscarriage, stillbirth or shortly after birth.



Towards Tomorrow Together charity founder Mel Scott, Burton's Queen's Hospital's Clare Rainsford, patron of Stillbirth and Neonatal Death (Sands) Jo Cameron and Emma Carnell at the hand-over of the cold cot to Burton's Queen's Hospital.

Mail reporter KATIE BOWLER and photographer NEIL BARKER went to visit an inspirational bereaved mother who has raised money to fund a cold cot for the hospital.

A BEREAVED mother has raised money to buy a state-of-the-art piece of equipment for a delivery suite.

Emma Carnell gave birth to a stillborn baby girl, Macey-Jane, at Burton's Queen's Hospital in August last year, after carrying her for 41 weeks.

Miss Carnell said she received outstanding care at the hospital — so much so she felt she wanted to give something back to help other parents who might go through the same traumatic experience as herself.

The 23-year-old organised a charity ladies' night in her home town of Tamworth and raised £3,000.

With the money she has been able to purchase amongst other things, a cold cot — a specialist piece of equipment designed to keep dead babies cool. Queen's Hospital is one of the first hospitals in the country to own one.

Miss Carnell told the Mail: "I didn't get long with Macey-Jane after she was born.

"I was offered an ice pack to keep her cold as babies' skin starts to deteriorate rapidly once they are gone.

"It's the most horrific thing I've ever had to go through in my life and to then be offered an ice pack was kind of mindblowing.

My head was all over the place.

"I had one day with her before she went away for a post-mortem examination. That's only one day to try to make memories to last a lifetime.

"Some parents don't even get that amount of time though and it's awful really." Miss Carnell said fund-raising and helping future parents was her way of keeping Macey-Jane's memory alive.

She added: "The hardest thing is trying to deal with it and arranging the funeral.

It's hard to describe what it's like or how it feels and it's obviously not what you'd expect to be doing.

"I found by raising money it helped me focus and it keeps her memory alive.

"Everything I went through was at Queen's and the staff were amazing. I don't think I could have got through it without them.

Miss Carnell got support from a charity called Towards Tomorrow Together, founded by Mel Scott, who herself lost two babies — one during pregnancy and one stillborn.

Ms Scott said: "I met Emma through my charity and we have provided support to help her through the difficult times.

"I understand what she has been through, having experienced it myself. I had three days with my baby boy Finley after he died so we had more time to make memories of him.

"Most parents don't get that. Some get less than an hour.

"With the funeral money I donated it to my local hospital to buy 26 butterfly boxes, which are memory packs, and this was just the start of all the fund-raising and charity work.

"After going through that I wanted to help others and that's when I founded my charity, as well as another called Finley's Footprints, which also helps families who have experienced the loss of a child.

"Emma has done amazingly well raising cash to provide the cold cot.

"It is a really good piece of equipment and it makes the whole experience a little less traumatic.

"It gives parents more time with their child to say their goodbyes.

"Babies go through so many changes once they are delivered and it's very distressing to see.

"By cooling the baby it slows the process down.

"The advantage with the cold cot is it can also warm babies back up so the final kiss goodbye isn't such a painful memory of an ice-cold baby."

Miss Carnell presented the cold cot to the delivery suite at Queen's Hospital with the support of Ms Scott, staff and midwives on the department, her family and Jo Cameron, who found fame as a candidate on The Apprentice.

Ms Cameron became a patron of Stillbirth and Neonatal Death (Sands), a charity similar to Finley's Footprints, after losing a baby in 2006.

Gillian Salmon, matron of maternity at Queen's Hospital, said after the presentation: "We can't thank Emma enough for all her hard work in raising the money so we can have this amazing piece of equipment.

"I am sure in the future that many families will benefit from this cot.

"We are extremely grateful for it and we're proud to be one of the first hospitals in the country to have one."