

Ritual Respect – Executive Summary

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[A Digital Health & Care Institute (DHI) Collaboration, University of Strathclyde]

Miscarriage is sadly the most common type of complication associated with early pregnancy, with approximately one in four pregnancies ending in miscarriage. For each woman the experience is different, and access to the right information and emotional support at the right time is crucial to enable them to cope with their loss. However, ongoing emotional support provision for women following miscarriage that meets individual needs is notably lacking, which for many can result in enduring negative effects on their health, relationships, and future pregnancies. This gap in healthcare provision also has wider implications for NHS services, capacity and resources in the long run.

The research project led by The Glasgow School of Art in collaboration with NHS Grampian, and funded by the Digital Health & Care Institute (DHI), aimed to support health professionals, and empower and equip women to improve their emotional wellbeing following miscarriage from a person-centred perspective. The project employed a participatory design approach, collaborating with: women who have experienced miscarriage, health professionals who are involved in providing care around miscarriage (i.e, consultants, midwives and specialist midwives), and representatives from a perinatal counselling group. A series of engagements including pre-Lab sessions and three Experience Labs were organised over a period of four months. This report presents the findings from the project.

Analysis and synthesis of the Lab outcomes (i.e, the conversations, maps, artefacts and concept prototypes) offered rich insights around: women's experiences of miscarriage and scenarios of accessing care; current care pathway capturing key stages and experiences from the perspective of health professionals and women; qualities of preferable care; and concepts for a preferable model of future care by focusing on the emotional care journey.

Ethical approval for the full study involving members of the public was granted by The Glasgow School of Art ethics review committee. The NHS R&D committee granted ethical approval for involving health and care professionals in Scotland.