



The Bereavement Team

Bereavement Support Information

We would like to express our deepest condolences to you, your family and friends during this very difficult and sad time. We understand that the time ahead may be challenging and painful for you and we would like to support you through this time.

This information sheet has been produced to try and help you understand and prepare for some of the practical and emotional aspects of losing someone that you love.

The first few days after the death

There is no normal or right way to feel following bereavement and most people experience a whole range of emotions this is especially true during the current climate of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

You may have also received the '[Help for the Bereaved](#)' booklet however at this time some of the information within that booklet will not apply as there are significant changes to the process due to coronavirus.

The bereavement office is open Monday to Friday between 9am to 4pm and can be contacted on 01305 255125. Should you be unable to reach a member of the team please leave a message on the voicemail. This is checked regularly within working hours and your call will be returned.

The Medical Examiners Process

One of the people who will contact you in the first few days after death is the Medical Examiner. The Medical Examiner is a senior doctor whose role is to provide an independent scrutiny of all deaths occurring. After scrutiny of the case, they liaise with the doctor who was looking after the patient to ensure the cause of death on the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) is accurate. The Medical Examiner then discusses the cause of death with the next of kin and will endeavour to answer any questions about the final illness and care of the patient.

Should the death need referring to the coroner then the Medical Examiner will explain this to you.

Registering the Death

Once you have spoken to the Medical Examiner and the MCCD has been completed, this will be scanned and sent electronically from the bereavement office to the Dorset Registration service. The hard copy of the MCCD will then be delivered directly to the Registry office in Dorchester.

The bereavement office will then call you and inform you that the MCCD has been sent and to call the registrar on 01305 225153 to book a telephone appointment to register the death.

After registration has been complete the registrar will send the Death Certificate directly to you. They will also send the appropriate forms to enable burial or cremation to be undertaken to your chosen funeral director.

Patient Property

Any personal items belonging to the deceased will be stored securely within the mortuary and will be passed to the funeral directors when the patient is released into their care. Due to coronavirus all property will be double bagged and ideally should not be opened for seven days after death. The recommendation from the hospital is that clothing should be washed at 60°C and other items or valuables wiped with detergent wipes when you receive them.

Bereavement Support

Grief is a very individual process and we all react differently. There are a number of organisations that can offer support to come to terms with your loss in whichever way you feel is right. A few of these are listed below:

- **The Bereavement Trust** - Bereavement-trust.org.uk or 0800 435 455
- **Dying Matters** - dyingmatters.org
- **Cruse Bereavement Care** – cruse.org.uk or 0808 808 1677
- **Samaritans** – Samaritans.org or 116 123 (free from any phone)

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01305 255125.

About this leaflet:

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If you have feedback regarding the accuracy of the information contained in this leaflet, or if you would like a list of references used to develop this leaflet, please email pals@dchft.nhs.uk



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