

NBCP Bereavement Care toolkit

Being strategic



national bereavement
c a r e p a t h w a y
for pregnancy and baby loss

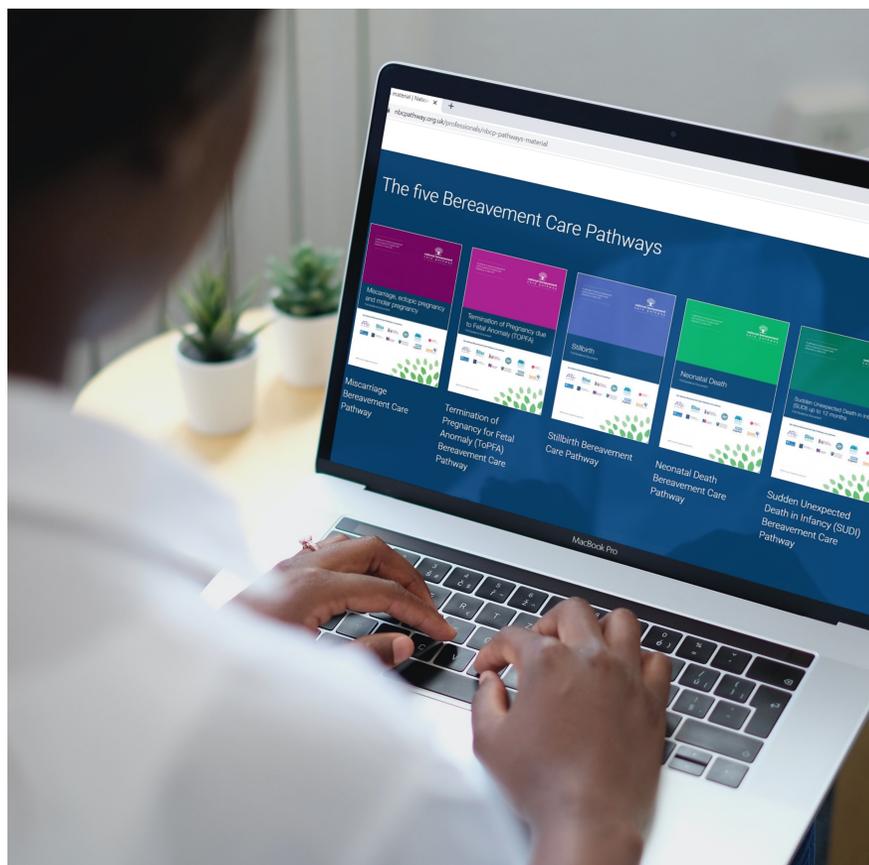


Introduction

The National Bereavement Care Pathway (NBCP) seeks to improve the quality and consistency of bereavement care received by parents from the NHS after pregnancy or baby loss.

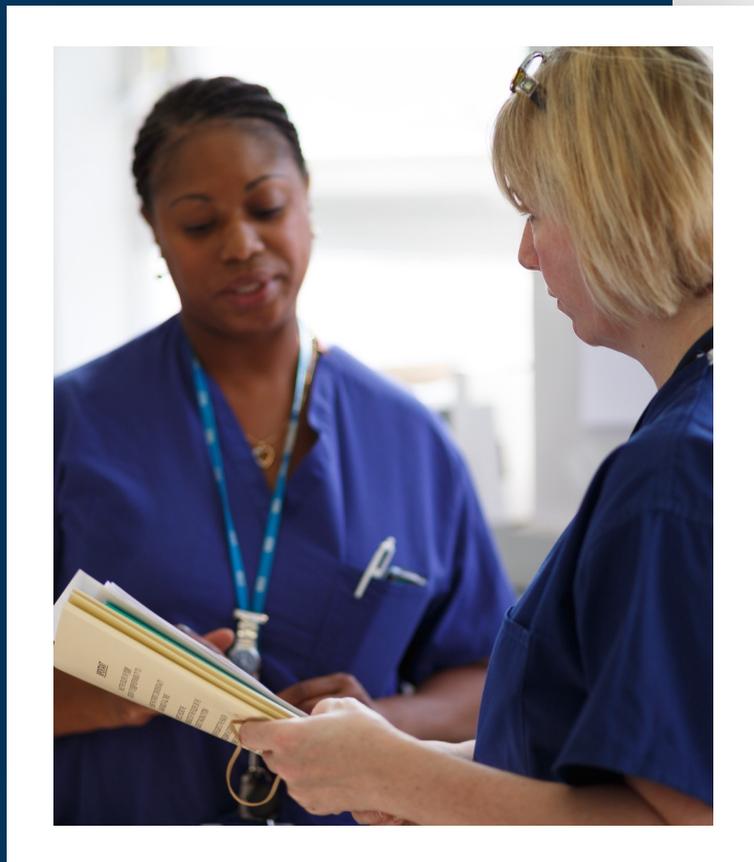
[Sands](#) leads the NBCP in collaboration with bereaved families, other charities and Royal Colleges, providing health care professionals with frameworks, tools and educational resources to support excellent care.

The NBCP is based around [nine standards](#) of bereavement care and includes pathways for miscarriage, termination of pregnancy due to fetal anomaly, stillbirth, neonatal death and sudden unexpected death of an infant up to 12 months.





Introduction



One of Sands' core objectives is to ensure that every bereaved parent receives the highest standard of bereavement care possible. Feedback to Sands from healthcare professionals has highlighted a need for a specific toolkit to support the implementation and embedding of the NBCP. We have developed this toolkit in order to equip healthcare professionals with the resources they need to help bereavement care standards to 'stick' – to embed NBCP standards rather than seeing these as just a project.

We are grateful to everyone who has contributed to the development of this toolkit, including Gail Johnson (former RCM Education Advisor), the NBCP Core Group, the Professional Advisory Group, and the healthcare staff who generously contributed their time to be interviewed in the videos.

2. Being strategic

- Creating a case for change to embed the NBCCP
- Using data: evidencing best practice
- Creating a business case:
 - Garnering support to influence change
 - Embedding bereavement care roles



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Introduction: Creating a case for change

- **Embedding the NBCP** requires strategic thinking and planning. In this module, we'll take you through some key steps in making an effective 'business case' (or 'business plan') to support you in implementing change.
- **"Being strategic"** means being perceptive, forward looking, open-minded, proactive, and making and taking (maybe longer-term) decisions based on evidence and considered perspectives.
- **The language of strategy** is often business-focussed and health professionals tend not to be trained in strategy or strategic thinking.
Yet take out the business speak and being strategic is what most people do in their daily lives.
- **Developing a business case** is essentially pitching for, and planning lots of activities which have outcomes, benefits, costs, and other people involved.

Activity

- Think of a time that you needed to be strategic away from work, and make some notes on what you needed to do.
How might you apply these to your work situation?
- [Listen to healthcare professionals discuss the ways in which service development and improvement can be brought about by advocating effectively.](#)



Using data to build your case

When writing a business case, you will need to draw on data to evidence the changes you want to make.

There are several sources of data you can draw on:

- 1. Parents' experiences** of bereavement care are central to improving bereavement services. Have a look at [Module 1 of this toolkit on Parent Engagement](#) to explore the ways in which you can collect parent feedback to inform the development of your bereavement service, for example through the MBEM, or PMRT. Incorporating parent quotes in your business case can be a powerful way of reminding people that bereaved parents are at the centre of bereavement care.
- 2. Research data** is central to improving healthcare. Understanding and using research data can help you build an effective business case by evidencing best practice. Data can be quantitative and qualitative, including service user perspectives as well as facts and figures.



Using data to build your case

- 3. High-level reports and reviews** present clear evidence and requirements for national bereavement care standards. The provision of a seven-day bereavement care service is a key immediate and essential action set out in the [Ockenden Review \(2022\)](#), including the use of the NBCP as guidance for providing compassionate, individualised and high-quality bereavement care.
- 4. The NBCP self assessment tool** will help you understand whether your service is meeting the standards for bereavement care. You can use this tool to identify which standards need improving and this can provide evidence for your business case. A clinical audit of one or more of the NBCP standards will also provide you with clear data on whether your service is meeting a particular standard. See [Module 1](#) of this toolkit for more information on conducting an audit.

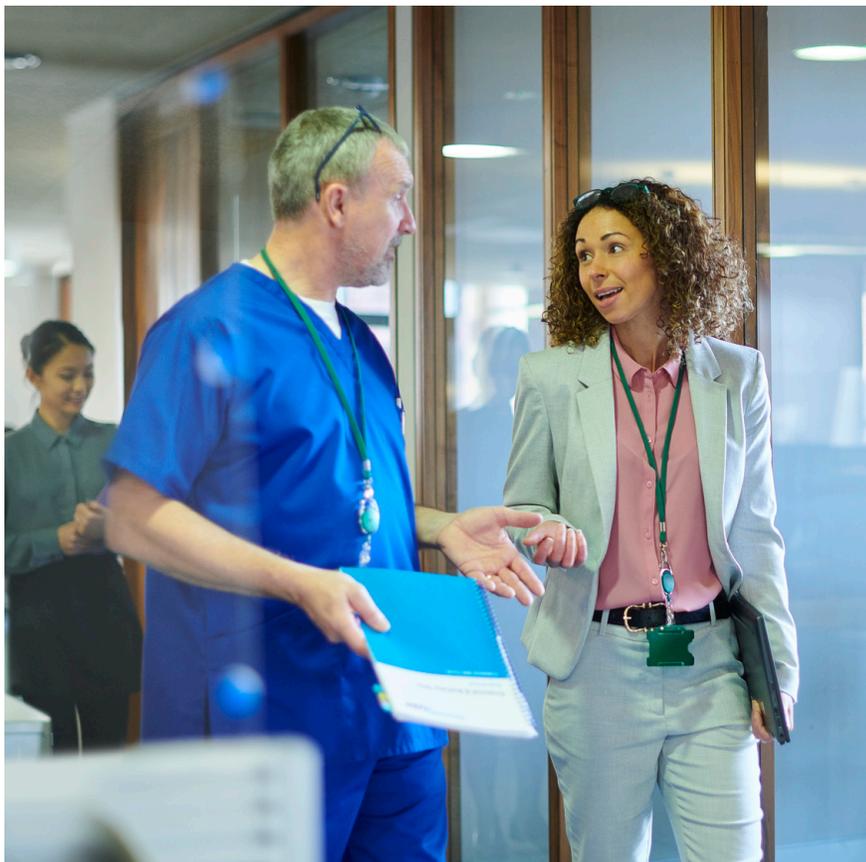
Activity:

- What data is available to you in your role and how could this be useful in creating a case for change?
- Look at the MBRRACE data available for your Trust via the links on [this page](#), including 'Tables and Figures', and the interactive map. How could you include this in a business case?
- [Listen to healthcare professionals discuss establishing bereavement care as 'business as usual'](#).

Writing a business case (1)

Some guiding principles to consider:

- When seeking funding or approval for a project and/or resource, you will need to demonstrate **efficiency** and **effectiveness**, related to costs, benefits and outcomes.
- You may need to use a business case for something small like a specific resource e.g. cold cot, or it may be something much larger e.g. the creation or expansion of a full bereavement service, or a new bereavement suite from scratch.
- Many executives in hospitals are not clinicians; you will need to show how important this particular change, resource, or project is to the organisation and its service users. It is important to identify aspects which are measurable and to present them in a way that a 'business' team understand. Again, parent voice can help in this.





Writing a business case (1)



Developing a bereavement care service and implementing the NBCP takes time. Ensuring that your role is part of ‘business as usual’ will help to ensure that the dedicated time needed is available to you.

Activity

[Listen to healthcare professionals discuss their experiences in developing a business case for bereavement service provision, and presenting their case to senior managers.](#)

Writing a business case (2)

If writing a business case is new to you, you may wish to write out a plan in your own words then consider how to apply the language of 'business' to it.

Does your workplace have a template or a typical style that is preferred? It can be much easier to follow a format that is known by others and it will help to keep you focussed on what the particular needs of your workplace are.





Writing a business case (3)

- It is also important to know who your audience is and what their particular needs, values and interests are. Who are you writing for? You may have to present your case to a number of interested stakeholders in one go, or have to progress through a series of meetings with people.
- [The Five Cases Model](#) is a useful approach to writing a business case as it considers the perspectives of different stakeholders. Using this model will ensure you present a balanced business case and support agreement on your preferred option more quickly. We'll take you through an adapted version of this approach to writing a business case, considering these three sections: strategic, economic and management cases.



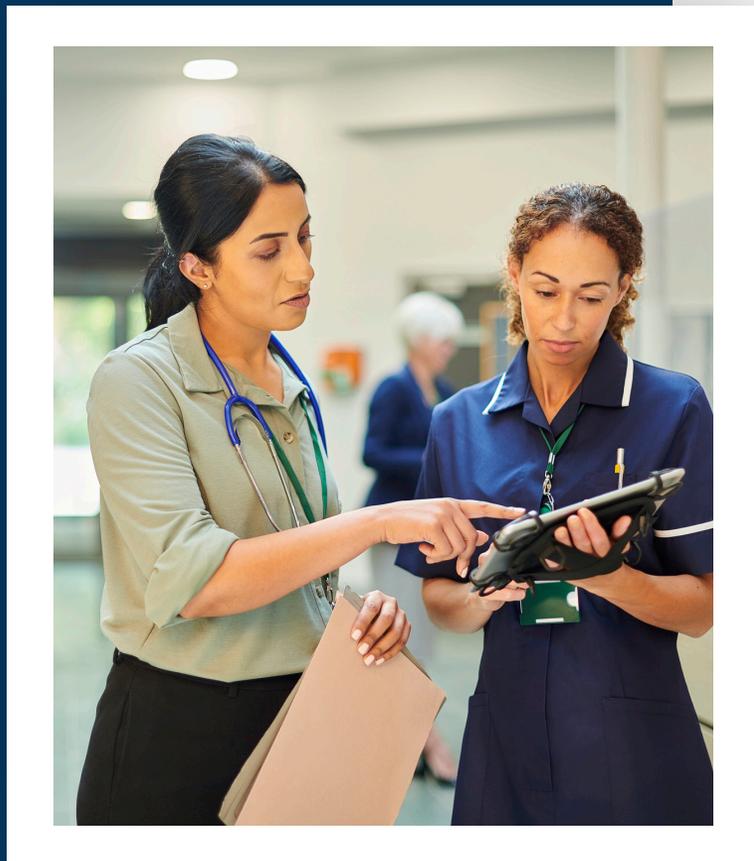


Key points for writing a business case

1. Be **concise** and convey the essentials. You can provide background information, but keep the key issues short.
2. Make it **interesting and clear**. Decision makers need to understand your rationale, they (probably) don't have your expertise or enthusiasm, you need to 'sell' what you want, but don't overwhelm them. Use parent quotes and/or CQC report quotes and MBRRACE data to highlight key areas.
3. **Minimise acronyms**. You know your own 'language' but you will have to be clear and where appropriate use their language.
4. Describe your **vision of the future**. This is your time to set the scene for the future. You can think and push boundaries. Be realistic about what is achievable and in what timeframe/cost: you can have a long term plan but break down the processes into manageable chunks!
5. Demonstrate the **value and benefits** the project brings to the service (business). This is a time to share the evidence you have collected and pick out the benefits for the organisation (business), as well as service users.
6. Ensure **consistent style and readability**. Take time to ensure that the style is consistent, especially if the business case is written by a few people. Using the same font and same approach will demonstrate attention to detail and provide a confidence in the team. A well-developed plan can be lost if the format is messy or if the decision makers feel you haven't shown commitment.



Key points for writing a business case



Activity

- Read an example of a successful business case written by a bereavement midwife.
- Using the example provided, draft a business case to your Trust/board outlining the need for funding for a need you've identified, for example, bereavement care training for staff, a refurbished bereavement suite.



1. The strategic case

Strategic

- The aim of the **strategic case** is to make a **case for change** and show how it strategically aligns with the direction of your Trust.
- To do this, you need to align your project's **goals and objectives** with those of the Trust. What are your Trust's organisational and strategic values and where can you find these? What are the 'hooks' that can help you succeed, for example, linking to the Ockenden Report [[link here](#)]. For example, an organisation may have a plan to develop an integrated and streamlined service, or there may be a vision for 'person centred care.' This is your opportunity to explain how your service plans would meet that.
- To present the strongest possible strategic case, **outline** the business problem to be solved, detail the scope of what you are trying to achieve, and describe the benefits and risks. **Explain** how a particular process, change, investment, if successful, would contribute positively to the service (business) overall.





2. The economic case

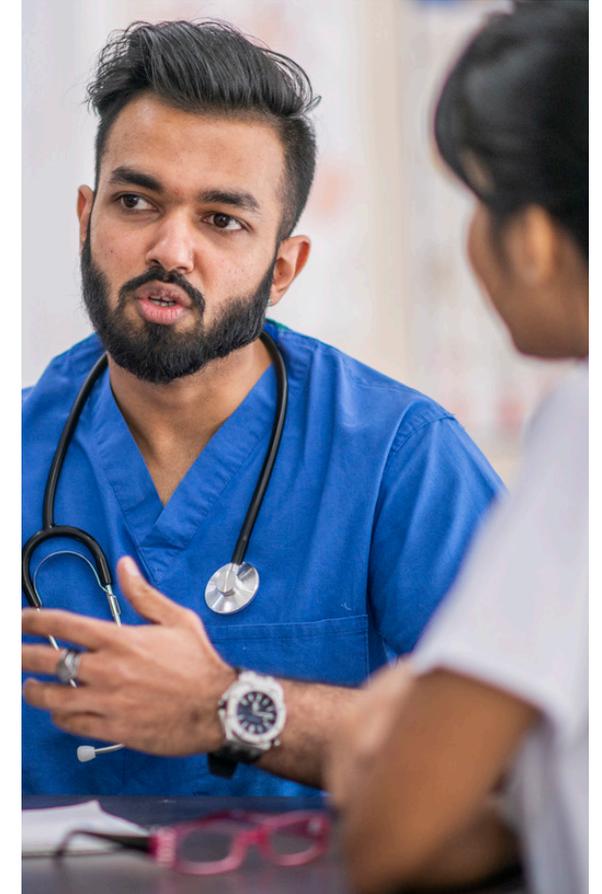
Economic

- The aim of the **economic case** is to identify which of the options you are presenting provides the best value to the service. This is important if you are presenting a case for a project that families will interact with, especially demonstrating it meets their needs.
- To present the best possible economic case, show that you've **appraised** multiple options (i.e. created a long list), ruled out options based on cost and value (i.e. created a shortlist), and then explored, in detail, what each remaining option provides. When looking at a project from this perspective, show that you can procure suppliers (or internal resources) and that you can do so fairly and cost-effectively.
- Acknowledge from the start that a bereavement service is unlikely to be cost-neutral. It's success won't be a financial one but is more likely to be reputational, and measured in terms of improved feedback from families.

3. The management case

Management

- Lastly, the **management case** needs to show managerial stakeholders that adequate plans are in place for the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of your preferred option.
- To do this, present a plan for how your preferred option will be project managed in accordance with best practices, and also show that independent assurance is available if required. For example, consider contract management and how to ensure benefits are realised and human resources are used fairly and appropriately.
- Include how the case/plan will be managed, what role the stakeholders have, how the project will be delivered, monitored and evaluated.
- Present a plan for how your preferred option will be project managed, who will be involved and the lines of accountability. How will your service be monitored and reviewed? How will you collect parent feedback? How often will you submit a report to your Governance team?



Presenting a business case

It is most likely that you will submit your case in writing, this is why it is important to have all the aspects of your case covered clearly and concisely.

Ideally you will be able to present your own case in person. It is important that you are 'professional'. While it is okay to share your passion, remember this is about a business choice and emotions are not always helpful. Keep to the facts and share the evidence.





Presenting a business case



Use a PowerPoint template, and practice running through your presentation using a timer to test how long you are speaking for. Have a practice run-through with a colleague. Remember to speak slowly, slower than you would in a normal conversation. When presenting, structure your points clearly. Tell your audience what you're going to tell them, tell them, and then close the presentation by telling them what you've told them!



End of toolkit module 2: Being strategic

Thank you for using this NBCP toolkit module on **being strategic** in bereavement care.

We want this resource to be useful, relevant and up-to-date for healthcare professionals and welcome your feedback. Please take a couple of minutes to share your comments using [this form](#).



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Saving babies' lives. Supporting bereaved families.