

Petals' Reflective Practice & Wellbeing Weekend for Health Professionals





Who We Are

An introduction to Petals

Every day, hundreds of families in the UK experience the heartbreak of baby loss, a trauma that is both common and misunderstood.

Petals is the UK's leading provider of free, specialist counselling for parents affected by any type of baby loss. Petals Counselling is specifically designed to help both birthing people and their partners to process their trauma and grief and move forward in a healthy way.

The number of parents we support is growing at pace and currently stands at more than 2,000 a year. We exist to provide and promote our specialist counselling, while also supporting other healthcare professionals who provide care and support to families experiencing pregnancy or baby loss.

Our vision is that every parent in the UK has easy and timely access to free specialist counselling following a loss of any kind.



Our Health Professional Reflective Practice and Wellbeing Weekend



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in our **Health Professional Reflective Practice and Wellbeing Weekend** - a chance to step away, breathe deeply, connect with others who truly understand and process the impact of their work on their health and wellbeing.

We understand the emotional toll this work can take. You offer compassion, stability, and strength to others during their most vulnerable moments. This programme offers you **an opportunity to slow down, reconnect with yourself and others, and explore the impact of your work in a safe, supportive space.**

Weekend info:

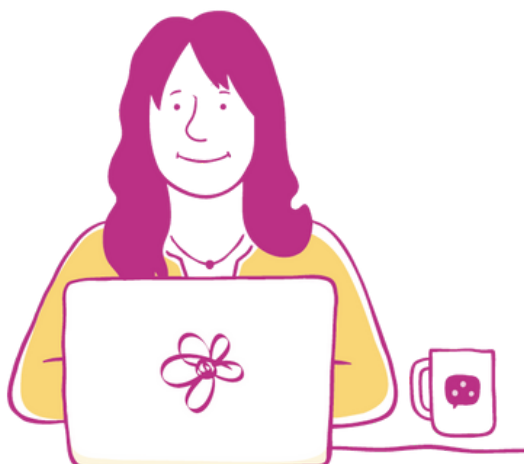
Arrival: **4pm-5pm Friday**

Departure: **12pm Sunday**

Location: **Reading Countryside**

Cost: **£345 per person**

(generously subsidised thanks to sponsorship)



Why choose this weekend?



This weekend is uniquely rooted in over a decade of specialist expertise in baby loss support. **Petals** is the UK's leading baby loss counselling charity, and together with **Bereavement Training International (BTI)**, we have developed and delivered highly evaluated training and support programmes for professionals working in this specialist field.

Our Reflective Practice & Wellbeing Weekend draws on this rich foundation. It has been designed and will be delivered by **Karen Burgess, founder and CEO of Petals**, and **Paula Abramson, Founder and Principal of BTI** - both recognised as leading experts in the field of baby loss and bereavement support.

With decades of frontline experience in counselling, psychotherapy, and training, Karen and Paula bring unparalleled insight, compassion, and professionalism to this programme.



Their work has informed national policy, shaped professional practice, and provided transformative support to thousands of bereaved parents and professionals.

This weekend will provide **a space developed by those who understand the complex emotional impact of this work, and who are passionate about creating safe, supportive environments for professionals to rest, reflect, and rebuild.**



About our Reflective Practice & Wellbeing Weekend



At Petals and Bereavement Training International (BTI), we recognised a gap: we noticed that whilst there are some charities providing wellness retreats for bereaved parents, there wasn't anything similar being offered to the professionals who support these families. This weekend has been designed to fill this gap.

The weekend is delivered as a structured group programme, with each session building on the last. To gain the full benefit of the experience, attendees are asked to commit to attending all sessions across the weekend. This allows for continuity, depth and a shared sense of safety and connection within the group.

Above all, this weekend is about you — your wellbeing, your resilience, and your sense of connection with others who share this deeply meaningful and often challenging work.

What you will experience:

Our weekend programme is designed to help you feel restored, reconnected, and better equipped. All activities are thoughtfully paced to ensure you can engage in ways that feel right for you. Highlights include:

- **Guided Reflective Sessions** – space to share and process experiences
- **Walk & Talk** - come together in peaceful, natural surroundings
- **Mindfulness & Meditation Session** – with experienced practitioner, Kim Paul
- **Creative Expression** – a gentle flower arranging activity
- **Peer Support** – confidential conversations with others who “get it”
- **Practical Self-Care Tools** – techniques you can take into your daily life
- **Time and space** - for individual activities and relaxation

Plus:

- A tech-free environment to help you switch off
- Use of onsite leisure facilities: swimming pool, gym, sauna, tennis courts
- Time to rest, reflect, and simply be



Who is the weekend for?

This retreat is open to any health professional who provides care and support to families experiencing pregnancy or baby loss.

This includes (but is not limited to):

- **Obstetricians**
- **Bereavement Midwives**
- **Midwives and Nurses**
- **Healthcare Assistants**
- **Other support staff working in maternity or neonatal care**



NB: You may be a (health) professional who has had your own personal experience of baby loss. We ask that you consider whether you feel ready to attend this event, and suggest that you should be at least two years post-loss.



Outcomes & benefits



By the end of the weekend, participants will feel:

- Better able to process the emotional impact of their work
- More confident in recognising when they need support and how to access it
- Part of a compassionate community of peers
- An improved sense of professional wellbeing



Participant feedback:

“Great opportunity for sharing good practice and networking.”

“I felt emotionally safe, and it was nice to take time away with like minded people.”

“I left feeling inspired.”

“Time for reflection and rest and relaxation.”

Reflect and Restore

Venue & accommodation:

De Vere Wokefield Estate Hotel
Goodboys Lane, Mortimer, Reading, RG7 3AE

What you will experience:

- Two nights' accommodation
- All meals throughout the weekend
- Full reflect and restore programme
- Use of leisure and wellness facilities

Costs & funding support

Thanks to generous sponsorship from Irwin Mitchell, we're able to offer this programme at the heavily subsidised rate of £345 per person.

A £50 deposit will be required to secure your place. There is the option to pay by instalment. Please contact us by emailing **training@petalscharity.org** for more information.



Funding Tip: NHS staff may be able to apply for professional development or wellbeing funding through their Trust. Attendees may also wish to approach external organisations or local charities for individual sponsorship.

Importance of This Provision



Petals is the Baby Loss Counselling Charity. Our vision is that **every parent** in the UK has **easy and timely access** to specialist counselling after pregnancy and baby loss.

We provide evidence-based, specialist psychological support to individuals and couples who experience pregnancy or baby loss. Our counsellors create a safe, specialist therapeutic space that helps parents process trauma, navigate grief, and move toward reconciliation and hope for the future.

But we also know that high-quality bereavement care relies on the wellbeing of those who deliver it. Obstetricians, Midwives, neonatal nurses, sonographers and bereavement leads carry extraordinary emotional labour, often supporting families through some of the most distressing moments of their lives. Without appropriate reflective practice, emotional protection and access to wellbeing resources, the cumulative impact of this work can be profound.

Supporting the mental health of you as health professionals is not only essential for your own wellbeing, but also crucial for sustaining a resilient, skilled workforce capable of delivering compassionate care. Our Reflective Practice & Wellbeing Weekend has been designed to meet this need — providing protected time, emotional replenishment and psychological tools to support you in your incredibly demanding roles.



Bereavement Care Statistics

- 1 in 3 midwives report symptoms of burnout linked to the emotional demands of caring for bereaved families (Royal College of Midwives, 2023).
- Over 40% of neonatal nurses say they have considered leaving the profession due to emotional strain (Bliss Baby Report, 2022).
- 70% of maternity staff say they receive insufficient time or space for reflective practice or emotional decompression (NHS Staff Survey, 2023).
- Staff working in bereavement care experience higher-than-average levels of trauma exposure, with many reporting unprocessed emotional impact from repeated involvement in baby loss (SANDS/NCMD data, 2021).
- Retention challenges remain significant: midwifery vacancy rates exceed 10% in many regions, with wellbeing cited as a key factor in attrition (NHS Digital, 2023).
- 61% of maternity and neonatal staff report symptoms of emotional exhaustion.
- Staff who regularly support bereaved families are twice as likely to experience compassion fatigue.
- 1 in 3 maternity professionals has considered leaving the NHS, with emotional strain a major contributing factor.
- Over 70% of midwives say they do not receive sufficient psychological support after traumatic clinical incidents.
- NHS retention studies show that improved wellbeing interventions can reduce turnover by 20–25%.

Next steps



Spaces are limited and we expect high demand.
Early booking is recommended.

If you're ready to secure your place or if you would like to speak to someone before booking, please contact:
training@petalscharity.org.



We look forward to welcoming you!



www.petalscharity.org



[@petalscharity](https://www.instagram.com/petalscharity)



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