



MISCARRIAGE
ASSOCIATION

The knowledge to help



Welcome to the Miscarriage Association's annual review, the document in which we reflect on the year between April 2021 and March 2022.

The second year of the Covid-19 pandemic continued to take its toll on lives and lives lost, on work and education, on social interaction. As levels of infection varied, so too did rules on national and regional guidance and the imposition of lockdowns, causing continuing distress and uncertainty for many.

This was no less true for people affected by pregnancy loss. Many were still affected by reduced access to gynaecology, maternity and GP care. Many of those who were able to access care still had to attend alone. And many felt increasingly isolated and unsupported.

Thanks to our funders, supporters, volunteers and staff, the M.A. continued to be a crucial and continuous resource for people, throughout the year, supporting those affected by loss and, too, the staff caring for them under the most difficult of circumstances.

Even in the context of a continuing global crisis, we never lost sight of the personal and individual impact of pregnancy loss. Maintaining our services, steadfastly adhering to our values and staying actively aware of the changing landscape helped us to continue helping people through.

In the following pages, we share some of our activities and achievements over the last year and our plans for the future. Thank you for being there with us to help people through.

OUR VALUES

Empathy

We listen, we care, and we understand.

Advocacy

We believe that pregnancy loss matters. We give a voice to people experiencing miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy or molar pregnancy and use our influence to make sure they are heard.

Trust

We put people experiencing pregnancy loss at the heart of everything we do and offer support without judgement. We can be relied upon to provide information that is dependable, and evidence-based.

OUR VISION

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



Candle from Cosy Aromas, 'Sometimes the smallest things take up the most room in your heart'

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.



Launched across Card Factory stores in January 2022

HOW WE HELPED THIS YEAR



2,287,537

website visits

We had 2,287,537 website visits from people seeking information and support.



129,042

leaflets provided

We supplied 64,494 printed leaflets to NHS hospitals and other service providers; and a further 64,548 titles were downloaded.



9,750

direct contacts

Our helpline team responded to 9,750 calls, emails, direct messages and live chat, with 51 volunteers offering additional telephone, group and online support.



115

workplaces taken pledge

Our new workplace Pregnancy Loss Pledge was signed by 115 employers, with 281,564 employees.

A source of support during each miscarriage

I had never ever, by any measure, been a fitness fanatic, or even a fan. At school, sporting success for me was being the second last to be picked for a team. After leaving school and compulsory P.E. lessons, I never understood how people chose to run for fun, and not because they were running to catch a train.

Yet in March 2022, I found myself in a pink pair of trainers, running a 10K riverside run to raise money for the Miscarriage Association.

What made me do it? In 2021 I experienced three miscarriages over seven months, and after three pregnancies and losses, I hated my body.

After my third loss I wanted to do something to reclaim that body; to learn how to trust it again and feel empowered. That's why I decided to do this 10k run with my husband to raise money for the wonderful team at the Miscarriage Association. They have been a source of support during each miscarriage and from attending their online support sessions, I know



Francesca Geach, Miscarriage Association Fundraiser

how important their work is for many other parents experiencing loss.

People were so generous in their donations to us - we set a fundraising target of £1,000 and raised just over £2,000. If our story has motivated people to give to the Miscarriage Association then our painful losses haven't been for nothing.

Turning our sadness into something positive

We decided to share our story of miscarriage to help reach out to others and open up discussions on what appeared to be a 'taboo' subject.

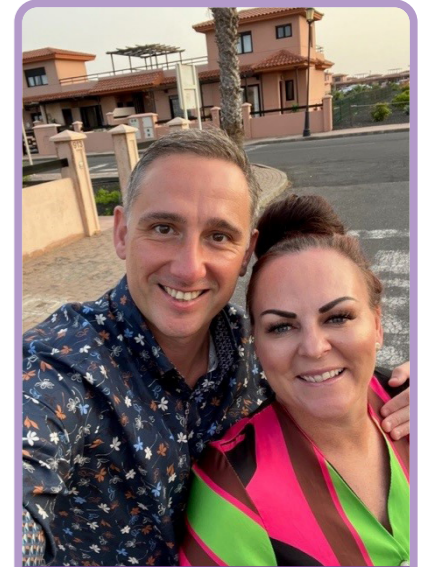
We both have a passion for helping people and over time, after going through pregnancy loss, we spoke about how we could turn our sadness, emptiness, upset, anger and self-blame into something positive. We have since learnt that everyone will deal with it differently and the emotions and feelings we experienced were perfectly normal.

We realised that despite how common miscarriage is, after a combined total of 40 years in the Police, no-one had ever spoken about it at work. We have since written articles and hosted webinars, and are currently

developing a support network that will focus on colleagues from our own force, before looking to expand regionally to offer wider support to even more colleagues.

We have also recorded a number of videos for the Miscarriage Association website. We hope that by sharing our experiences, from both a female and male perspective, we can emphasise to others that there is no right or wrong way to cope with a miscarriage.

Supporting other people has helped us both and we know from positive feedback that our articles and



Leanne and Mark Hobin, Miscarriage Association website story contributors

sessions have reached out to people who have never opened up about their experiences before.

We aim to provide high-quality support and accurate, up-to-date and understandable information for anyone who needs it. It's crucial that people can access help in whatever way is right for them, so we provide a number of routes for people to contact us for direct personal support and information.

WHAT WE DID IN 2021/22

During the year our helpline team responded to 9,750 direct contacts across all our channels: calls, emails, live chat and direct messaging. This represented a 39% increase on our pre-pandemic contact statistics and was only very slightly down on 2020/21 – the very height of the pandemic.

In its second year of operation, live chat constituted a quarter of all direct contacts, offering a clearly valued option for 'talking' without actually having to speak at a time of distress.

Our online peer support group meetings continued to be well attended and much appreciated, providing safe spaces to share experiences with others across the UK and sometimes beyond it. Some also held online 'Wave of Light' meetings during Baby Loss Awareness Week: platforms for people to gather online to light candles in remembrance.

We launched a range of remembrance items for people to buy, including a heart keyring, decoration and bracelets, to support the needs of people seeking ways to mark or memorialise pregnancy loss.



YOU TOLD US

"The M.A live chat function was a big part of my healing process after my miscarriage. The advisor I spoke to was so understanding and helpful and gave me lots of information/support. It was amazing to be able to talk about my feelings without saying them aloud as I was crying."

"Just wanted to say how profoundly grateful I am for this evening's Zoom session. It truly has already helped me just knowing I am not alone. Having the women accept me meant a whole lot."

Our online support and information 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. They can access all our leaflets, pages on the facts and feelings of pregnancy loss and a wide range of shared stories, enabling them to feel more informed and less alone.

WHAT WE DID IN 2021/22

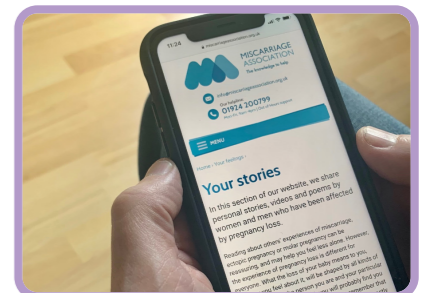
We recorded 2,287,537 visits to our website during the year.

During this second year of Covid we ensured that our website was kept up to date with changes in national and local guidance, noting the impact of both changes and inconsistencies in access to care and treatment options.

64,548 of our information leaflets were downloaded during the year, from 24 different titles, as well as those emailed to people who needed them.

We published 89 stories on our main website and Days That Matter website, written or filmed by women and men with experience of pregnancy loss.

We began researching and developing new online resources for people affected by second trimester loss and for those pregnant after loss, published in 2022.



YOU TOLD US

"The Miscarriage Association was hugely important to me as I grieved and healed. Their website is filled with personal stories, research, advice and support groups which helped [both of us] move on with our lives."

"I was absolutely not prepared for what happened... I don't think I would have managed as well as I did, if I hadn't read the information and realised that what I was experiencing was 'normal'."

It can be really difficult knowing what to say, what to avoid saying

Paramedics tend to get very limited training relating to pregnancy loss, yet having the tools to be able to care for people going through this is absolutely vital.

What can be really difficult is knowing how to talk about pregnancy loss to the person experiencing it, as well as their family - what to say, and what to avoid saying.

I led an online training event for 565 paramedics on this and was really pleased to have the Miscarriage Association's involvement. We wanted paramedics to appreciate just how much of a difference they can make in this most difficult situation.

The feedback we had was brilliant and we continue to use the Miscarriage Association e-learning video for ambulance crews and other fantastic resources in our training.

I've also been working on how babies are transported in ambulances when someone has miscarried. I had been really touched by so many stories of nothing appropriate being available to paramedics in these situations, and the idea of 'Cuddle Pockets' came out of discussions with colleagues.



Aimee Yarrington, Midwife Paramedic, College of Paramedics

Cuddle Pockets (and similar ones using other names) help to make the ambulance journey and arrival at hospital a little less distressing by looking after the baby in a dignified and compassionate way. They're an essential piece of ambulance equipment that many are now providing, and we really hope to see them available nationwide soon.



A sensitive and respectful way to transport pregnancy remains or babies.

YOU TOLD US

“ Thank you for the leaflets which we received yesterday, for creating them and for making them available free of charge! This is such a great help supporting our patients at the Early Pregnancy Clinic. ”

Tsveta Hadjieva, Specialty Doctor Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Craigavon Area Hospital, Northern Ireland

The guidance and tools I needed

When we decided to develop a pregnancy loss policy, it was important for it to be well considered, supportive and to take account of its complexities. The Miscarriage Association gave me the guidance and tools I needed to use the right language, tone and approach.

One of the things we were keen to include was how to offer support to staff going through pregnancy loss while they were working from home during lockdown - and as we have continued to work in a hybrid manner since then.

We also wanted to make sure that our policy was fully inclusive, including being mindful of partners affected by loss. And we wanted staff to know their rights, as well as offering as much as we could in

terms of financial support and leave.

Having a policy in place has helped on so many levels. People often don't want to announce a loss as it's so painful. We hope that by opening up this conversation, more staff will feel comfortable talking about it if they wish, so that we can support them. It also means that we can ensure that a manager is practically and emotionally equipped to offer that support.



Krystle Williams, HR Manager, Global Witness

We've had positive feedback, including from men, with one commenting "we really needed this", and in line with our policy, we are now working on providing training to our staff.

We aim for everyone affected by pregnancy loss to get the care, support and information that's right for them and are working to improve the care that people receive at all stages of their experience of pregnancy loss. Health professionals can make all the difference to someone's experience of pregnancy loss.

WHAT WE DID IN 2021/22

We made our full range of printed leaflets freely available to hospitals and clinics from November 2021 and sent out nearly 65,000 – an increase of more than 400% compared to the previous year.

We were one of the first charities to become a trusted partner of the Healthinote app, available to 3,000 GPs across the UK, enabling them to prescribe M.A. information and signpost to our support services direct to patients' mobiles or tablets.

We contributed to the development of a new BMJ Learning course for GPs on pregnancy loss, with a potential

reach of 157,000 primary care doctors.

We served on the guideline development group updating European guidance on recurrent pregnancy loss; and provided evidence to the Westminster Government's consultation on a new Women's Health Strategy.

We delivered training and information sessions for healthcare professionals, from student midwives and junior doctors to a cohort of 565 paramedics. We continued to ensure that our e-learning content was up to date and freely accessible.

We aim to ensure that the diverse impact of pregnancy loss is widely understood and acknowledged. We work to increase public awareness and understanding, challenge perceptions and assumptions and reduce the sense of taboo.

WHAT WE DID IN 2021/22

We partnered with the UK's biggest card retailer, Card Factory, to produce the first widely available pregnancy loss card - both online and in all their 1,000+ stores.

In addition to a continuing programme of awareness sessions for employers, we launched a Pregnancy Loss Pledge campaign, encouraging employers to commit to supporting staff affected by pregnancy loss. By the end of March 2022, 115 employers had signed up, with 281,564 employees.

We continued to inform discussion and debate on

the issue of bereavement leave and pay after pre-24 week loss, including backing a Private Member's bill calling for a minimum of three days' statutory paid leave after pregnancy loss.

We advised on storylines for three television series and featured in 70 articles and broadcast pieces, helped by many of our 120 media volunteers.

The M.A. was the focus of an hour-long 'takeover' of Talk Radio on Father's Day. The campaign featured men speaking candidly about their own experiences of loss.



“ The ripple effects of baby loss can mean that friends, family and partners are all affected, in different, and often, complex ways. I personally feel passionately about highlighting the experience of partners and took part in a Father's Day feature on Talk Radio, which was a great opportunity to do this. ”

Ola Obaro, Miscarriage Association Trustee

Abridged Financial Statements


1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022

	General funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
INCOME FROM:				
Donations and legacies	550,766	-	1,788	552,554
Other trading activities (fundraising & merchandise)	87,228	-	-	87,228
Charitable activities (leaflet sales)	13,329	-	-	13,329
Investment income	5,893	-	-	5,893
Other income	7,968	-	-	7,968
Total income	665,184	-	1,788	666,972
EXPENDITURE ON:				
Raising funds	70,959	-	-	70,959
Charitable activities	379,993	7,305	9,915	397,213
Total expenditure	450,952	7,305	9,915	468,172
Net income / (expenditure)	214,232	(7,305)	(8,127)	198,800
BALANCE SHEET				
Fixed assets				2,504
Current assets				1,100,204
Total liabilities				(14,969)
Net assets				1,087,739
Represented by:				
Brought forward from 2020/21	804,062	27,351	19,526	888,939
Net income / (expenditure) 2021/22	214,232	(7,305)	(8,127)	198,800
Transfer between funds	(543,653)	543,653	-	-
Balance carried forward	512,641	563,699	11,399	1,087,739

These abridged financial statements have been extracted from the full financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022. 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, 2 Otters Holt, Wakefield WF4 3QE or from the Charity Commissioner's website.

The full financial statements were approved on 15 December 2022 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 2021/22

Despite continuing concerns about the financial impact of the pandemic, the Miscarriage Association had another positive year, thanks largely to the generosity of our many supporters, volunteers and friends.

We began the year with a healthy fund balance that not only provided security for our core services but also enabled us to develop additional workplace resources and new resources on second trimester loss, as well as starting a new project on pregnancy after loss.

We saw some significant changes in income and expenditure during the year, especially increased income from companies and trusts and from the London Marathon. Income from leaflet sales also increased, even though we made the decision to supply all our leaflets free of charge from November 2021. In contrast, we had less income from donations and from 'virtual' fundraising events and activities than in 2020/21.

Total general fund expenditure was 18% higher than in the previous year. Some of this was due to increased fundraising costs, especially those associated with the London Marathon after a year in which the

event was cancelled. But the chief reason for the increase in charitable expenditure was providing our leaflets free of charge to hospitals and clinics. That created a very welcome 400% increase in demand and a resulting tenfold increase in the cost of leaflet production and distribution. Designated fund expenditure was also higher than the previous year.

Overall, income exceeded expenditure and combined with our starting fund balance, meant that we ended the year with assets well above the six months' operational costs that our reserves policy previously demanded. However,

growing economic uncertainty in the UK and beyond means that we have increased that reserves level to twelve months' operational costs. This will be £512,641 in 2022/23.

We have also set up a designated development fund of £521,707 to enable the M.A. to continue to expand our activities over the next three years and continue to work towards our vision: that everyone affected by pregnancy loss gets the care, support and information that's right for them.

Thank you so much for helping us on that journey. We could not do it without you.



Our thanks to the companies and charitable trusts that supported us during 2021/22

DONATIONS

Ajaz.org

Cosy Aromas

Duncan Norman Trust Fund

GCHQ

HC Beer

New Leaf Distributions

Wyn and Ken Lo Memorial Foundation

GIFT IN KIND

Google for Nonprofits

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 those volunteers who administered and moderated our online support platforms. Almost 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 grateful 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. Some have supported us through payroll giving or by their annual membership fee. We also greatly appreciate donations made by companies and charitable trusts.

Every donation is a gift that helps us make a difference. Every gift helps to fund our work now and going forward. 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 M.A. team



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

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 2022

Amy Braier, Chair

Barbara Hepworth-Jones, Vice- chair

Penny Kerry, Hon Treasurer

Sarah Bailey

Jan Birrell

Beena Lad

Natasha Necati

Ola Obaro

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Peta Harrison

STAFF: AT 31 MARCH 2022

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

Simon Wiffen

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 work to the two key strategic goals set out in our new three-year plan:

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

The diverse impact of pregnancy loss is widely understood and acknowledged.

IN 2022/23 WE WILL:

Further develop our e-learning resources for health professionals as well as delivering direct training, study sessions and workshops.

Ensure we represent patient perspectives on clinical and bereavement care guidelines, research and health policy.

Launch new resources for people who experience second trimester miscarriage and for people who are pregnant after loss.

Continue to provide our support and information leaflets free of charge to hospitals and clinics.

Maintain our high-quality staffed helpline service.

Launch a series of public awareness campaigns to reduce stigma and lack of understanding.

Further promote supportive workplace policies through our Pregnancy Loss Pledge with new formal training programmes for employers and line managers.



Twice I had successful IVF transfers and both times I lost my little ones.

I was broken. Feeling utterly alone. Struggling to get through each day.

And then someone gave me your number. I called and I can't even remember the names of the different ladies I spoke to but I know that each of them were the most gentle, understanding angels. They talked me away from the edge and made me feel less isolated.

I have finally reached a place where I can be genuinely happy for friends who fall pregnant. I have a nearly 8yr old son who is perfect and a husband who still cries for our babies lost but we are stronger and okay.

I heard today from a friend, who has just had a ruptured ectopic pregnancy and I immediately thought of you all - and have passed on the number.

It made me realise that I never thanked you and your organisation for helping me get through such an utter low in my life. The good that you do is beyond words. I cannot thank you enough for making me feel okay and for helping me feel like I could be whole again.



MISCARRIAGE
ASSOCIATION

The knowledge to help

CONTACT US

01924 200799 (Helpline)

01924 200795 (Admin)

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West Yorkshire WF4 3QE

VISIT US

www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk

Live chat available on our website

FOLLOW US

