

NBCP Bereavement Care toolkit

Parent engagement: feedback and audit



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

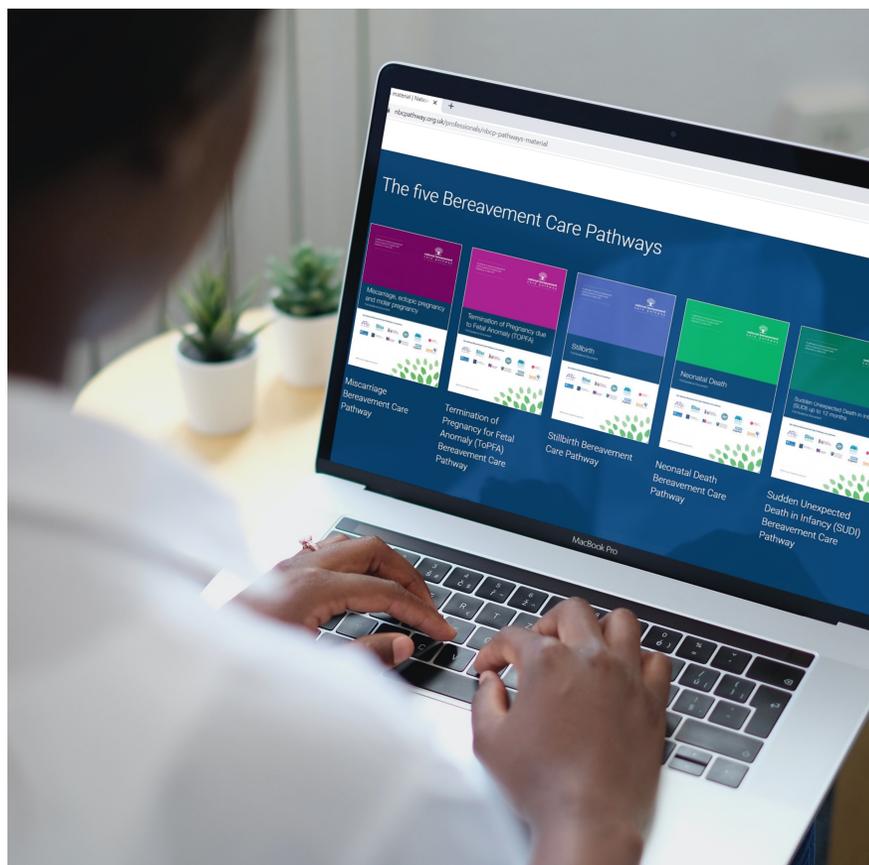


Introduction

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.

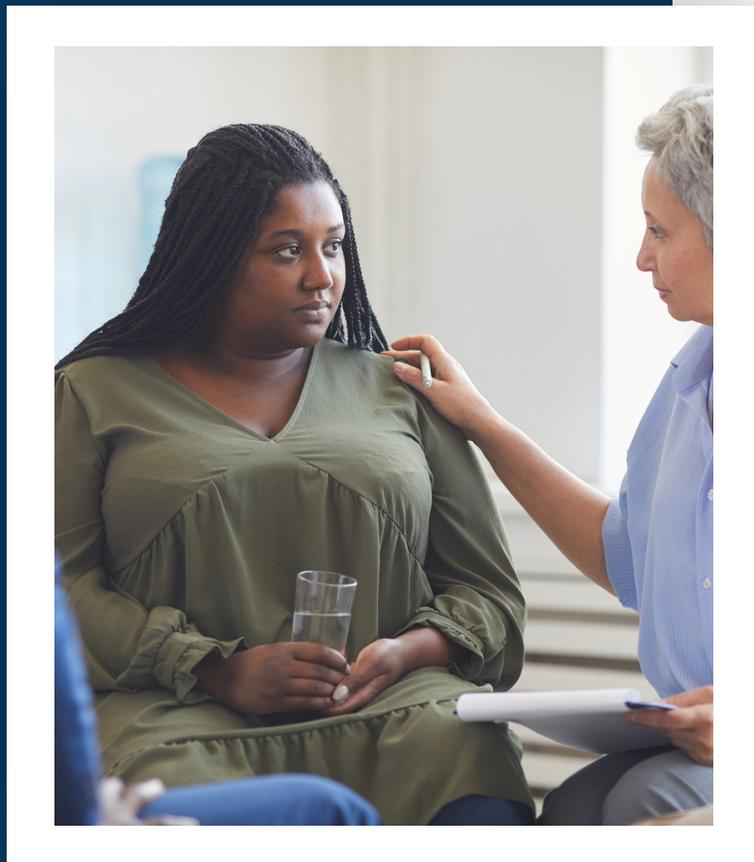
[Sands](#) leads the NBCP in collaboration with bereaved families, other charities and Royal Colleges, providing health care professionals with frameworks, tools and educational resources to support excellent care.

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.

Parent engagement: feedback and audit

- Part 1: Parent voices
- Part 2: Audit



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Parent engagement: Introduction

Parent engagement needs to be at the forefront of shaping and improving bereavement care services. In this module, we'll focus on the ways in which you can engage with parents, and build local audits out of parent engagement.

Involving parents through clinical review, written feedback, or local support groups run by the NBCP partners can help you understand how well your service is meeting the needs of local parents, and help you identify both what you are doing well and what could be improved.





Parent engagement: Introduction

Seeking the views of bereaved parents and families can be challenging, and asking about their experiences at a time of distress at the loss of a pregnancy or baby can seem insensitive and intrusive. However, many parents want to **share their experience of care**, good and poor, to help services develop or feed back on what went well.



Parent engagement: Introduction

This module is divided into two parts:



Part 1: Parent voices:

Explores the different ways in which you can seek parent feedback, and involve parent voice in the development and improvement of your bereavement services.



Part 2: Audit:

Explores how your bereavement care service can be assessed and audited.

Part 1: Parent voices

Sands and its NBCP partners support parents and advocate for them by providing opportunities to have their voices heard and to share their learning with healthcare professionals, in order to improve services

Many have local groups who are eager to work with healthcare workers to improve services. For example, **Sands Hospital Liaison Volunteers (HLVs)** are a vital link between hospitals, Sands groups and Sands staff. The HLV role advocates for both parents and hospital staff, enabling Sands to support health care professionals and parents, and increase the quality of [bereavement care services locally](#).





Part 1: Parent voices



- More about the work of Sands and other NBCP partners can be found on the [NBCP website](#).
- Your local **Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP)**, a working group of women, families, commissioners and healthcare providers, may well have a rep with experience of bereavement care. MVPs are a place for parents and healthcare staff to review and contribute to the development of local maternity services.

Activity

- **Review the NBCP partners list** and identify what local groups you can link with to support the development of your bereavement services. Make contact with a local support group to explore how you can work together.



Seeking parent feedback: the PMRT (1)

- The [Perinatal Mortality Review Tool \(PMRT\)](#) supports high-quality, standardised reviews into perinatal deaths, to ensure parents' questions about the death of their baby are answered and that lessons to prevent the deaths of future babies are learned. Parents' perspectives of their care are key to the narrative of events, and capturing their views, questions and concerns are essential to effectively identifying lessons from the PMRT.
- Reviews and investigations are important for **parents**, as they can provide families with as much information as possible about why their baby died, so they can make sense of what happened. For **services and systems**, they are important for identifying improvements in care for other families, and saving future babies' lives.
- [Meaningful involvement of families](#) delivers better learning, higher-quality reports and an improved experience of the investigation for all involved. A [national report](#) of the findings from all hospital reviews is produced annually.



Seeking parent feedback: the PMRT (2)

- The [PMRT website](#) provides a range of resources to support meaningful parent engagement in the review of their and their baby's care.
- **Sands** provides free training for healthcare professionals to help support their communication and engagement with parents around hospital review. The [Parents and PMRT Review webinar](#) covers the key principles, pathway and resources to support parent engagement in the hospital review of their care as outlined by the PMRT. It is designed to support professionals across multi-disciplinary teams whether they have had training in bereavement care or not.

Activity

- Review the upcoming dates and register to attend the free **Sands** training webinar [Parents and PMRT Review: Communicating and involving parents in the review of their baby's death.](#)



Seeking parent feedback (3)

- The **Maternity Bereavement Experience Measure (MBEM)** questionnaire invites parents to give as much or as little feedback as they can. The findings can help to shape bereavement services. You might find it helpful to look at the MBEM guidance to reflect on how your current practice supports the needs of bereaved families, and you may wish to adapt this to your own area. Some trusts and boards have developed their own version of the MBEM, using Survey Monkey for example as a tool for collecting this information.
- The 'Friends and Family Test' (in England) asks service users their views and experience of hospital care. However, asking parents about their experience following perinatal loss is inappropriate. We recommend using other tools, such as the MBEM, to collect parent feedback.

Activity

- [Listen to healthcare professionals discuss their use of different channels for collecting parent feedback, and how this feedback has changed service provision.](#) Think about the frequency and channels you use for collecting parent feedback, making a note of newer methods which will help you.



Whose Shoes? workshops

'Whose Shoes?' is a workshop and toolkit series for healthcare professionals, designed to help participants understand different perspectives in healthcare provision. It aims to help healthcare professionals become more person-centred in their approach to care by looking at how healthcare services can be co-produced with patients.

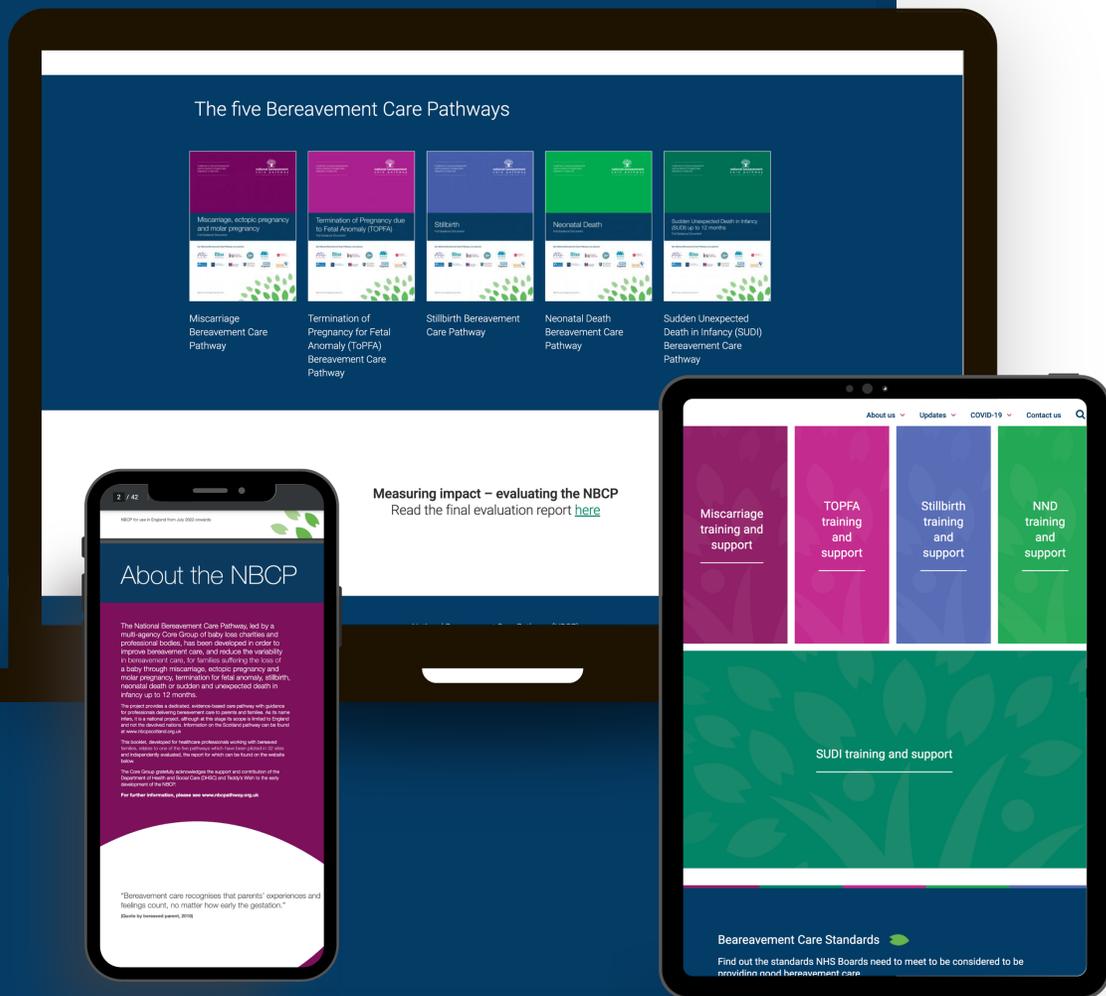
- Participants are encouraged to 'walk in other people's shoes' to explore the concerns, challenges, and opportunities facing different people working within and using health and social care services.

The NBCP team have trialled the Whose Shoes method with two bereavement teams in NHS England Trusts, and found it enormously helpful for participants in identifying aspects of bereavement care which work well, and those which need improving.

Activity

- Consider running a **Whose Shoes workshop**, and see this [toolkit](#) for information on how it works.
- See these [case studies](#) to explore the impact of Whose Shoes workshops on maternity service improvement.
- Look at the [Whose Shoes Padlet](#) for examples, including learning on bereavement care, and to see some films of workshops in action.

Taken from [The RCOG Workforce Report \(2022\)](#)



Parent engagement: your perspectives

What do you do in your trust to understand parents' perspectives? Do you use different tools or channels to those we've included here? Please [share your examples](#) with the NBCP team, or [contact us here](#).



Part 2: Audit



Clinical **audit** is a way of finding out whether you are doing what you should be doing by asking if you are following guidelines/standards and applying best practice. **Audit** is a systematic approach to measuring practice against a standard. The audit cycle follows a structure to ensure that the approach remains focussed and valid.

Research evaluates practice or compares alternative practices, with the purpose of contributing to a body of knowledge by asking what you should be doing. Research often directly involves patients or service users, and may trial different approaches to practice. Research must also have ethical approval. [You can read NIHR guidance on involving patients in research here.](#)

Actions:

- [Listen to a bereavement midwife discuss parent feedback and audit.](#)

Engaging with staff

Audit is common in clinical practice. Auditing practice provides a clear picture of what is happening and can guide you to new ways of working.

Many Trusts have their own audit process. You may have an audit department who are able to help on designing audits. Demonstrating what 'good' looks like takes time, and if staff are involved in responding to audit questions they can become overloaded and disengaged. Some audits can be undertaken without needing to engage with all staff.





Engaging with staff



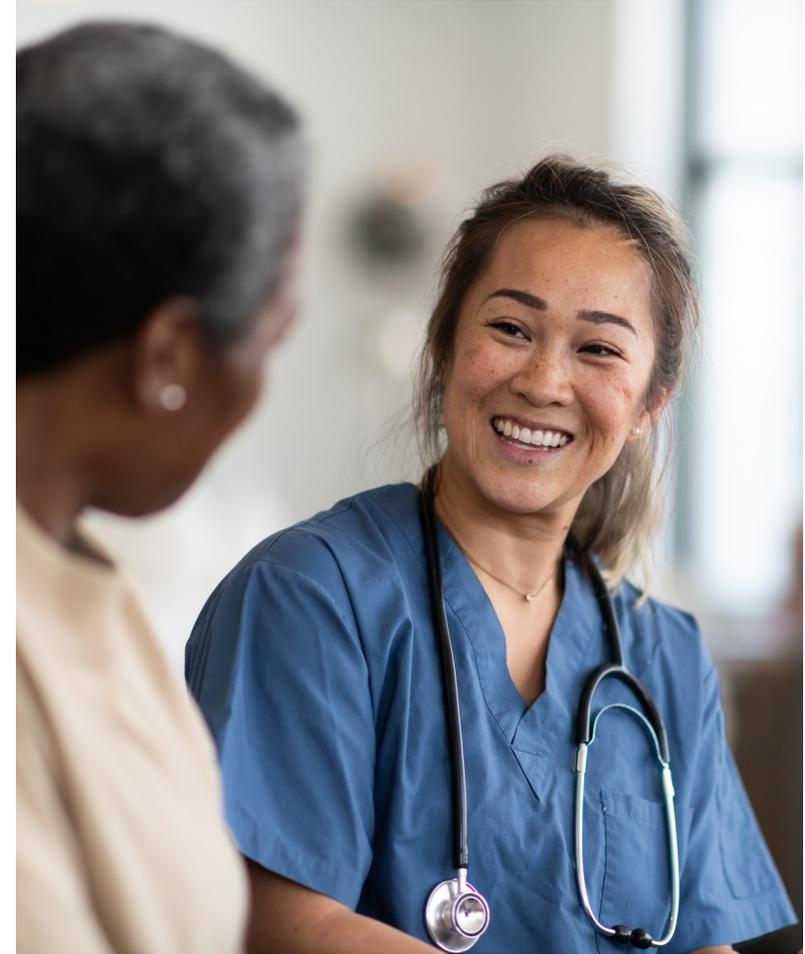
Explaining what the audit is about and what you are trying to achieve is important, everyone wants to be part of good care. Often people take part in audits and don't get any feedback, demonstrating why their perspective is important will help with compliance, recognising that their views and perspectives are valued and valid. Regular feedback and information on the next steps will also help.

Activity

- How can you ensure that staff are 'engaged' with audits?

NBCP self assessment tool

- The **NBCP self assessment tool** is designed to help you 'measure' the current standard of bereavement services against the nine standards, to identify areas for improvement and to celebrate excellence.
- The self assessment tool is a useful way of gaining a **snapshot** of your bereavement service. It provides a bitesize and manageable way of looking at the NBCP standards, rather than a whole pathway.
- The self assessment tool can provide you with a **strategic view** of your bereavement service, and you can easily use the self assessment template as part of a presentation. See section 2 of this toolkit, 'Being strategic', for further information.





NBCP self assessment tool

- We recommend you **review the self assessment document every 6 months** to help you see where progress has been made, or where maintaining the reviewed standard might be challenging. You could also ask others to complete the assessment to get a different opinion.
- Once you have undertaken the self assessment you may decide to **audit** a standard that you feel is 'compliant' or that you wish to improve. We suggest you audit all standards that are not 'championing' bereavement care. Each NBCP standard can be audited to demonstrate what is working and what needs improvement.
- For further information on the NBCP self assessment tool, [contact the NBCP team at Sands](#).

Activity

- [Listen to a bereavement midwife discuss how using the NBCP self assessment tool has helped improve bereavement care in her Trust.](#)



Designing an audit



- The NBCP Standards are ready-made for audit. You can use audit to explore if they are being met.
- For example, Standard 2: **Bereavement care training is provided to all staff who come into contact with bereaved parents and staff are supported by their Trust (employer) to access this training.** When undertaking your audit you should be able to demonstrate what training is available and that it meets the standard.

Is there bereavement care training available?

There are several training packages available from the charities who are part of the NBCP. You can be confident that these are high-quality packages and are designed to support practitioners caring for bereaved families. You may also have designed your own in-house training. This should have been evaluated to provide confidence in 'high quality'.



Designing an audit

Is it provided to all staff who come into contact with bereaved parents?

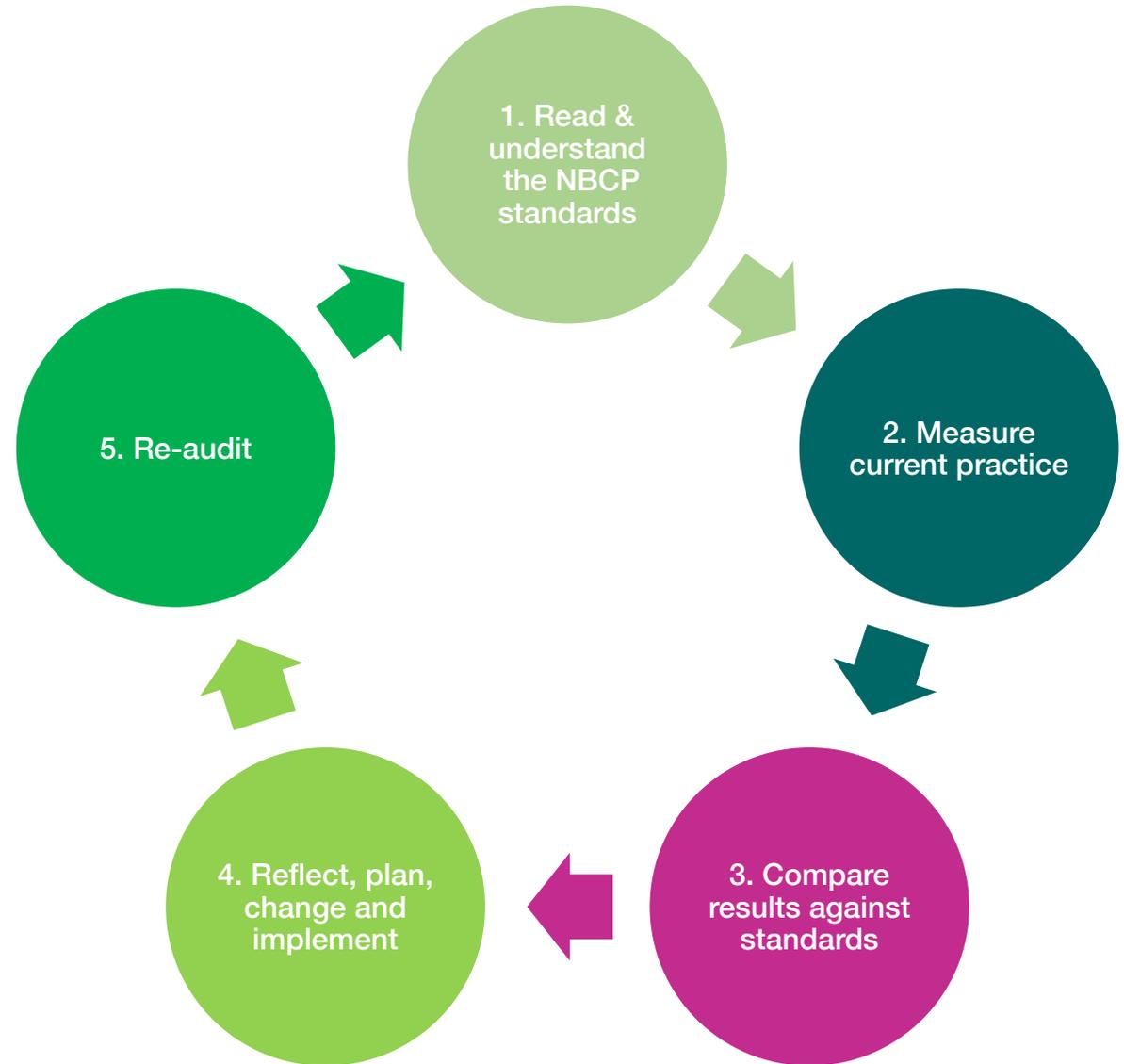
- You need to be clear on who comes into contact with families and what training you expect them to have undertaken. Look at your network list in module 2, as this will help you identify some of the staff who need to be trained. You also need to consider your stakeholders –i.e. all of the staff who will be part of this.
- You can state that as **all** hospital staff may come into contact with bereaved families that ‘all staff should have completed the eLfH module **Bereavement care after pregnancy loss or baby death – learning for all** within, for example, 12 weeks of being employed. Staff who haven’t yet undertake the module should be given 12 weeks to undertake it. When designing your audit you will need to agree appropriate timescales. Go back to your network group, ask human resources for help and guidance. They may be able to collate the data on completion rates and be able to support staff who haven’t done their training.
- You can then use your audit findings to create a case for change –look at the Being Strategic module with links to business case templates to help you

The audit cycle

This is a typical audit cycle. Think about what this looks like in terms of the NBCP standards in your own Trust.

When you get to the planning stage, set out some **SMART** actions. Are they:

- ✓ Specific
- ✓ Measurable
- ✓ Agreed
- ✓ Realistic
- ✓ Time-bound



Reflecting on findings

- Remember you have a standard identified (e.g. Standard 2) but you have added in criteria to demonstrate that you are meeting the standard, i.e. All staff to have had some training within 12 weeks of employment. Because many staff will have been at work before the standard was set, you will need to agree the timescale for all staff, e.g. suggest 12 weeks.
- In this audit, you do not need to talk to the staff directly but, with the help of HR or the training department they can identify completion rates.





Reflecting on findings

- You will need to identify a timeframe for the audit, and in this example it is likely to be longer than 12 weeks to see if your criteria are valid. One of your changes might be to review the timescales for training, or to work with colleagues across the workplace to encourage and support the uptake of training, ensuring that staff understand why this training is important. For example, your HR department may be able to add the training to an induction programme and or part of mandatory staff training.
- Depending on the standard the approach might be different. For example, you might need to involve collecting information from staff, by asking them questions on their views or experiences. For example, are less experienced staff supported by more experienced colleagues?

Action

- Using the Sands self assessment form and the information above, write your own plan to audit. Who will you involve? When? How?



End of toolkit module 1: Parent engagement

Thank you for using this NBCP toolkit module on **parent engagement** 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.