

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 ext:

*The staff of the Aintree University Hospital
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.**

Information for relatives

Please could you telephone the Bereavement Office on 0151 529 2855. The Bereavement Office will be open Monday to Friday 08.30-16.30. They will explain what you need to do next, arrange a time for you to see them and help with any questions you may have.

Please do not attend the Bereavement Office without first telephoning for an appointment, otherwise the forms may not be ready for you when you arrive, which may involve an unnecessary wait. Please do not make an appointment with the Register Office until the new forms have been completed or collected.

Important things which you need to do

- Telephone the Bereavement Office to make an appointment —they will advise you of what needs to be done in the early stages
- Collect any clothing, cash and valuables belonging to your relative/ friend from the ward
- Collect the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death from the Bereavement Office
- Register the death at the Register Office
- 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 or Bereavement Office
- Contact various authorities
- Contact support agencies
- Inform people about the death

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/ District Nurses/ other health care agencies	
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.

Guidance and who to turn to

Helpful advice and assistance and support are available from the following:

Bereavement Office

The Bereavement Office staff will provide you with information and support regarding visiting the deceased (if desired), the necessary administrative responsibilities and general advice regarding funeral arrangements.

It is from here that the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death can be collected. This will only be released to the patient's nominated next of kin recorded in the hospital notes or an Executor of the Will.

Hospital Staff

Should you wish to discuss anything with the staff you are most welcome to contact the nurse in charge of the ward or department in which your relative/ friend died. Arrangements may be made for you to meet with a member of the medical staff.

Hospital Chaplains

The Hospital Chaplaincy is a department within the hospital consisting of representatives of all faiths, who are available to offer support. You may wish to contact the Hospital Chaplain, or a religious or cultural minister of your choice. The nurse looking after your relative/ friend can contact them at any time or alternatively you can telephone the Chaplaincy on 0151 529 3195 or Roman Catholic Chaplaincy Services on 0151 529 3191.

The Hospital Chapel is open from 9am –5pm and is a place where you may wish to sit quietly and relax, think or pray.

Out of hours the Chapel can be accessed through the security desk which is located in the main hospital reception.

Family and Friends

Relatives and close friends can often help share your 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>

What you need to do next

1. Telephone the Bereavement Office to make an appointment to see the Bereavement Officer. **Tel: 0151 529 2855**
2. Collect the Medical Certificate Cause of Death from the Bereavement Office and then telephone the Liverpool Register Office (Registrar of Births and Deaths) for an appointment to register the death. **Tel: 0151 233 3004 (24 hours)**
3. Contact a funeral director of your choice (these are listed in your local telephone directory, yellow pages or Thompson Local Directory or on the internet)

Contacting or visiting the Bereavement Office

When you telephone the Bereavement Office, you will be given a date and time to visit only when all the required paperwork has been completed (in some cases this will be on the next working day). The Bereavement Office staff will also offer help and advice with the required documentation and procedures to follow. When contacting the office you will be asked:

- The full name of the deceased
- Your relationship to the deceased
- Your contact telephone number (if you have one)
- If know, whether the funeral is to be a burial or cremation (where there is a Will it is wise to check this for Instructions)

The Bereavement Office is located in a separate building from the main hospital, and is located in Bluebell House. Bereaved relatives may park in the designated parking area directly outside the Bereavement Office when visiting. Parking is free -please display this booklet in your car to ensure you do not receive a parking ticket.

- Please see map for the exact location of the Bereavement Office.

Visiting your deceased relative/ friend in the Bereavement Suite

If your relative/ friend had been ill for a while, you may have expected the death and been able to be with them when they died.

The death may have been unexpected, or you were unable to get to the hospital in time.

Within a short time of death, your relative/ friend will be taken from the ward to the hospital mortuary. Whilst there is a room available to view your relative/ friend you may prefer to wait until they have been transferred to your funeral directors chapel of rest.

Should a member of family wish to see your relative/ friend in the Bereavement Suite , you will need to liaise with the Bereavement Office (out of hours viewings should be by exception only, please contact the ward staff who can arrange this for you).

Please be advised that the Bereavement Office will need to contact the next of kin to obtain permission for a visit to take place.

Normally the funeral director will take your relative/ friend to their chapel of rest within a few days of the death where they can also be viewed.

Site Map

(need to ask Communications Team for a map)

Collecting the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death

The Medical Certificate of Cause of Death will only be released to the nominated next of kin documented in the patient's hospital records. Proof of identity will be required from the next of kin in order to collect the Medical Certificate Cause of Death. If you have nominated another person to attend on your behalf, they will need a letter of authority from you and proof of their identity.

If you are collecting the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death from the Bereavement Office, it is appreciated if you arrive no more than 5 minutes before the appointment time you have been given by the Bereavement Office.

Depending on the circumstances of the death the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death will be issued by either one of the following people:

The Hospital Doctor

Usually, the doctors who have been treating the deceased will issue the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. The Register Office will need this certificate to register the death.

The doctor may also ask you carry out a hospital post-mortem examination. This will not be done without your written consent, which the doctor or Bereavement Office will discuss with you.

The General Practitioner (GP)

In certain situations the deceased's General Practitioner will issue the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death, which will need to be collected from their surgery

The Coroner

If the death has been referred to the coroner, the doctor cannot issue the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. The death cannot be registered until the Register Office has received authority from the coroner to do so. The coroner will then take responsibility for the issuing of the necessary documentation so that the death can be registered. A coroner's officer will contact the nominated next of kin or appropriate person to advise them regarding the procedures.

For information on which deaths need to be reported to the coroner please refer to the section regarding the coroner on page 13.

Emergency Department and Acute Medical Unit

Usually deaths occurring in either of these departments have occurred within 24 hours of admission to hospital. Unfortunately, in the majority of cases the doctor will be unable to issue the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death due to the death being unexpected and/or the cause of it is not known.

The doctor will notify the coroner of the death so please telephone the Bereavement Office for further advice on what to do.

Organ and Tissue Donation

Aintree University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust supports 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 people's lives. Not everyone is suitable to be an organ donor and this decision is made by doctors and transplant coordinators.

Most people, however, can be considered for tissue donation and this decision is made by specialist nurses at NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT). The donation and transplantation of tissues such as skin, bone, tendons and eyes can save and improve people's lives. 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.

If donation for transplant is not possible for any reason, donation for research and/or teaching may still be possible.

- 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 ward 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

Registering the Death

How to register the death

- Collect the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death from Bereavement Office
- Make an appointment at the Register Office.
- Take the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death to the Register Office within 5 working days.

Who can register the Death

- A relative of the person who has died.
- 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 the Cause of Death.
- The deceased person's medical card, if available.
- The deceased person's birth certificate, if available.
- The deceased person's marriage certificates, if appropriate and available.

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 Registrar's Office is open Monday to Friday between 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and is located at:

Liverpool Register Office

St George's Hall,
St George's Place (Heritage Centre entrance)
L1 1JJ

To make an appointment please visit www.liverpool.gov.uk

Alternatively you may call Liverpool Direct, open 24 hours/ 7 days a week on Tel: **0151 233 3004**

E-mail: 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.

What the Registrar will need to know:

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

The Registrar will give you:

A Certification 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 Benefits Agency 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 it to the Benefits Agency.

Additional certificates are available for a small fee. There is an increased cost for copies obtained at a later date.

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.; many companies will not accept photocopies, additional certificates are available for a small fee. There is an increased cost for copies obtained at a later date.

If the death is referred to the Coroner

In some instances 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.

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 reports of deaths and make enquiries on behalf of the Coroner.

What does the Coroner do?

A Coroner enquires into those deaths reported to them. It is their duty to find out the medical cause of the death, if it is not 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 your relative/friend's own doctor, or a hospital doctor who had been treating him/her, 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 your relative/friend.

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 is difficult to establish the cause of death, it may be necessary to involve the Coroner in the following circumstances:

- All sudden and unexplained deaths.
- Cause of death unknown.
- Where the cause of death is unnatural e.g. suicide, accident, poisoning.
- If the death occurred while the patient was undergoing a medical procedure.
- If the death is caused by an industrial disease.
- Custodial death, arrested by the Police, detained in prison or under the mental health act.

What will the Coroner do?

The Coroner may decide that your relative/ friend's 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.

Post-Mortem Examinations

Post Mortem examinations are carried out at the Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospital Trust. If your relative/ friend requires a post mortem then they will be transferred to the Royal Liverpool Hospital.

Coroners Post-Mortem

The Coroner may order a post-mortem examination when the cause of death is uncertain.

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.

Hospital Post-Mortem

Although the Coroner may not require a post mortem you may be asked to give permission for this examination to be carried out.

This may assist the doctor to give more precise information of the cause of death.

You can refuse permission. A member of medical staff will ask you whether you will give permission and a signature is needed from the next of kin or any other relative who is sure the next of kin agrees.

By consenting to this examination, you are still able to collect the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death and make funeral arrangements.

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 a.m. and 4.15 p.m. 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

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

Arranging the funeral and choosing a funeral director

You do not have to wait until you have registered the death before contacting a funeral director, although they are unable to collect the deceased's body until the death has been registered.

Funeral directors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and the earlier the funeral director becomes involved, the sooner they will be able to act on your behalf to find out when the necessary documents allowing the funeral to proceed will be issued.

If the death has been referred to the Coroner his office will advise you what to do. Your funeral director will liaise with the Coroner for you.

If there is to be a hospital post-mortem examination the date when the funeral can be held may be affected.

If your relative/friend has made a will this may give information about their funeral arrangements.

Funeral director's addresses and telephone numbers can be obtained from your local telephone directory.

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 who can be contacted on 01962 712 690. 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.

Paying for the funeral

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)

Emotional Support

Your family doctor may 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.

Local support organisations that may be able to offer help

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

Cruse Bereavement Care

Cruse Bereavement Care

PO Box 800

Richmond

Surrey

TW9 1UR

Tel: 0844 477 9400

Website: <http://www.cruse.org.uk/bereavement-services>

E-mail: helpline@cruse.org.uk

Offers counselling, support and advice. A newsletter and extensive list of books and leaflets are published.

The Samaritans

The Samaritans

Tel: 08457 90 90 90

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

Liverpool Bereavement Service

Tel: 0151 236 3932

Citizens Advice Bureau

Tel: 03444 111 444

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

Compassionate Friends

Mon – Fri 9.30 am – 10.30 pm

Tel: 0345 123 2304

It is hoped that the information contained within this booklet 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.

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 Liaison Service

Aintree University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Tower Block, Lower Lane, Liverpool L9 7AL

Tel: 0151 529 3287

(answer phone 0151 529 2400)

Alternatively if you have any other concerns you may wish to write to:

The Chief Executive

Aintree University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Aintree House

Lower Lane

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