



MISCARRIAGE  
ASSOCIATION

The knowledge to help

Annual  
Review

2019/20

Support  
Information  
Care  
Awareness

# Welcome to the Miscarriage Association's annual review, where we share some of our activities and achievements over the last year and our plans for the future.

It is also our opportunity to thank the many, many people who volunteer their time, knowledge and experience to help those who have experienced pregnancy loss.

## Thank you

to our support and media volunteers, to those who help with research, to our donors and fundraisers and to all who help increase public understanding and awareness.

## Thank you

to those who help develop our resources and to the health professionals and specialist organisations who work with us to improve care during and after pregnancy loss.

## Thank you

to everyone who supports our vision and the work of our staff and Trustees. In these difficult times especially, your contribution is both precious and priceless.



## OUR VISION

Everyone affected by pregnancy loss receives the care, support and information that's right for them.

## WHY WE'RE HERE

### 1 in 4

An estimated one in four pregnancies ends in miscarriage.

### 1 in 80

A further one in eighty pregnancies is ectopic – a potentially life-threatening condition.

### 1 in 600

And one in six hundred pregnancies is a molar pregnancy, requiring specialist care and follow up.

## HOW WE HELPED THIS YEAR



### 2,281,432

website visits

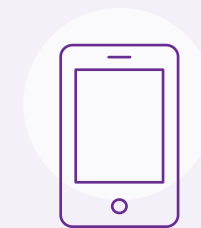
We had 2,281,432 website visits from people seeking information and support.



### 19,000

leaflets to hospitals and clinics

We supplied 19,000 leaflets from 18 titles to NHS hospitals and other service providers.



### 7,007

direct contacts

Our helpline team responded to 7,007 calls, emails, direct messages and live chat, with 49 volunteers offering additional telephone, group and online support.



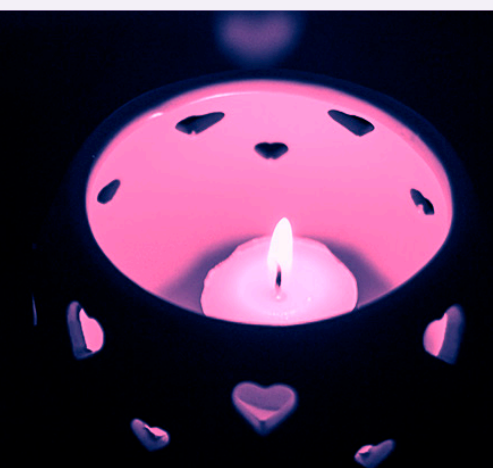
### 1.5m

people reached

Our candle image shared on social media to mark the Wave of Light at the end of Baby Loss Awareness Week reached over 1.5m people.

**Remembering all the tiny lives that ended far too soon.**

[www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk](http://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk) #waveoflight



Wave of light during Baby Loss Awareness Week



# Pregnancy loss and mental health

The impact of my five miscarriages spiralled me into a depression deeper than I have ever felt.

When my baby's heart stopped beating, I felt my life had ended as well - in fact I wanted it to.

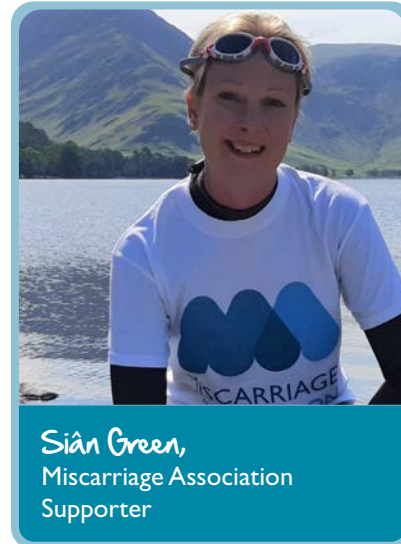
The Miscarriage Association's new resources highlight how miscarriage can trigger mental health problems or it can re-activate existing conditions. For me, my low self-esteem was perpetuated and I started to rely on old coping strategies to punish myself and get rid of the awful feelings.

The failure I felt was excruciating and although I carried on working and appearing 'normal', I was both physically and mentally exhausted. That's the danger about the silence of miscarriage and mental health,

even the people close to you may not realise just how lost and empty you really feel.

I was fortunate to seek help from professionals which was like holding hands against my thoughts, space to release my anger and to find ways to look after myself. The Miscarriage Association has also been vital in understanding my grief and links to my mental health. It has also been a platform to raise awareness to help others.

My grief is ever present. I truly believe I will never move on from my losses, but I am learning to move forward with them and to cope with the feelings in a healthier way.



Siân Green,  
Miscarriage Association  
Supporter

# Supporting someone you know

I've been a Trustee for the Miscarriage Association for nearly three years.

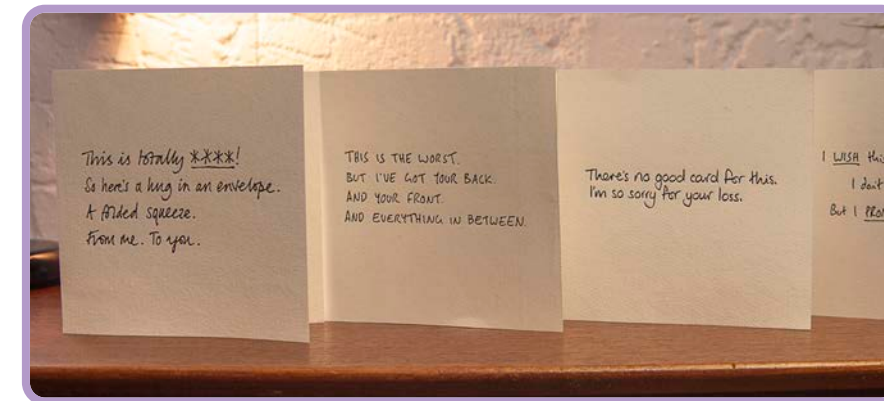
The M.A.'s new cards fill a void. There's nothing like them, which is surprising because pregnancy loss is so common and support for anyone going through it is so necessary. Other sympathy cards just aren't the same. These cards help to normalise getting in touch with someone you know at what can be a

really hard time, and make it easier if you don't know what to say.

The cards are also something that the person who's had the loss can hold onto as long as they need. They include information about the M.A. as a source of support, which makes it such a beautiful package. It's a little hug in a card.



Natasha Nceti,  
Miscarriage Association Trustee



The new 'Supporting someone you know' leaflet gives clarity about how pregnancy loss might make people feel. Everyone's experience of loss is different, it takes a toll on your body and your mind and it's so sensitive, it can be hard for others to understand.

It's been an 11 year journey for me and I'm blessed with a really good circle of friends and family. Sometimes just having someone to sit with you in silence is all that's needed, so you don't feel alone. I think the most important thing is to say 'I'm here if you need me'.

Online access to our support and resources is essential in enabling us to reach out to people affected by pregnancy loss, particularly as it's the way most people find and communicate with us. **Increased and improved online support and information** is one of our most important goals.

## WHAT WE DID IN 2019/20

We launched a new online resource, 'Pregnancy loss and mental health', informed by research with our community regarding mental health needs before, during and after pregnancy loss. This includes new web pages, a short film, personal stories and a leaflet.

We saw the number of followers on our main Facebook page increase by 19% (to 31,736), Instagram followers increase by 54% (to 14,776) and membership of our private Facebook group for people pregnant after loss double to 1,681.

We recorded 2,281,432 website sessions during the year, an increase of 128% when compared with 2018/19.

In March 2020, we created two pages of key information on Coronavirus and pregnancy loss, including one on access to NHS care, and added further Coronavirus-related information across the website. We continued to update those pages during the pandemic.



'A short film': psychotherapist Julia Bueno.

“Your website has helped me through the worst day of my miscarriage and the subsequent few days so far. It helped me know what to expect and what other women do in the circumstances.”

“Your website has already provided me with so much support and information, to know you're not alone in the world is something that has really helped me.”

While online services are vital, we offer support in other ways too, so people can access our help in the way that is right for them. That's why **appropriate direct personal support and information** is another of our goals.

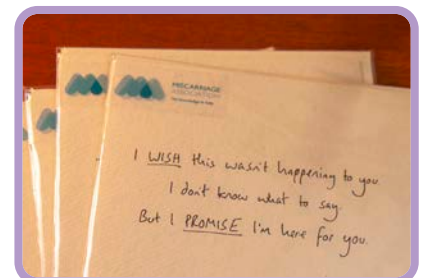
## WHAT WE DID IN 2019/20

We launched a range of greetings cards to acknowledge pregnancy loss, featuring handwritten messages from women affected by loss and created by direct and digital marketing agency MRM. The launch received UK and international media coverage, and was widely discussed on social media.

We created a new web page and leaflet, 'Supporting someone you know', to help family, friends and colleagues.

We responded to 7,007 calls, emails, direct messages and live chats during the year, an increase from 5,026 in 2018/19 largely reflecting take-up of the new live chat service. While direct contact numbers dropped in the first two weeks of lockdown, this was followed by a 37% increase over the next months.

We undertook research into the issues surrounding pregnancy loss and the workplace and developed a new set of resources, including a new leaflet 'Miscarriage and the workplace', which were published in 2020/21.



“Thank you for your publication about recurrent miscarriage. It has been written so beautifully and with so much information... I have spent hours researching and reading and this is the best/clearest one I have found. It explains things so well and has really helped me through a horrible time”



# Caring for patients with pregnancy loss

I work on an acute gynaecology ward, so I'm there for people experiencing pregnancy loss, but I don't see them later on in their journey.

I believe that understanding how pregnancy loss can affect some people later on, and how compassionate care from those earliest stages can make a positive difference, is absolutely essential.

The Miscarriage Association's new e-learning resources for health care professionals are so helpful. They're great for training new staff, as well as serving as a refresher for staff who've been in a role for many years.

I've shared the resources with other staff, like A&E and ambulance staff, who don't deal with pregnancy loss on a day to day basis. It's not

necessarily the kind of training they'd have access to – and so important that they do.

We offer 'Forget-Me-Not' memory boxes on our ward, to bring some comfort and acknowledgement to anyone who would like one after a miscarriage, ectopic or molar pregnancy. The boxes include flower seeds, a pendant, a candle, a journal, a certificate to mark the date of the loss and information about where to find support.

It's a small, busy ward and you can't always spend as much time with patients as you'd like to. But in that



time it's incredibly important to treat everyone as an individual, keep an open mind and know that everyone deals with loss differently.

# Raising funds and raising awareness

Marathon day is said to be your 'victory lap' after all the miles of training. Well, I can't say it was my 'victory lap', but it was the start of a journey...

This plus size short ass 'last official finisher' in 2019's London Marathon had no idea what she was starting by posting a video mid-marathon to let her family and friends know she was ok. The video of my tough experience being right at the back of the London Marathon went viral and the rest is history.

Before the marathon I had raised £5,000 - that's now risen to over £13,000. I was on radio and TV, and many have shared my story, allowing me to talk about why I was running, my five angels and the work of the Miscarriage Association.

My Marathon story was more than a run, it was about me finally accepting that I was a mum of six: five angels and one precious rainbow. It was about all those who messaged me in the aftermath and thanked me for helping them feel able to talk about their own experiences and to know where to go for help.

My angels found a way to show me the light. I found a platform through social media, podcasts and public speaking to take people on a journey with me, to cry and laugh. A journey which helped others realise that they are not alone.



Kerrie Aldridge, Miscarriage Association Fundraiser

The care you receive from a health professional – whether it's your GP, hospital doctor, sonographer, nurse or midwife – can make all the difference to your experience of pregnancy loss. Having **more health professionals able to provide good and sensitive care** is our goal.

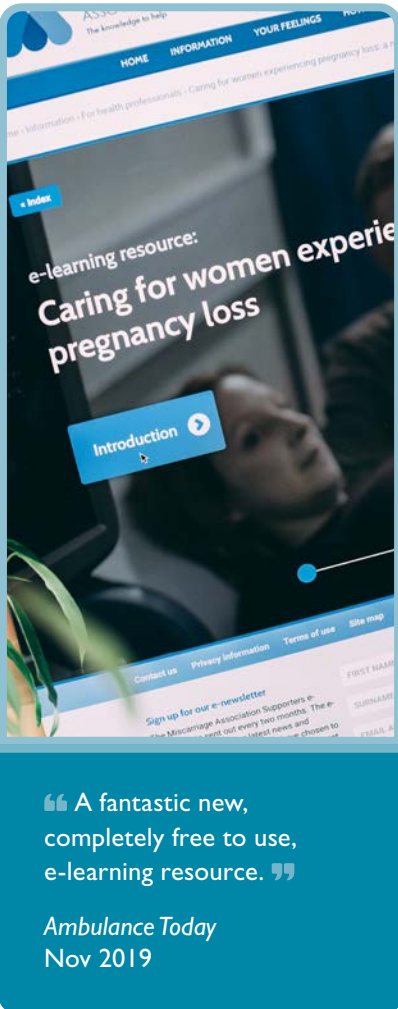
## WHAT WE DID IN 2019/20

We launched a new, free e-learning resource for health professionals caring for patients with pregnancy loss. This received a five star review in the journal *The Obstetrician & Gynaecologist* and it was also featured in *Ambulance Today*.

We contributed to the development of a BMJ Learning module on pregnancy loss, to be launched in 2020/21; and served on the steering group for a NHS England commissioned project to develop best practice guidance for perinatal mental health.

We contributed to a joint Leeds University/Society & College of Radiographers project to develop consensus guidelines on communicating unexpected news via ultrasound. We continued work as a core partner in the National Bereavement Care Pathway in England and in Scotland.

We served on the steering and advisory groups for 10 research studies, contributed to conferences, study days and training sessions and provided consultancy to hospitals and health professionals.



“A fantastic new, completely free to use, e-learning resource.”

Ambulance Today  
Nov 2019

Many people find it hard to talk about pregnancy loss or worry about how to support someone they know. That's why **more public discussion, awareness and media coverage of pregnancy loss** is one of our goals.

## WHAT WE DID IN 2019/20

We served on the core group planning Baby Loss Awareness Week (BLAW). The campaign theme was the need for better access to mental health services and support, evidenced in the report 'Out of Sight, Out of Mind', and launched at a back-bench debate at Westminster.

Other BLAW activity included media interviews, awareness and remembrance events and the lighting up of public buildings in pink and blue. The candle image we shared for the Wave of Light on the last day of BLAW reached more than 1.5 million people on social media.

We shared research news that miscarriage and ectopic pregnancy can trigger post-traumatic stress, reaching 145,523 people on social media and responding to 19 requests for interviews.

Overall we responded to 93 print, broadcast and online media requests for information, comment and case studies, helped by some of our 91 media volunteers.



“After my experience of recurrent miscarriage I became an M.A. media volunteer to try to help raise awareness. Many people don't understand how devastating pregnancy loss can be and often don't think about the partner's experience at all.”

Paul Skelding,  
Miscarriage Association  
Media Volunteer

# Abridged Financial Statements

1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020

	General funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
<b>INCOME FROM:</b>				
Donations and legacies	340,926	-	2,724	343,650
Other trading activities (fundraising & merchandise)	112,773	-	-	112,773
Charitable activities (leaflet sales)	11,832	-	-	11,832
Investment income	8,121	-	-	8,121
Other income	6,450	-	-	6,450
<b>Total income</b>	<b>480,102</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,724</b>	<b>482,826</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON:</b>				
Raising funds	50,450	17,280	-	67,730
Charitable activities	322,589	22,317	4,822	349,728
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>373,039</b>	<b>39,597</b>	<b>4,822</b>	<b>417,458</b>
Net income / (expenditure)	107,063	(39,597)	(2,098)	65,368
<b>BALANCE SHEET</b>				
Fixed assets				2,166
Current assets				668,276
Total liabilities				(15,072)
<b>Net assets</b>				<b>655,370</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>				
Brought forward from 2018/19	503,591	72,644	13,767	590,002
Net income/ (expenditure) 2019/20	107,063	(39,597)	(2,098)	65,368
Transfer between funds	(9,340)	(9,265)	75	-
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>601,314</b>	<b>42,312</b>	<b>11,744</b>	<b>655,370</b>

These abridged financial statements have been extracted from the full financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020. The full financial statements were prepared in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice Accounting and receive an independent examination report from Mazars LLP.

These abridged financial statements may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. For further information, the full financial statements, the independent examiner's report on those financial statements and the Trustees' annual report should be consulted. Copies of these can be obtained free of charge from the Miscarriage Association, 17 Wentworth Terrace, Wakefield WF1 3QW or from the Charity Commissioner's website.

The full financial statements were approved on 16 December 2020 and have been submitted to the Charity Commission, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator and Companies House.

Signed:   
P. Kerry (Hon Treasurer)

**Independent Examiner**  
Mazars LLP, 5th Floor, 3 Wellington  
Place, Leeds LS1 4AP

**Principal Bankers,**  
Co-operative Bank, 1 Balloon Street,  
Manchester M60 4EP

# Reviewing our finances 2019/20

The Miscarriage Association has had another sound financial year. Trustees and staff continued to manage the M.A.'s resources, and the public money donated to us, with great care.

During the year we succeeded in raising funds that were well above expenditure. Overall, income for the Miscarriage Association was very similar to the previous year, although expenditure was higher. We saw increases in donations from companies and charitable trusts and in the value of a gift in kind from our Google Ads grant.

Against that, income from individual donations and some fundraising activities dropped slightly. Income from the London Marathon and the Royal Parks Half Marathon, however, was similar to the previous year. These two events, along with many other fundraising activities including Facebook fundraising, have the added benefit of raising awareness of both the charity and the subject of pregnancy loss.

While hospital orders for our leaflets increased, income from those sales dropped. This was expected in the first full year of making our most widely-used leaflet free of charge to

hospitals, reflecting our commitment to improving miscarriage care.

General fund expenditure increased slightly on the previous year, largely due to the increased cost of raising funds. Against that, the costs of general fund charitable activities were slightly lower.



Designated fund expenditure increased by two thirds, reflecting planned investment in five specific projects. Restricted fund expenditure is that of branches alone.

The M.A. ended the year with a healthy fund balance, well above the six months' operational costs

that our reserves policy demands. This level of reserves has proved invaluable during the Coronavirus pandemic, enabling us to maintain our services throughout despite the significant drop in income caused by the cancellation of the London Marathon and other mass participation events. It provides financial security over the coming years as we face further uncertainties caused by the pandemic.

We owe this financial buffer to our supporters: our donors and our fundraisers; our volunteers who help to keep the costs of providing direct charitable support relatively low; those who share their knowledge and skills; our members and our friends. With your help, we can continue working in line with our vision: that everyone affected by pregnancy loss gets the care, support and information that's right for them, during the pandemic and well beyond.

## Our thanks to the companies and charitable trusts that supported us during 2019/20

### DONATIONS

Asda Foundation

B&Q Ltd

Duncan Norman Trust Fund

GSK

Gynaecology Ultrasound Centre

Mazars Charitable Trust

OneFamily Friendly Society

Pears Foundation

Royal Institution, c/o Steve McNeil

Sidley Austin LLP

Stella Symons Charitable Trust

Transport for London

Walpole British Luxury

Yorkshire Clinic

### GIFTS IN KIND

Google for Nonprofits

MRM



# Thank you to our supporters

We would like to express our sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to the work of the Miscarriage Association during the year.

We are very grateful to our telephone support volunteers, support group leaders and helpers and to their mentors; and to all our online support volunteers. All people with personal experience of pregnancy loss, they helped to provide comfort and support to others going through difficult times.

We greatly appreciate all our media volunteers and others who shared their stories in the media and online, helping others to feel less alone.

We are grateful too to all those who donate their time and expertise to inform and improve our services: health professionals, researchers, writers and colleagues from related charities and of course, those with lived experience of pregnancy loss.

We are deeply thankful to all those who contributed to our funds. Their support might have been the result of a fundraising event, or a donation in memory or in celebration or simply made anonymously online; support through payroll giving or an annual membership fee; or a donation from a company or charitable trust.

Every donation is a gift that helps us make a difference. Every gift helps to fund our work now and going forward – especially important given the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Our fundraisers also raise awareness of pregnancy loss and of the M.A. as a source of help. And during this year as every year, at least some of those supporting our fundraisers found that they too could finally talk about their own experiences of pregnancy loss, helping to reduce taboos. There is nothing more powerful.



# The Miscarriage Association team

**PATRON**  
Nigel Martyn

**AMBASSADOR**  
Matthew Burton

**PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS**  
Mr Roy Farquharson  
Ms Diana Hamilton-Fairley  
Dr Marjory MacLean  
Prof Lesley Regan  
Prof James Walker

**TRUSTEES: AT 31 MARCH 2020**  
Laura Norris, Chair  
Amy Braier, Vice-chair  
Barbara Hepworth-Jones, Vice-chair  
Penny Kerry, Hon Treasurer



Trustees (left to right): Ola Obaro, Amy Braier, Jan Birrell, Natasha Necati, Laura Norris, Barbara Hepworth-Jones, Sarah Bailey, Penny Kerry. Missing from picture: Beena Lad.

Sarah Bailey

Jan Birrell

Beena Lad

Natasha Necati

Ola Obaro

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**  
Peta Harrison

**STAFF: AT 31 MARCH 2020**  
Ruth Bender Atik, National Director  
Vicki Robinson, Deputy Director

Lisa Bruce, Senior Support Worker

Helen Berry, Support Worker

Juanita Charles, Support Worker

Ann Collier, Support Worker

Karn Dyson, Fundraising Manager

Alice Weeden, Communications Manager

**FREELANCE STAFF**  
Clare Foster  
Natasha Judd

## Plans for the future

Our over-arching priority is to maintain our existing service provision and to continue developing it in line with the needs of current and potential stakeholders. We will therefore continue working to our goals, as set out in our Strategic Plan:

- Increased online support and information
- Appropriate direct personal support and information
- More health professionals able to provide good and sensitive care
- More public discussion, awareness and media coverage of pregnancy loss
- Increased organisational capacity and skills

### IN 2020/21 WE'LL BE:

- Launching new resources to help improve the support people receive in the workplace after pregnancy loss.
- Developing new resources for people who experience second trimester loss (late miscarriage).
- Further shaping, contributing to and communicating research into the causes, management and treatment of miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy and molar pregnancy.
- Promoting our resources to help those wanting to support someone who experiences pregnancy loss.
- Finalising a new long-term strategy to take the Miscarriage Association through to 2025.



*I called you on the morning of 19th December in some distress as I found out that I had a miscarriage... I turned to you for help.*

*You did everything right. You asked if I had any burning questions or if I preferred for you to take the lead. I took the latter option as by this stage I was weary and wiped out with exhaustion.*

*Although the miscarriage was awful and distressing to go through, there was a comfort in having the knowledge I needed to get through it on my own, especially important given that I was in the middle of the countryside on Christmas and Boxing Day and getting help would have been something of a challenge. I got through it with the support of my wonderful husband and neither of us panicked in the process.*

*But I wanted to say a sincere thanks from myself and my husband for everything you did for us. It goes without saying that had we not been mentally prepared with the information you gave us it would have been a very different scenario and really terrifying to experience on our own.*



**MISCARRIAGE  
ASSOCIATION**

The knowledge to help

#### CONTACT US

01924 200799 (Helpline)

01924 200795 (Admin)

[info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk](mailto:info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk)

17 Wentworth Terrace, Wakefield,  
West Yorkshire WF1 3QW

#### VISIT US

[www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk](http://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk)

Live chat available on our website

#### FOLLOW US

