

## Emergency Department Help for you following a Bereavement



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**The nurse who cared for you today is**

.....

**and can be contacted at**

**Aintree University Hospital on 0151 525 5980 / 529 2578**

*The staff of the Emergency Department  
would like to express their sympathy to you  
following your recent bereavement.*

*When someone dies  
there are many arrangements to be made.*

*We hope this booklet will provide guidance  
about what to do and to help you  
in the difficult days immediately after your bereavement.*

**Please don't hesitate to ask questions  
if you are unclear about any matter.  
Our staff will always be pleased to help.**

## Guidance: Who to turn to

### The Nursing Staff

The nurses in the Emergency Department will be pleased to try to answer any questions you have and discuss any problems. If you wish, they can contact a relative or friend for you.

They are familiar with all religious and cultural practices and these will have been observed.

### Emergency Department Doctor

Doctors are available to see relatives and close friends to answer your questions. The nursing staff can arrange a meeting for you.

### Hospital Chaplains

A Hospital Chaplain is often readily available and **always** on-call to speak with you. Death often raises all sorts of questions and a Chaplain can help to work these through with you; some people like to gather around the deceased for final prayers which the Chaplain would lead. **Please don't hesitate to ask the staff to contact a Chaplain for you.** We can access all the Christian and major non-Christian faith communities if you wish.

Aintree Hospital Chapel is located and signposted on the link corridor of the first floor and is open 24 hours a day.

### General Practitioner / Family Doctor

The GP / family doctor will be notified by the hospital in due course. You may wish to seek the help and support of your own GP.

**Funeral Directors are also very helpful and will guide you as much as they can.**

### Family and friends

Relatives and close friends can very often help share the burden of grief and provide valuable support at this time.

### Department for Work and Pensions

There is useful information available on the website:

<https://www.gov.uk/after-a-death>

## **Important things that you need to do**

**The days following bereavement can be very difficult, but there are formalities which must be dealt with promptly.**

- ◆ Collect any clothing, cash and valuables from The Bereavement Office
- ◆ Collect the Medical Certificate of cause of death
- ◆ Register the death
- ◆ Organise the funeral

### **Other things you may wish to do:**

- ◆ You may wish to view your relative / friend
- ◆ Talk to someone, for example Hospital Chaplains, whose numbers are at the back of this book
- ◆ Contact various authorities
- ◆ Contact support agencies
- ◆ Inform people about the death

## Checklist - Who needs to be told about the death?

You will probably want to let the family, friends and neighbours know of the death right away. There are several other people who may also need to know. These are:-

*Tick when you have informed any of the following people:*

Priest, Vicar or Minister of other faiths	
Family doctor	
Department for Work and Pensions (pensions, benefits)	
Bank, Giro, Credit cards. Building Society	
Social Services (Care Workers, Meals on Wheels etc )	
Schools, college or university attended	
Place of work (occupational pension)	
Executors of the Estate (Will)	
Solicitor	
Insurance companies	
Library services	
Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)	
Residential or nursing home	
Landlord, Housing Department	
Council Tax Offices	
Electricity, Gas, Telephone, Water companies	
Post Office (redirect mail)	
D.V.L.A. Swansea	
Cancel any appointments	

The deceased may have been living alone, so you will need to ensure that their home is secure and remove all signs that indicate no-one is there. You may wish to collect spare keys from other relatives, friends and neighbours.

You may also need to arrange for any pets to be cared for and check the terms and conditions of any insurance/rental agreements covering the property.

## **Tissue and Organ Donation**

### **Aintree University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust supports both Organ and Tissue Donation**

Organ and tissue donation can offer you the opportunity to fulfil your relative/friend's wishes. The donation and transplantation of organs such as heart, liver, lungs and kidneys can save peoples' lives. Not everyone is suitable to be an organ donor and this decision is made by doctors and transplant coordinators. The donation and transplantation of tissues such as skin, bone, tendons and eyes can save and improve peoples' lives. Most people can be considered for tissue donation and this decision is made by specialist nurses at NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT). Tissue donation can take place up to 48 hours after death and tissue from a single donor can save or improve the lives of over 50 people.

- At the time of your relative/friend's death a next of kin contact number and patient information will be sent to NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) by a member of the nursing staff
- A specially trained nurse from NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) may then contact you by telephone to give you information about tissue donation, especially if your relative/friend is on the Organ Donor Register
- If you do not wish to be contacted about tissue donation please call the NHSBT National Pager Number on **0800 432 0559** and leave a message "**Please do not contact the family of .....(name of the deceased) who was a patient on ward.....(ward name) at Aintree Hospital**"

### **Please note: Being a tissue donor will not cause any delay in funeral arrangements**

If you would like further information about tissue donation you can:

- Call the NHSBT National Pager number on **0800 432 0559**. Leave your name and a contact number and a specially trained nurse will call you back.
- Visit the Tissue Donation website at [www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/tissuedonation](http://www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/tissuedonation)

## **Deaths occurring in the Emergency department**

Due to the death of your relative / friend occurring on the way to or in the accident and emergency department, a medical certificate cannot be issued from this hospital.

You will be requested to **ring** the Coroner's office the following day:-

After 11am and before 5pm, Monday to Friday  
On telephone number 0151 225 5770

The staff will inform you who is going to issue the medical certificate, either:-

- a. The GP of your relative / friend
- Or
- b. The Coroners Office

- a. If the GP is going to issue the certificate, we would suggest you contact him / her to arrange a convenient time for collection.
- b. If the Coroner's Office is going to issue the certificate, they will advise you when to attend the Registrar's office to register the death.

**Only in certain circumstances will you need to attend the Coroner's Office and you will be given this information when you ring them.**

## **Police attendance and identification**

Often when there is a sudden unexpected death, the police may call at your home to check details. Usually when the deceased has collapsed in a public area the police may want the next of kin or their representative to identify the body. These formalities are necessary and common practice and the police will help you in any way they can.

## **The Mortuary**

The mortuary does not have a Chapel of Rest but does have a designated area for viewing and identification in exceptional circumstances although you may prefer to wait until the deceased has been transferred to your funeral directors chapel of rest.

You will be asked to attend the Emergency Department by appointment initially, so that arrangements can be made for a member of staff to escort you to the mortuary. Due to the unpredictable nature of work within the accident and emergency department, there may occasionally be a delay in providing this service, but we will do all that is possible to minimise this delay should it occur.

Requests for appointments for viewing by family and friends should be made with the Emergency Department by phoning 0151 529 2500/2502.

## **Post-mortem examinations**

### **Hospital post-mortem**

Occasionally the doctor treating the deceased may seek consent for a post-mortem examination to be carried out in order to gain a fuller understanding of the deceased's illness or the cause of death in order to improve their understanding of the disease.

It may also be carried out to obtain "tissue" or any part from the body for the purpose of future medical education or research, which will help to contribute to better care of other patients in the future. This kind of post-mortem examination is not legally required and is only carried out with the complete consent of the deceased's next-of-kin.

Where a hospital post-mortem is carried out, the medical certificate of cause of death will still be issued by the hospital.

### **Coroner's post-mortem**

The coroner may order a post-mortem examination to be performed when the cause of death is uncertain and needs to be determined. The decision is at the discretion of the coroner. Consent from the relatives is not needed.

Organs or tissue cannot be taken from the body for any purpose except to establish the cause of death and they cannot be retained longer than necessary to establish that purpose. After the post-mortem the coroner completes the death certificate.

# **The Coroner**

## **If the death is referred to the coroner**

In some circumstances there is a legal requirement for the doctor to refer a death to the coroner. About one third of all deaths in this country are referred to the coroner. This will often result in a post-mortem examination. If you have any questions about a death being referred to the coroner, the Bereavement Office staff will discuss and explain the procedure in detail.

## **Who are coroners?**

Coroners are usually lawyers, but in some cases they may be doctors. Coroners are independent judicial officers – this means that no-one else can tell them or direct them as to what they should do but they must follow the laws and regulations which apply. Coroners are helped by their officers, who receive the report of deaths and make enquiries on behalf of the coroner.

## **What does the coroner do?**

A coroner enquires into those deaths reported to him. It is their duty to find out the medical cause of the death if it is now known and to enquire about the cause of death if it was due to violence or was otherwise unnatural.

## **Are all deaths reported to the coroner?**

No. In most cases the deceased's own doctor, or a hospital doctor who had been treating the deceased, is able to give a cause of death.

## **How are deaths reported to the coroner?**

Deaths are usually reported to the coroner by the police or by the hospital doctor who had been treating the deceased. A doctor will also report an unexpected death.

## **When is a death reported to the coroner?**

The death will be reported to the coroner if it resulted from or occurred in any of these circumstances:-

- The death was violent or unnatural or occurred under suspicious circumstances
- The cause of death is not known or is uncertain
- The deceased was not attended by a doctor during their last illness
- The doctor treating the deceased had not seen them either after death or in the 14 days before their death
- The death occurred whilst a patient was undergoing an operation or did not recover from the anaesthetic
- The death was caused by an industrial disease
- The coroner may be the only person who can certify the cause of death. The doctor will write on the formal notice that the death has been referred to the coroner

## **What will the coroner do?**

The coroner may decide that death was quite natural and will allow a doctor to issue a medical certificate of cause of death. If not, the coroner may ask a pathologist to examine the body by means of a post-mortem examination.

If the result of the post-mortem examination shows the death to have been of natural causes, the coroner will issue a certificate and this will be sent to the register office directly. The coroner will

advise you once this certificate has been issued and you may then make an appointment to register the death at the register office.

### **What if the death was not due to natural causes?**

The coroner will hold an inquest but they can usually issue a certificate so that burial or cremation can take place before the inquest. An inquest is an inquiry to find out who has died and how, when and where they died, together with information needed by the Registrar of Deaths, so that the death can be registered.

For further information regarding coroner's procedures, you can contact the coroner's office, which is open Monday to Friday between 8.30 am - 4.15 pm and is located at:

H.M Coroner for Liverpool & Wirral  
Gerard Majella Courthouse  
Boundary Street  
Liverpool  
L5 2QD

**Tel: 0151 225 5770**

**Fax: 0151 207 4522**

e-mail: [coroner@liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:coroner@liverpool.gov.uk)

Website: <http://www.gov.uk>

# Registering The Death

## Where to register the death

You will **need to make an appointment** to register the death. This must be done **within 5 working days** (unless it has been reported to the coroner) and in the district Register Office where the death occurred.

**Please note, a death cannot be registered without a medical certificate of cause of death.**

The Register Office is open Monday to Friday between 9am to 4.30pm and is located at:

Liverpool Register Office  
St George's Hall  
St George's Place (Heritage Centre entrance)  
Liverpool  
L1 1JJ

**Tel: 0151 233 3004**

E-mail: [register@liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:register@liverpool.gov.uk)

Arrangements can be made to register a death elsewhere, but this may delay the funeral by a few days because the forms have to be posted to the office where you wish to register the death.

## How to register the death

1. Collect the medical certificate of cause of death.
2. Make an appointment at the Register Office.
3. Take the medical certificate of cause of death to the Register Office within 5 working days (if the doctor has spoken to the coroner about the death, the Bereavement Office staff will advise you on the procedures in these circumstances).

## Who can register the death

- A relative of the deceased
- Someone present at the death
- The person making the funeral arrangements

Please note if English is not your first language, you may prefer to take someone with you to help.

## What needs to be taken to register the death

- The medical certificate of cause of death
- The deceased's medical card, if available
- The deceased's birth certificate, if available
- The deceased's marriage certificate, if appropriate and available

## What the Registrar will need to know

### Tick when you have the following information

The date and place of death	
The deceased's last usual address	
The deceased's first names and surname (and maiden name where appropriate)	
The deceased's date and place of birth (town and county if born in the UK, and country if born abroad)	
The deceased's occupation (or last occupation if retired) and the name and occupation of their spouse, if applicable	
Whether the deceased was receiving a pension or allowance from public funds	
If the deceased was married, the date of birth of the surviving widow or widower	

### The Registrar will give you:

- A **certificate of burial or cremation**: this certificate is green in colour and should be given to your funeral director as early as possible
- A **certificate of registration of death** (form BD8): this may need to be sent to the social security office and is provided free of charge. Read the information on the back of the certificate and if any of it applies, fill in the certificate and post or take to your social security office.
- **The death certificate**: this is a copy of the entry in the death register. You may need one or more death certificates for the will and for any pension claims, insurance policies, etc. These are available for a small fee. Further copies can be obtained at a later date if required.

## Arranging the Funeral

It is important that any Will made by the person who has died is read as soon as possible, as it may include their wishes regarding their funeral.

Contact the Funeral Director of your choice as soon as possible, even before you obtain the certificate of cause of death. The Funeral Director will be able to advise you on any arrangements you need to make.

Members of the National Association of Funeral Directors give a full estimate of charges at the time of taking instructions. Do not be afraid to discuss ways of reducing the cost quoted.

**(See your local telephone directory or refer to the telephone numbers in the back of this booklet)**

If you receive income support, family credit and / or housing benefit, you may be entitled to help with the funeral costs. You will need to apply for help and advice to your local department of social security.

## Rights and options

The main requirements in England and Wales are that the death is certified by a doctor or coroner, registered with a Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths, and the body either buried or cremated.

- You do not have to have a funeral ceremony
- You do not have to use a religious minister
- You do not have to use a funeral director
- A ceremony does not have to take place in a crematorium or place of worship

There are more options concerning the content of a funeral ceremony and its duration than many people realise. Woodland burial and other green options are increasingly available. The majority of people choose to make their arrangements through a funeral director, but some people see “do it yourself” funerals as more personal and less expensive.

If this approach appeals and you have time to research and prepare, enquire at the cemeteries and crematorium department of your local authority for guidance. You could also get information from the Natural Death Centre. Some funeral directors are willing to help with such funerals.

## Choosing a funeral director

Funeral directors will manage funeral arrangements and give advice and support. Check if the funeral director you choose belongs to a trade association. This requires them to provide full information about their services and prices. These factors may influence your choice:

- Location of the firm's premises
- Range of services provided
- The way you are treated by the staff.
- Cost.
- Recommendation of those who have used the service.
- Ownership (small family business or large firm).

## **A simple funeral**

Most people would probably require the funeral director to provide the following services as a minimum:

- Make all the necessary arrangements.
- Provide appropriate staff.
- Provide a suitable coffin.
- Transfer your relative/friend from the place of death to the funeral director's premises.
- Care for your relative/friend prior to the funeral.
- Provide a hearse to the nearest cemetery or crematorium.
- Arrange for burial or cremation as appropriate.

Embalming, viewing of the deceased, or providing cars for mourners are optional extras.

## **Funeral costs**

Costs for the same services may vary considerably from one funeral director to another. You may wish to get more than one quote to compare costs. Disbursements' are fees paid to others, e.g. for cremation, minister, doctors' certificates, newspaper announcements, flowers, etc. Ask the funeral director for a written quotation detailing all these fees.

Funeral payments are normally recoverable from your relative/friend's estate. If you arrange the funeral, you are responsible for paying the bill.

If you are finding it difficult to pay for the funeral that you have to arrange, you may be entitled to receive a Social Fund Funeral Payment from the Department for Work and Pensions providing you or your partner receive one of the following:

- Income support.
- Housing benefit.
- Council tax benefit.
- Job seeker's allowance (income based).
- Disabled Persons tax credit.
- Working family's tax credit.

Your local Citizens Advice Bureau can help with all legal and practical matters following a death, including costs.

Telephone numbers are listed in local telephone directories.

Age Concern provides advice and information to anyone over the age of 60 about funeral arrangements and welfare benefits etc. Tel: 0151 236 4440.

There are also two booklets that might be of help to you (published by the Department for Work and Pensions):

- Help with the costs of a funeral from the Social Fund (SF200).
- What to do after a death in England & Wales (DWP Leaflet D49).

These are available from the Register Office, Social Services and main Post Offices.

## **Notification of a death in a newspaper**

- You may wish to put an announcement about the death in the national or local newspapers, giving the date, time and place of the funeral and your wishes about flowers or contributions to charity or research.
- The classified advertisement department of the newspaper will help you with the wording or you can leave this to your funeral director. For security reasons, you should not include your address.

## **Wills**

If you have any queries about the will or regarding the absence of a will you can contact:

Probate Registry  
Queen Elizabeth II Law Court  
Derby Square  
Liverpool  
L2 1XA  
Tel: 0151 236 8264

A useful booklet on how to obtain Probate (PA2) is available from the Probate Service.

<https://www.gov.uk/wills-probate-inheritance/overview>

Below is an example of a letter for your nominated person to bring to the Bereavement Office to collect cash or valuables on your behalf:-

(Your name)  
(Your address)  
(Your postal code)

(Your telephone number)

Date

Bereavement Officer  
Bereavement Office  
Name of Hospital  
Address of Hospital

Dear Sir / Madam

I hereby authorise (name of representative) to collect any clothing and valuables being held for the late (name of deceased).

I am the next of kin / legal representative of the above named.

You can contact me on the above telephone number if necessary.

Yours faithfully

(Your name)

## Useful Contact Numbers

### Local Government Services

Coroners Office	0151 225 5770
Register Office	0151 233 3004

### Counselling

Your family doctor will be able to listen and offer emotional support, but if you need more time to talk or longer term support, a counsellor may be able to help. Some large GP practices have counsellors at their surgeries or you may wish to contact the hospital trauma and bereavement counsellor on 0151 529 2578 or one of the support organisations listed.

### Support Organisations that may be able to offer Help

Child Death Helpline Mon/Wed/Fri 10am – 1pm; each evening 7 – 10pm	0800 282 986
Compassionate Friends Mon – Fri 9.30 am – 10.30 pm	0345 123 2304
CRUSE Bereavement Care	0808 808 1677
The Lullaby Trust (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)	0808 802 6868
Liverpool Bereavement Service	0151 236 3932
Child Bereavement UK	0800 088 8840
Meningitis Now	0808 801 0388
Alder Centre (Bereavement Counselling) Mon – Thurs 9am – 5pm; Fri 9am – 4.30pm	0151 252 5391

### Age Concern

Sir Thomas House  
5 Sir Thomas Street  
Liverpool L1 6BW  
Liverpool Tel: 0151 330 5678  
Sefton Tel: 01704 542 993  
Website: <http://www.ageconcernliverpoolandsefton.org.uk>  
Works with the elderly

### Organ Donation

Tel: 0300 123 2323  
Website: <http://www.organdonation.org.uk>

### Citizens Advice Bureau

Tel: 03444 111 444  
Website: <http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk>

## **Knowsley Counselling Agency**

149 Cherryfield Drive  
Kirkby  
Merseyside  
Tel: 0151 443 4404

## **Roadpeace**

Tel: 0845 4500 355

Website: <http://www.roadpeace.org>

E-mail: [info@roadpeace.org](mailto:info@roadpeace.org)

Roadpeace offers a practical and emotional support service to the bereaved and injured through road traffic accidents.

## **Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society (SANDS)**

Tel: 020 7436 5881 (Mon – Fri 10am – 5pm)

Website: [www.uk-sands.org](http://www.uk-sands.org)

E-mail: [support@uk-sands.org](mailto:support@uk-sands.org)

UK wide network of local self-help groups run by and for bereaved parents

## **Support after Murder and Manslaughter (SAMM)**

Tel: 0845 872 3440 (answerphone when office closed)

Website: <http://www.samm.org.uk>

E-mail: [info@samm.org.uk](mailto:info@samm.org.uk)

## **The Samaritans**

Tel: 08457 90 90 90

Website: <http://www.samaritans.org.uk>

## **Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (SOBS)**

Tel: 0300 111 5065 available 9am - 9pm each day

Website: <http://www.uk-sobs.org.uk>

E-mail: [sobs.admin@care4free.net](mailto:sobs.admin@care4free.net)

## **Terence Higgins Trust**

Tel: 0800 802 1221 (10am-8pm Mon-Fri)

Website: <http://www.tgt.org.uk>

E-mail: [info@ttht.org.uk](mailto:info@ttht.org.uk)

## **PETAL (People Experiencing Trauma And Loss)**

Tel: 01698 324502

Website: [www.petalsupport.com](http://www.petalsupport.com)

Email: [info@petalsupport.com](mailto:info@petalsupport.com)

## **Victim Support**

Tel: 0808 1689 111

Website: [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

It is hoped that the information contained within this book will be of assistance to you, but if there is any point or problem that you may experience which is not covered, please ask, we would very much like to help you.

We are determined to provide the best possible service to patients and other visitors to the accident and emergency department and welcome all comments on the service we provide, whether good or bad, so that we can act on these comments to continue to improve the services we provide.

If you have any comments on the service you have experienced, you can make your comments to the person in charge of the ward/department, or you can write to or telephone:

### **Patient Advice and Complaints Team**

Aintree University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Tower Block, Lower Lane, Liverpool L9 7AL  
Tel: 0151 529 3287  
(answer phone 0151 529 2400)

If you have any concerns, you may wish to write to:-

The Chief Executive  
University Hospital Aintree  
Lower Lane  
Fazakerley  
Liverpool L9 7AL



**If you require a special edition of this leaflet  
This leaflet is available in large print, Braille, on audio tape or disk and in other  
languages on request. Please contact:**

**Tel No: 0151 529 2104**

**Email: [interpretationandtranslation@aintree.nhs.uk](mailto:interpretationandtranslation@aintree.nhs.uk)**