

*Information and Guidance
for relatives and carers*

Following a Bereavement



Useful Contact Details

Switchboard: 0208 510 5555

Ward Name:

Ward Telephone Number:.....

Name of ward sister/Lead nurse:.....

Bereavement Administrator: 0208 510 7150

Foreword

This booklet provides information and guidance for relatives and carers following a bereavement. We hope that its contents are of help to you.

It has been divided into two parts:

- Part 1 gives advice on the immediate practical tasks that need to be undertaken following a bereavement.
- Part 2 gives information on bereavement and grief, with contact numbers and advice for ongoing support for you and your family.

Hospital staff are here to help you in any way we can. We will try to answer your questions and want to offer you the support you need.

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Part 1: Immediate Practical Tasks

A: The Hospital and Bereavement Office

How can we help at the hospital?

We understand that this is a very distressing time for you and that there are many things that you will now have to organise. We hope that the guidance given here will make things easier for you.

The hospital's Bereavement Administrator is available to offer help and advice to guide you through the next few days, and to ensure that the practical arrangements are handled in a very sensitive and timely manner.

Hospital staff are aware that every loss is unique and that everybody grieves differently. Staff are also aware of the particular religious needs of the larger faith-groups in Hackney and will try to respond with utmost diligence and care.

Collecting the necessary paperwork

The Bereavement Administrator will ensure that all the necessary paperwork is prepared, so that a funeral can be arranged. The Bereavement Administrator will also book an appointment for you at the Town Hall, so that you can register the death.

What you need to do:

- Telephone the Bereavement Office on 0208 510 7150 to make an appointment to collect the necessary paper-work. The office hours are: 10.00am – 3.30pm, from Monday – Friday, but closed at weekends and on Bank Holidays.

Out of hours, for urgent enquiries, you can contact the Clinical Site Managers.

Please do not come to the hospital without an appointment as your paperwork may not be ready.

- The Bereavement Administrator will explain the paperwork you will need for the Funeral Director and to register the death at the Town Hall.
- The Bereavement Administrator will make an appointment for you at the Town Hall, so that you can register the death. It is a legal requirement to register every death within 5 working days. Please refer to page 7 to see what information you need to provide to register the death.
- When you feel ready, you can start making funeral arrangements by contacting a Funeral Director of your choice. This can be done before or after your appointment at the Town Hall.
- In some situations, the hospital cannot issue the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death and has to refer to the Coroner. For more details please refer to page 9.

What you will receive from the Bereavement Administrator:

- **A Medical Certificate of Cause of Death** in a white sealed envelope. The sealed envelope needs to be given to the Registrar at the Town Hall.
- **An appointment to register the death at the Town Hall.**
- **The “Undertaker’s Removal Order”**, which you will need to complete and give to your Funeral Director. This form gives the hospital permission to release the deceased from the hospital into the care of the Undertakers.
- You need to be a relative to be able to collect the deceased’s personal belongings. The Bereavement Administrator will accompany you to the Property Office, where these possessions will be handed over to you. You will need to sign a receipt.

Parking

Parking at the hospital is often difficult. The Bereavement Administrator can help you obtain a parking space for the duration of your appointment with the Bereavement Team. Please complete the Parking Permit, page 4 of this booklet and leave this page open and on clear display on your dashboard.

BEREAVEMENT OFFICE PARKING PERMIT

PERMISSION TO PARK FOR ½ HOUR ONLY

Date:

Time:.....

Please fill in the date and time of your appointment in INK, then place on the dashboard.

Thank you.

Bereavement Administrator, 0208 510 7150

The Chapel of Rest

When a patient dies in the hospital, they will be taken to the mortuary where they will remain until they are collected by the Funeral Director. The Chapel of Rest is situated in the main mortuary.

Viewings can be arranged if specifically requested. You can either discuss this with the Bereavement Administrator, or liaise directly with the Mortuary Officer on 0208 510 7041. Out of office hours, you are advised to contact the ward where the patient was last cared for, who will be able to advise when a viewing can be arranged.

You will, of course, also be able to pay your last respects at the Funeral Director's Chapel of Rest, where they have specialist facilities. Please discuss this with the undertakers, when you are making the funeral arrangements.

The Multi-faith Chaplaincy Team: Providing spiritual and religious support

Chaplains are faith-leaders from various faiths and denominations, who are appointed by the hospital to offer emotional support to people of all faiths and none. Chaplains can also offer religious guidance and advice after a patient has died. If you are feeling distressed and think it would help for a Chaplain to be alongside you, please let any member of staff know, or contact the Chaplains directly on 0208 510 7773.

Informing the GP

The Bereavement Administrator will write to the deceased patient's GP (family doctor) to inform them of the death.

B: Registering the death at the Town Hall

Registering the death and Town Hall contact details

The Bereavement Administrator will make an appointment for you to register the death at the Town Hall.

All deaths must be registered at the Registry Office in the borough where your relative died. You must register the death within five working days. All deaths that occur at Homerton University Hospital must be registered at:

Registration Services
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

Phone: 0208 356 3000

Email: info@hackney.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.hackney.gov.uk/deaths.htm>

Please telephone 0208 356 3000 for opening hours, particularly at weekends and Public holidays.

The Hackney Service Centre is situated directly behind Hackney Town Hall.

Who can register the death?

A death can be registered by a relative of the deceased, by someone who was present at the death, or by the person responsible for making the funeral arrangements (not the Funeral Director).

What you need to take to the Town Hall

The only document you must take with you to the Town Hall is the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death, which you will receive from the Bereavement Administrator. However, you might also find it helpful to take with you the Birth Certificate and/or Marriage Certificate of the deceased, as you will be required to provide the Registrar with further information.

Further information required by the Registrars

- Full name of the deceased, which includes the maiden name for married women
- Date and place of death
- Date and place of birth
- Last known address of the deceased
- Occupation
- If married, the full name, date of birth and occupation of any surviving widow or widower.

Documents you will receive from the Town Hall

- A Certificate of Registration of Death will be provided; **Form BD8 (white form)**. This is different from a Death Certificate. Please read the information on the back of the form, fill it in and send it to the local social security office. The address of your local security office can be obtained by ringing Department of Work and Pensions on 0845 6060265
- You will receive a Certificate of Burial or Cremation, which needs to be given to the Funeral Director so that the funeral can take place. It is known as the **Form 14 (green form)**.

The Death Certificate

- The Death Certificate is an official copy of the entry in the Death Register.
- There is a small fee for every copy of the Death Certificate (You can pay the registrar by cash or card.) Additional certificates obtained at a later date cost more.
- Copies of the Death Certificate might be needed for:
 - Notification for DSS
 - Pension Claims
 - Payment books
 - Insurance companies
 - Premium bonds
 - Private pensions
 - Banks/Building societies
 - Housing associations

C: The Coroner, sudden deaths and post-mortems

The role of the Coroner

In certain situations the hospital cannot issue the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death, but has to refer the death to the Coroner. The Coroner is a doctor or lawyer responsible for investigating deaths in any of the following circumstances:

- An accident or injury
- An industrial disease
- If a patient dies during surgery or before recovering from an anaesthetic
- If the cause of death is unknown
- If death was sudden or unexplained

In many of these cases the Coroner may be the only person who can certify the cause of death. Often the Coroner will need examinations to be carried out on the body to explain the cause of death. This may include a post-mortem examination. Because these investigations are not carried out at the hospital, the Coroner will arrange for the body to be moved to an independent mortuary. The Coroner's decisions are legally binding, which means that the hospital has to fully comply.

The Coroner's Officers will make direct contact with the next-of-kin to answer questions and provide guidance. The Coroner's Officers will also issue all of the paperwork, instead of the hospital.

Sudden deaths in the A&E department

Often, when patients die in the Accident & Emergency Department (A&E), their death is unexpected. In most cases, the hospital has to inform the Coroner. The doctor referring the death will seek guidance as to whether or not they can issue a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. If not, the Coroner may ask the GP (family doctor) to complete the certificate, or they may wish to investigate the death further. Please read the section on “The role of the Coroner”, page 9 and the chapter on “Post-mortem examinations”, page 10.

The staff of the A&E department can be contacted on 0208 510 7573, and are available to you 24 hours a day. Please ring this number to arrange a viewing, or if you have any unanswered questions.

Post –mortem examinations (also known as autopsies)

Coroner’s post-mortem

A Coroner’s post-mortem examination is performed by an independent pathologist, who has been instructed by the Coroner to establish the cause of death. This type of post-mortem is a legal requirement and will not need the bereaved family’s consent. The next-of-kin cannot prevent a Coroner’s post-mortem, even if it conflicts with the family’s faith-tradition.

Hospital post-mortem

A doctor may ask relatives for a hospital post-mortem, if they feel that additional information can be gained. This post-mortem is not compulsory and relatives have the right to refuse.

If the relatives agree, a doctor will explain to them, in detail, what a hospital post-mortem entails, and will require written consent.

D: Tissue donation

Most people are aware that hundreds of lives are saved every year by donated organs, such as hearts and kidneys. Many people do not realise that donated tissues such as skin, bone, and heart valves can dramatically improve the quality of life for others, and even save them. As many as 50 people can be helped from the donation of one person.

Which tissues can be donated?

Eyes: Eyes can help restore sight to people with cornea problems (the clear part of the eye). This may be a result of damage caused by eye disease or injury, or defects from birth, and the white part of the eye (the sclera) can be used in operations to rebuild the eye.

Heart Valves: Heart valves can be transplanted to save the lives of children born with heart defects, and adults with damaged heart valves.

Skin: Skin can be used as a natural dressing, helping to treat people with serious burns. This can save lives by stopping infections, can help to reduce scarring and reduces pain.

Bone: Bone is important for people receiving artificial joint replacements, or replacing bone that has been removed due to illness or injury. It helps reduce pain and improve mobility.

Tendons: Tendons, the elastic-like cords that attach bones and muscles to each other, can be donated to help rebuild damaged joints, which helps people move more easily.

Can we choose which tissues to donate?

Yes. Only those tissues for which you have given permission will be donated.

Is there an age limit to tissue donation?

There are no age restrictions for bone, skin and eyes. However, heart valves and tendons can only be donated up to the age of 60.

Can anyone become a tissue donor?

Almost anyone can be considered for tissue donation, however, there are some rare exemptions. To ensure that all donated tissues are safe, the donor's medical and life style history is assessed similar to blood donors, to protect the person receiving the tissue from infection.

How long after death can tissue be donated?

The best time is within 24 hours after someone has died. However, sometimes it is possible to donate up to 48 hours after death.

For further information and advice, please contact Tissue Services Direct on 0800 432 0559

E: Funeral Arrangements

Arranging the Funeral

A list of local Funeral Directors can be found within this booklet. Funeral Directors are employed to make all of the arrangements for the funeral, on the instruction of the family. It is not essential to employ a Funeral Director. Some families choose to arrange the funeral themselves, however, please be aware there are strict guidelines which must be followed. You can start making the funeral arrangements, as soon as you feel able to. If you choose to appoint a Funeral Director, they will:

- help you make all necessary arrangements and liaise between the various organisations, such as the cemetery/crematorium and hospital.
- ensure all the correct paperwork is issued, so that the funeral can be held.
- discuss the funeral service with you. They will map out your options and choices and associated costs.
- help you appoint a faith-leader or non-religious celebrant to lead the service.

Paying for the funeral

The cost of a funeral can vary a lot. Before making any arrangements you should check how the funeral will be paid for. The deceased may have contributed to a scheme or policy. They may have savings, a prepaid funeral plan or life insurance policies.

It is a good idea to contact more than one Funeral Director to get an idea of the cost of a funeral. Do not be afraid to discuss with the Funeral Director ways of reducing costs.

You might be able to seek financial help if you are receiving:

- Income support
- Family Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit

You will need the form “SF200 – Help when someone dies”. Your local Social Security Office, Citizen Advice Bureau or Job Centre will have a copy.

Cremations

The Bereavement Administrator will ask you, if you are planning a burial or cremation service. If a cremation is chosen, then Cremation Papers need to be issued. The Bereavement Administrator will arrange for the hospital's medical staff to complete the necessary forms.

If you are appointing Undertakers to organise the funeral, they will arrange to collect these from the hospital. The fees for cremation papers will be included in the funeral bill.

Repatriation

If you wish to repatriate the body (move the body to another country), it is vital that you discuss this with the Registrar at the Town Hall, and also an Undertaker, as various additional papers have to be issued. Most commonly, a "Free from Infection" (FFI) document has to be issued by the hospital, and an "Out of England" Order must be issued by the Coroner, both of which have to be paid for. The "Out of England" Order can take up to 4 working days to be produced by the Coroner.

F: Further contact from the hospital

The hospital will write to the next-of-kin 4-5 weeks after their family member or friend has died, offering an opportunity to explore unanswered questions. If, however, this feels like having to wait for too long, we would like to encourage you to contact the Bereavement Administrator immediately, so that a meeting can be arranged for you to discuss your concerns.

Part 2: Coping with your emotions

The death of someone who was important to you is one of the hardest experiences you will have in your life.

There are no right and wrong reactions to death. We all need to grieve in our own time and way. For some this might mean crying, but others may express their grief in different ways. You may find that you are experiencing a whole variety of unexpected thoughts, feelings and sometimes physical symptoms.

If you are feeling concerned about yourself or others, it is a good idea to contact your GP (family doctor).

A: Organisations which may be of help

We have listed some organisations, who might be helpful for you during this difficult time.

Local organisations

Adath Yisroel Synagogue and Burial Society (Jewish) Arrange funerals for their members:
020 8802 6262

Caris Islington Bereavement Service
Offering support and help to the bereaved living in the Borough of Islington
020 7281 5200

Child and Family Consultation
Counselling and advice service for children and young people and family members
John Scott Health Centre 020 8809 5577
Children and Young People's Centre 020 3222 5600

Citizens Advice Bureau (Hackney)
Drop in service Mon-Thu, Fri 10am-3pm.
Phone advice Mon-Thu 1pm-4pm: 020 8525 6350

City and East London Bereavement Service
Counselling available for the residents of Tower Hamlets, plus patients that live in Hackney having received treatment at Barts and The London:
020 72471209

Claudia Jones Organisation
Counselling for elderly Afro Caribbean men and women undergoing emotional distress: 020 7241 1646

Coroners Office 0207 538 0602

Cancer You Are Not Alone (CYANA)

Bereavement counselling and support (Asian language support available): 020 8553 5366

Down To Earth

Support for those in financial need to plan affordable, meaningful funerals: 020 8983 5055

Hackney Age Concern

Information, advice, support, fact-sheets etc for older people: 020 7249 7149

Hackney Bereavement Service

Free services to people over 50 who have experienced a significant loss: 020 7254 9804

Hackney Caribbean Elderly Organisation

Bereavement support: 020 7923 3536

Hackney Wellfamily Service

Support and counselling on a range of issues like debt, housing, relationships, parenting, and bereavement to family members (Turkish language support available): 020 8802 6794

Homerton Hospital Patient Advice and Liason Service (PALS)

Information, advice and support. Available to answer questions and address comments or concerns regarding patient care at Homerton Hospital: 0208 510 7315

Jewish Bereavement Counselling Service

Counselling and support for people from the Jewish community: 020 8457 9710

St. Joseph's Hospice Service

Bereavement counselling and support available for the relatives and friends of people who have died under the care of St. Joseph's or another hospice, and also for Hackney residents aged 18-50, whose bereavement was not connected to the hospice: 0208 525 6031

National organisations

Age Concern 0800 00 99 66

Asian Family Counselling Service 020 8571 3933
or 020 8813 9714

**British Association of Counselling
and Psychotherapy** 01455 883300

Child Bereavement Charity 01494 568900

CRUSE Bereavement Care 0844 477 9400

**Jewish Bereavement Counselling
Service** 020 8457 9710

LGBT Bereavement Helpline 0207 837 3337
(Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender)

**Macmillan Cancer Support
Cancerline** 0808 808 0000

Mind Information line	0845 766 0163
National Association of Funeral Directors	0845 230 1343
NHS Direct (24 hours)	0845 46 47
Richard House Children's Hospice	0207 540 0261
Samaritans (Central London)	020 7734 2800
Samaritans (National)	08457 90 90 90
Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society (SANDS)	020 7436 5881
Terrance Higgins Trust	0808 802 1221
The Compassionate Friends	0845 123 2304
The NHS Organ Donor Register	0300 123 2323
Victim Support	0845 30 30 900
Winston's Wish	08452 03 04 05

Related websites

Benefits and financial support

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/
BenefitsTaxCreditsAndOtherSupport/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/BenefitsTaxCreditsAndOtherSupport/index.htm)

Bereavement Advice Centre

www.bereavementadvice.org/

Bereavement Register

www.the-bereavement-register.org.uk/

Service to reduce the amount of direct mail sent to the address of the person who has died

Counselling Directory

www.counselling-directory.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care

www.cruse.org.uk

Department of Work and Pensions

www.dwp.gov.uk/

Depression Alliance

www.depressionalliance.org

Dying Matters

www.dyingmatters.org

Facing Bereavement

www.facingbereavement.co.uk/

Funeral Map

www.funeralmap.co.uk

Resource to find local funeral services

Hackney Council Services

www.hackney.gov.uk/deaths.htm

If I should die

www.ifishoulddie.co.uk

Marie Curie Cancer Care

www.mariecurie.org.uk

National Association of Widows

www.nawidows.org.uk/

NHS Direct

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

RD4U

www.rd4u.org.uk

0808 808 1677

Support for young people affected by a bereavement

The Way Foundation

www.wayfoundation.org.uk

0300 012 4929

Self-help social and support network for people widowed under the age of 50

Way Up

www.way-up.co.uk/

Self-help group and support network for people widowed over the age of 50

B: List of undertakers

African Caribbean Funeral Services 0207 275 0175
99 Church Street N16 0UD

M. Broad (Jewish) 0208 445 2797
12 Woodside Lane N12 8RE

Carmels (Jewish) 0208 880 1655
5 Fairholt Road N16 5EN

Co-operative Funeral Care 0208 985 5861
191 Mare Street E8 3QE

T. Cribb and Sons 0207 254 6519
46 Dalston Lane E8 3AH

Demetriou and English 0208 889 9888
131 Myddleton Road, Wood Green N22 8NG

W. English and Sons 0207 739 8933
464 Bethnal Green Road E2 0EA

Floyds and Sons 0207 490 5090
99 Murray Grove N1 7QP

Green Endings Ltd 0207 424 0345
141 Fortess Road NW5 2HR

Hayes and English 0207 739 9165
148 Hoxton Street N1 6SH

James Hawes 0208 985 4231
216 Well Street E9 6QT

Levertons 212-214 Eversholt Street NW1 1BD	0207 387 6075
W.G. Miller 93-95 Essex Road N1 2SJ	0207 226 3886
G. R. Moss and Co. 209 Lower Clapton Road E5 8EG	0208 985 5702
Tadman 452 Bethnal Green Road E2 0EA	0207 739 5182
Chandu Tailor and Son (Sikh and Hindu) 13 New Southgate Street N11 1QD	0208 361 6151
Taslim (Muslim) 45 Fieldgate Street E1 1JU	0207 247 2625
C. R. Wigley and Sons 44 Kynaston Road N16 0EU	0207 254 8585

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