

“What should I say?”

Referring a family to PAIL Network

Refer to the following script for guidance as you present the referral to people in your care. If possible, practice this out loud a few times with a trusted colleague. The more you speak it, the more comfortable it will be when you are next offering this information.

Before you meet with the family:

- ✓ Check the PAIL Network website to determine if there is an in-person group in their [community](#). If not, they will still be able to join an online group for support, or other types of support (such as telephone support). People can participate in both online support and in-person support, where available.
- ✓ Offer every person a PAIL Network brochure and appropriate resource booklet. If they decline the resources offered, let them know they can find them later on PAIL Network’s website, or PAIL Network can mail one to their house if requested at a later date.

Talking with the family:

- ✓ When speaking with the person, be genuine and compassionate. Acknowledge the loss first (i.e. by saying “I’m sorry for your loss” or “I’m sorry we are meeting under these circumstances”).

What to say:

“This can be a really difficult time for you and your family. It’s completely normal to experience feelings of sadness, anger, and isolation. I want to take some time now to talk about some support that is available to people and families who have experienced [a pregnancy loss, a miscarriage, the death of their baby, etc.]”

“There is a Ministry of Health funded organization that provides support to people who have experienced a loss, called Pregnancy and Infant Loss Network, often referred to as PAIL Network. PAIL offers support to people and families with trained volunteers who have also experienced the loss of their baby. Being supported by others who have a similar experience is called “peer support”, and families tell us this type of support can help them to feel less alone, is non-threatening, and can help to develop coping strategies. It’s a well-researched and trusted way to provide meaningful emotional help. All of the family support programs offered by the Pregnancy and Infant Loss Network are provided at no cost to you.”

“Support is offered to families in different ways- there are a number of online groups, some communities have support available in person at a Circle of Support group, and you can also receive 1-on-1 phone support. There is also a private Facebook group for families, and hosted memorial events throughout the year. You are welcome to participate in as many different types of support as you like and you can attend group or in-person support as often or as little as you wish. Your partner can also join with you, or you can bring another support person with you if you like. The groups are open and there is no waiting list to join. If at any time you decide that you are no longer interested in support, you can withdraw your consent.”

“With your consent, I will share your contact information with their Referral Coordinator and they can contact you by phone or email within 3-5 days. Once you have been connected with the Referral Coordinator, you can determine when it’s the right time for you to start receiving support. The timing of receiving support after a loss is different for everyone. Some families need some time before they are ready to talk about their loss with others, while some prefer to be connected with other families as soon as possible after their loss. It is always up to you when you would like to start.

Do I have your consent to share your name and contact information with PAIL Network?”

*Please note, PAIL Network requires that you have documented consent on file before we are able to accept your referral.

Closing Considerations

- ✓ If the person declines a referral at this time, please remind them they can always self-refer by phone or email if they change their mind. They are also welcome to look at PAIL Network’s website at their own pace, and to join any of the memorial events offered.
- ✓ PAIL Network offers peer support and resources for different family members as well (grandparents, partners, etc.). Depending on this situation, this may be helpful information to share.
- ✓ PAIL Network can also offer navigation services if needed (e.g. finding a funeral home, applying for a Stillbirth Certificate, connecting with local supports in their community)

Your role is important – thank you for speaking with the family and offering them a chance for ongoing connection. Once a family is connected to PAIL Network, be assured we will take it from there. Our Referrals Coordinator will be able to speak with the family, help them understand what supports work best for them, and link them with other resources where appropriate.

In Summary

- PAIL Network offers peer support (support by others with lived experience of pregnancy or infant loss)
- People can self-refer, or be referred directly by a professional
- There is no cost for families to access any of PAIL Network’s supports or resources
- There are no limits on how long a family may access supports
- Supports are offered in-person, online, by phone, at events, on Facebook, and through written resources
- Once a person is connected, the PAIL Network team will help them better understand what is available and what will work best for them
- Please [check our website](#) often for the most up-to-date list of groups and locations

