



Sands' Surveys of Parents and Families from Black and South Asian Communities

Background

- Families from Black and South Asian communities are at increased risk of pregnancy or baby loss, an inequality which Sands is committed to reducing
- The surveys aimed to gather the experiences of such families around bereavement care and support
- Both surveys were co-created with members of each community: Black Mums Upfront (a London collective); and Shetal Joshi, one of Sands' trustees
- 131 Black and 82 South Asian parents and family members responded to the surveys

Results

Key findings

- Lack of support for pregnancy or baby loss before 17 weeks gestation
- Individualised support from people with similar experiences of pregnancy and baby loss would be most beneficial
- Need to increase the relatability and visibility of such support to people in Black and South Asian communities
- Need for greater awareness around faith and cultural preferences for funeral / memorial arrangements

Respondent demographics

- Across both surveys, nearly all respondents were bereaved mothers (94% and 97%), and only one respondent (an aunt) was not a bereaved parent
- For respondents from South Asian communities, 78% were Indian and 45% Hindu. 23% had experienced pregnancy loss or baby death before 17 weeks gestation
- For respondents from Black communities, 31% were Black British and 60% were from the South East & London. 47% had experienced pregnancy loss or baby death before 17 weeks gestation

Parents and Family Members' Experiences

Experiences of pregnancy or baby loss before 17 weeks gestation

- *"I just went home and had to deal with the loss by myself."*
- *"I've had three losses - one late miscarriage, one neonatal death and one early miscarriage and I received support for the first two in hospital but nothing outside of that really. For my early miscarriage I received no support."*
- *"[Memory-making activities] Allowed me to create memories which I would otherwise have not thought of myself"*

What would have made support better for parents and family members?

- *"A support group that had women who had experienced what I had."*
- *"Not to generalise miscarriage but offer support tailored to that individual."*
- *"Being given easy access to support groups local to me - I would love to speak to other mums that have gone through this and I'm just not sure where to find them"*

There is a need to increase the relatability of support

- *"I wish that I could have had black midwives or a black bereavement midwife just for that extra relatability"*
- *"I found it difficult to attend Sands group because I was a single and only black mother"*
- *"I have always believed baby loss across all communities is a taboo subject but more so in our Asian communities and finding people to talk to within the communities would be so beneficial"*

Future Work

- Work with others to improve support for pregnancy or baby loss before 17 weeks gestation and raise awareness more broadly
- Need to increase the relatability and visibility of such support to fathers and other family members in Black and South Asian communities
- Explore ways to support relevant professionals in providing community-specific support, especially information about funerary practices

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to all the parents and family members who participated in the surveys and to those individuals and organisations who helped to co-create and share both surveys.