

Gnosall Surgery

BEREAVEMENT HELP SHEET

We hope that the information on the following pages will be helpful to you in dealing with some of the practicalities following the death of a partner, relative or close friend at this difficult time. Your Doctor is available to speak to, or see you, if you need to talk about any aspect of your recent bereavement. Please do not hesitate to contact the surgery.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Medical Certificate

If someone dies at home the doctor will sign a medical certificate confirming the cause of death, unless they decide to refer the matter to the Coroner. If the death happens in hospital the doctor there will issue the certificate. A death is reported to the Coroner if it is sudden or unusual and in some cases a post mortem may be requested followed by an Inquest. Don't be alarmed - this is a normal legal requirement and the coroner's office should be able to answer any questions you have.

The medical certificate contains confidential information and should be handed unopened to the Registrar within **five days** of the death unless it has been referred to the Coroner.

It is often helpful to take the deceased's birth certificate or passport with you, if they are available, as they can provide useful information for the Registrar. The NHS card is also useful. However, these documents are not essential and you should not delay if they cannot be found.

The following information will be required :

- Date and place of death
- Full name and surname, including maiden name if applicable, and any other names by which the deceased was known
- Date and place of birth
- Occupation
- Usual address
- Medical Certificate of Cause of Death

It is a good idea to phone to make an appointment so that you are seen promptly. The registrar will give you two documents (free of charge) : a Certificate for Burial or Cremation and a Certificate of Registration of Death.

1 Certificate for Burial or Cremation (green form)

This Certificate should given to the funeral director to enable the funeral to take place.

2 Certificate of Registration of Death (BD8-white form)

This Certificate is for Social Security purposes. Please complete the form and return it to your local Benefits Agency office.

You may also need to purchase death certificates. A death certificate is a certified copy of the entry in the register of deaths. It is subject to crown copyright and so cannot be photocopied. As death certificates may be required by solicitors and financial organisations or for pensions and insurance claims, you may wish to purchase several copies at the time of registration, as copies obtained at a later date may cost more.

Details of Local Register Offices

Stafford Registration Office

Boscobel Room,
1 Staffordshire Place,
Stafford
ST16 2DH
Tel: 0300 111 8001
Email: registrarsenquiries@staffordshire.gov.uk

Fax: 01785 276026

Mini Com: 01785 276207

Opening Hours

Appointments are available from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday with late night opening to 6pm on Wednesdays.

Telephone enquiries about Registration Services can be made during the following times:

Monday to Friday: 8am to 6pm

Saturday: 9am to 5pm

Stafford Hospital Registration Office

Weston Road,
Stafford
ST16 3SA

Tel: 0300 111 8001

Email: registrarsenquiries@staffordshire.gov.uk

Fax: 01785 276026

Mini Com: 01785 276207

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Who to Tell about the Death

If the person who died was receiving any welfare benefits, such as a State Retirement Pension, inform the social security office of their death and return any order books. The registrar will give you a certificate to fill in and return with the books. Keep a note of any reference numbers as you may need them later on.

If the person who died had a driver's licence, return it to the DVLA; if they had a passport return it to the UK Passport Agency. You should also let the tax office know.

Depending on the circumstances, you may need to contact some other organisations as well. These could include:

- personal or occupational pension schemes
- insurance company
- bank and building society
- employer or trade union
- mortgage provider, housing association or council housing office
- social services (if the person was getting any community care services or equipment)
- energy or telephone suppliers

For more detailed information see the leaflet 'What to do after a death' which is available from your local social security office.

The practice undertakes to inform members of the Practice team including attached members such as District Nurses if they were visiting the deceased at home. We will also let any relevant Hospital consultants/departments know if they were receiving ongoing treatment or may have existing appointments so that you will not be troubled with unwanted correspondence.

Practical help and support

Sometimes a bereavement can make it difficult for you to manage in the way you used to. For example, if the person who died used to give you a lot of help and support around the house then you may feel that it will be impossible for you to manage without them. However, there may be other ways of getting the help you need.

Local authorities have a duty to assess the care needs of older and disabled people, and arrange services which help them to live in their own homes. Services could include:

- home help to assist with general household tasks
- home care to help with things like bathing and dressing
meals on wheels
- lunch clubs, social clubs or day centres

Contact your local social services department for information on getting an assessment.

SUPPORT GROUPS

The following list is a short selection of groups that offer specific bereavement support and advice. There are many others available

Bereavement Advice Centre

Helpline: 0800 634 9494

Supports bereaved people on a range of practical issues via a single freephone number. It offers advice on all aspects of bereavement from registering the death and finding a funeral director through to probate, tax and benefit queries.

Compassionate Friends

Helpline: 0845 123 2304; email: info@tcf.org.uk

An organisation of bereaved parents and their families offering understanding, support and encouragement to others after the death of a child or children. The helpline is always answered by a bereaved parent who is there to listen when you need someone to talk to; you can also email the helpline: helpline@tcf.org.uk.

Child Bereavement

Support and Information Line: 01494 446648.

A national charity which helps grieving families and the professionals who care for them.

Cruse Bereavement Care

Cruse Bereavement Care is here to support you after the death of someone close. If someone you know has died and you need to talk, **call freephone on 0808 808 1677.**

The helpline is open Monday-Friday 9.30-5pm (excluding bank holidays), with extended hours on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, when we're open until 8pm.

You can email the helpline at helpline@cruse.org.uk.

Exists to promote the well-being of bereaved people and to enable anyone bereaved by death to understand their grief and cope with their loss. Provides counselling and support and offers information, advice, education and training services.

National Association of Widows

Tel: 0845 838 2261; email: info@nawidows.org.uk

A self-help organisation, run by widows, for widows, that offers comfort, friendship and a listening ear to widows and unmarried women who have lost a partner through bereavement.

Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society (SANDS)

Helpline: 020 7436 5881, email: helpline@uk-sands.org.

A national charity, established by bereaved parents which aims to support anyone affected by the death of a baby. It works in partnership with health professionals to improve the quality of care and services offered to bereaved families and to promote research and changes in practice that could help to reduce the loss of babies' lives.

Samaritans

Helpline: 116123, e-mail: jo@samaritans.org

National organisation offering support to those in distress who feel suicidal or despairing and need someone to talk to. The telephone number of your local branch can be found in the telephone directory. Samaritans also provides a widely used e-mail service (not a chatroom but they endeavour to answer within 24 hours).

Winston's Wish

Helpline: 08452 03 04 05

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

Gives support for those caring for children affected by the death of a parent or a sibling and to the children themselves. Has excellent resources.