



University Hospital  
Southampton  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Bereavement care services

Information for families



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**University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust has produced this booklet to provide some help, guidance and advice during the early days of your bereavement.**

We acknowledge this can be a difficult and confusing time and would like to extend our condolences and assurance that we will try to help you in any way we can.

Following a death there are certain formalities to be dealt with, such as registering the death and arranging the funeral. We hope that this booklet will help you with some of these. If you have any questions or want to discuss anything relating to the hospital, please contact the bereavement care department on **023 8120 4587**.

You can also contact us by emailing **bereavementcare@uhs.nhs.uk** or you can write to us at the following address:

Bereavement care (MP 310)  
 Victoria House  
 Southampton General Hospital  
 Tremona Road  
 Southampton  
 Hampshire  
 SO16 6YD

Office hours:  
 Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays)  
 9am to 1pm and 1.30pm to 4.30pm

# Things to do at the hospital

## Paying your last respects

If you wish to, you can pay your last respects to the person who has died at the hospital. The ward staff or a member of the bereavement care department can arrange this for you; otherwise we recommend you contact your funeral director who will be pleased to offer this service at the funeral home.

## Tissue donation

Every year many hundreds of lives are dramatically improved through the use of tissues donated after someone dies. Tissue donation is entirely voluntary and is dependent on the generosity of patients' families. There are some conditions that prevent donations taking place and donations must take place within 48 hours of the person dying (24 hours for eye tissues). However, if you think that the person who has died carried a Donor Card, or expressed a wish to donate tissue, please contact the bereavement care department on 023 8120 4587 who will discuss this further with you. If the death occurred outside normal working hours, you can contact the NHS Blood and Transplant Service (NHSBT) direct on 0800 432 0559. Tissue donation will not delay any funeral arrangements and, because great care is taken to restore the patient's natural appearance, it will still be possible to arrange a viewing after the donation has taken place.

## Medical examiner and death certification

In most cases a hospital doctor who has been treating the patient will issue a *Medical Certificate of Cause of Death*, which you will need in order to register the death at the Register Office (see page 8). Before this certificate can be written, the doctor will need to discuss the death with a medical examiner. This meeting is to identify any areas of care that might need to be reviewed and to ensure that the certificate accurately reflects the cause of death. These meetings have proven to be very beneficial and generally have not impacted on the speed with which certificates are written. A member of the bereavement care team, who have a dual role as medical examiner officers, will speak to you before this meeting to find out whether you have any concerns or comments about the care your loved one received.

**Please telephone the bereavement care department on 023 8120 4587 who will discuss the certification process with you and when the certificate is likely to be written. Once the certificate has been issued they will call you to make an appointment for you to collect it.**

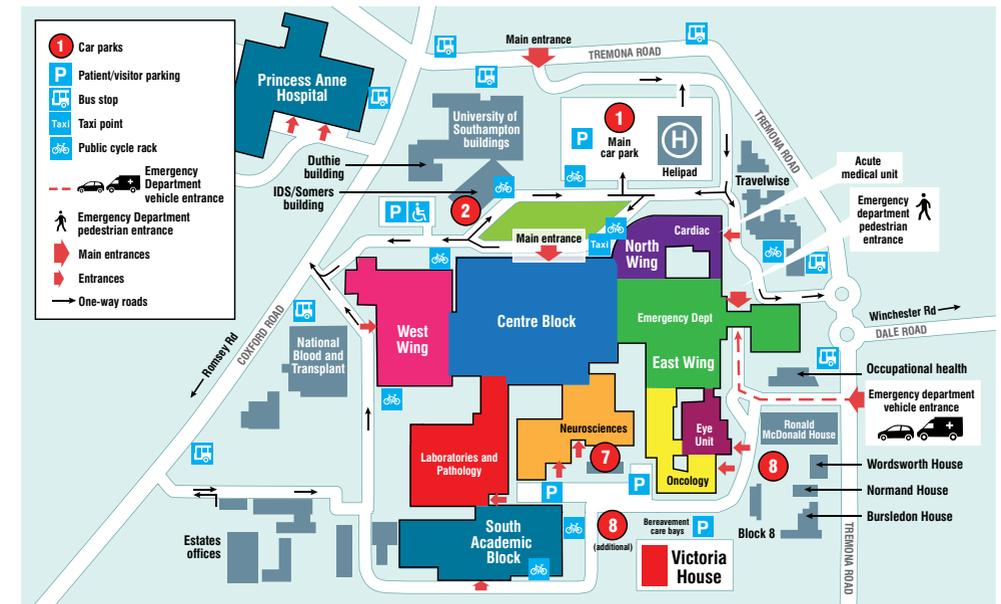
The doctor cannot issue the *Medical Certificate of Cause of Death* where the Coroner needs to investigate a death further (see page 7). In these cases, the bereavement care team will advise you of the process to be followed and what to do next.

## Collecting clothes and valuables

You can collect non-valuable property, such as clothing and toiletries from the bereavement care office when you collect the *Medical Certificate of Cause of Death*. If you are collecting valuables, you will need to show that you are entitled to receive them. This will normally be the surviving spouse, an executor named on the will, or the person obtaining Letters of Administration if there is no will. Valuables are kept in the cashiers' office which is open from 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday.

## Directions to the bereavement care department (Victoria House)

Come onto the hospital grounds via the Emergency Department entrance in Tremona Road. Bear left after Ronald McDonald House and in front of the Eye Unit. Take a ticket and come through the ticket barrier. Follow the road round to the right, past car park 8 and park in the bereavement care bays. We will give you a free exit ticket when you leave.



## Practical arrangements

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### Arranging the funeral

It is important to contact the funeral director of your choice as soon as possible so that they can start making arrangements on your behalf. You need not wait until the death certificate has been issued.

Most funeral directors are available seven days a week and are usually happy to visit you at home to help and advise you. Prices for funerals vary and you may wish to contact several funeral directors and compare prices before you make a decision. Alternatively, you may want to carry out the funeral without the assistance of a funeral director. If you would like some advice on how to proceed, please discuss this with a member of the hospital's bereavement care team.

If you are in receipt of certain benefits you may be entitled to help with the cost of the funeral. You can apply using form SF200 (Funeral payment from the Social Fund) which is available from the bereavement care office, the Register Office and most funeral directors. Please check the details carefully so that you understand which costs the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) will cover.

If you are under State Pension age and are widowed or your civil partner dies, you may be entitled to a Bereavement Support Payment. You can find out more at [www.gov.uk/bereavement-support-payment](http://www.gov.uk/bereavement-support-payment). Alternatively, you may wish to contact the DWP Bereavement Service on 0345 606 0265 for advice.

### The Coroner and post mortems

Some deaths are reported by hospital doctors to the Coroner, if:

- The cause of death is uncertain
- Death was sudden or violent or caused by an accident
- Death might be due to an industrial injury or disease
- Death occurred while the patient was undergoing an operation or was under the effect of an anaesthetic, or within 24 hours of hospital admission.

The Coroner will then decide whether or not a post mortem examination is needed. The Coroner has a legal right to request a post mortem even if this is contrary to the family's wishes. He will make any necessary arrangements, and give the Register Office the relevant forms so that you can register the death (see page 8).

You will **not** receive a *Medical Certificate of Cause of Death* from the hospital when a Coroner's post mortem examination is carried out. If there is a post mortem, the results go only to the Coroner in the first instance, but can be obtained later by the general practitioner (GP) of the person who has died. Please tell your funeral director if the death is reported to the Coroner. He or she will liaise with the Coroner on your behalf and let you know when you can register the death at the Register Office.

### Hospital post mortems

The doctor who certified the death may ask for permission to carry out a post mortem examination to help advance medical knowledge and teaching. The bereavement care team will be able to support you in making the decision that is right for you. It is entirely up to you whether or not to grant permission. If you do, the examination should not delay the funeral arrangements. You will still receive a *Medical Certificate of Cause of Death* from the hospital.

## Registering the death

The death needs to be formally registered with the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

The Register Office is in Bugle Street, Southampton (see map on page 9). There is a small car park and the office is open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9am to 4.30pm, Tuesday 10am to 4.30pm and Friday 9am to 4pm. You will need to either telephone the Register Office on **023 8091 5327** to make an appointment, or use their online booking system at: **[www.southampton.gov.uk/register-a-death](http://www.southampton.gov.uk/register-a-death)**

Please take the following documents with you if you have them:

- **The medical certificate of cause of death**
- **The deceased's birth certificate and/or marriage certificate**
- **The deceased's passport**
- **Proof of address for the deceased** (utility bill)
- **Identification document for yourself** (passport)

After registering the death the Registrar will give you:

- **A green form to hand to the Funeral Director** unless the Registrar states otherwise.
- **Copies of the Death Certificate.** The Registrar will ask you how many copies of the certificate you will need. A fee is payable for all copies.

## Registering by declaration

If it is not possible for you to register the death in Southampton, you may be able to register by declaration in your home town. The local Registrar will not be able to register the death or issue you with any certificates, but will take the necessary information and forward it to the Register Office in Southampton. The Southampton Registrar will then register the death and issue the relevant certificates. These will be posted to you, which may therefore cause delays in organising the funeral.

## Tell Us Once service

Once you have registered the death you can use the Tell Us Once service to inform a range of Government and council departments that the person has died. This can be done on-line or by telephoning 0800 085 7308. To make sure that the right information is given, it will help if you can take with you their National Insurance Number, details of any benefits or services they were receiving, their driving licence and passport.

## Registrar's Office location map



Not to scale  
©Crown copyright and database rights 2011 Ordnance Survey 100051695

## Settling the estate

Settling someone's estate can be confusing, time consuming and upsetting. If you are the executor of the will it is your responsibility to see that the person's wishes, as you understand them, are carried out. This will include paying funeral expenses, debts and taxes as well as dealing with their possessions and other assets. You can choose to do this yourself by contacting the local Probate Office (details in the telephone directory) to obtain the relevant forms and guidance, or you can use a solicitor to sort things out for you. Their fees for these services will come out of the estate; they usually charge by the hour so make clear precisely what they are required to do.

# Help and support

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## How you might feel

The death of someone close can be a devastating experience and can bring about stronger emotions than most people expect. Each bereavement is unique, and our grieving, our reactions and our needs are also unique. Even if you have known that someone was dying, there may still be a sense of shock when the death occurs. Initially you may feel numb, empty, unreal or full of pain. Later on these may change to feelings of anger, panic, guilt, sadness, or even relief. These are natural reactions to bereavement and are not a sign that you can no longer cope.

## Help and support

Relatives or close friends often want to help and share the burden, but they too may find this a difficult time and may be afraid to speak about the person who has died for fear of upsetting you. It may be necessary for you to take the first step, and let them know that you want to talk, and that it does not make things worse. Sometimes people find it easier to talk to someone they do not know, but who has an understanding of bereavement. The hospital's bereavement care team is here to listen and can also put you in touch with other agencies who might be able to help either now, or in the future. You might also wish to seek the support of a minister or priest, regardless of your religious beliefs. The hospital chaplains will be happy to offer their support and/or put you in touch with a minister of your own denomination or faith. It is important that you allow yourself time to grieve.

## How children react

It may be tempting to exclude children from conversations about the person who has died and the funeral arrangements. Children are no different to adults when it comes to bereavement. There is no right way to react and every child will respond differently. Grieving children need honest and appropriate explanations, in language that they can understand, which acknowledges their loss. It is important to remember that children may not have the words to express their feelings and may show how they feel through their behaviour.

## Organisations that can help

### CRUSE Bereavement Care

Provides face-to-face, telephone, email and website support

**023 8077 4900**

### Eastleigh Bereavement Service

Offers support and advice to bereaved people

**023 8057 8844**

### Samaritans

Offer emotional support to those experiencing despair, distress or suicidal feelings

**08457 90 90 90**

### Victim Support

Provide confidential help and support to victims of crime or their families

**0845 30 30 900**

## Organisations for children and young people

### Child Bereavement UK

Supports families when a baby dies or is dying, or when a child is facing bereavement

**0800 028 8840**

Website: [support@childbereavement.org](mailto:support@childbereavement.org)

### CRUSE Bereavement Care (youth website)

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 1677**

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

### Simon Says

Local charity supporting bereaved children

**023 8064 7550**

## Southampton Hospital Charity

We understand that losing a loved one is a very difficult time, but making a positive difference to celebrate someone's life can be a real comfort.

By making a donation to Southampton Hospital Charity you will be ensuring that patients at Southampton General and the Princess Anne Hospitals, and their families, are receiving the very best care in the best possible environment, for many years to come.

You might like to request donations at a loved one's funeral, as an alternative to flowers. Please speak to a family member or the funeral director to let them know you would like to support Southampton Hospital Charity and specify if you would like your gift to benefit a particular ward or department, so we can ensure we fulfill your wishes.

You can also make a Gift in Memory today by calling us on 023 8120 8881, donating through [www.memorygiving.com](http://www.memorygiving.com) page or by post to:

Southampton Hospital Charity  
FREEPOST RRUA-CSKX-JUBZ  
Mailpoint 135  
Southampton General Hospital  
Southampton  
SO16 6YD

You do not need to use a stamp but it will save the Charity money if you do – thank you.

Please remember to let us know the name of the person you are giving in memory of, and your own name and contact details so we can write to thank you for your donation.

Charity registration number 1051543  
**[www.southamptonhospitalcharity.org](http://www.southamptonhospitalcharity.org)**



## Feedback

We appreciate that this may be a very difficult time for you, but we would find it helpful if you could now, or in the future, complete the end of life care questionnaire which can be found on the Trust's website. Follow the Friends and Family Test link on the home page and select the End of Life Care survey. Completing this survey will help us to evaluate and improve our services for patients at the end of life and their families. Thank you.

Bereavement care  
Victoria House (MP 310)  
General Hospital  
Tremona Road  
Southampton  
SO16 6YD





**Payne, R C & Son**

161 Woodmill Lane  
Bitterne  
Southampton  
SO18 2PG  
**023 8067 1984**

**Payne, R C & Son**

485 Bitterne Road East  
Bitterne  
Southampton  
SO18 5EQ  
**023 8044 9111**

*Sholing / Woolston***Co-operative Funeralcare**

461b Butts Road  
Sholing  
Southampton  
SO19 1BZ  
**023 8044 8322**

**Waters & Sons**

106 Spring Road  
Sholing  
Southampton  
SO19 2QB  
**023 8043 4244**

**Beestons**

35 Bridge Road  
Woolston  
Southampton  
SO19 7GP  
**023 8044 8405**

**Terry, Jonathan**

101 Peartree Avenue  
Peartree  
Southampton  
SO19 7JJ  
**023 8043 4444**

**Matthews, B**

148 Portsmouth Road  
Sholing  
Southampton  
SO19 9AP  
**023 8044 7965**

*West End / Hedge End / Botley***Rogers, A H & Sons**

27 High Street  
West End  
Southampton  
SO30 3AA  
**023 8047 6444**

**Rogers, A H & Sons**

32 St Johns Road  
Hedge End  
Southampton  
SO30 4AG  
**01489 788677**

**Hughes, F C**

46 St Johns Road  
Hedge End  
Southampton  
SO30 4AG  
**01489 782404**

**Freemantle, A H**

19 High Street  
Botley  
Southampton  
SO30 2EA  
**01489 876546**

*Netley Abbey / Park Gate***Co-operative Funeralcare**

3-4 Middle Road  
Park Gate  
Southampton  
SO31 7GH  
**01489 886822**

**Freemantle, A H**

16 Middle Road  
Park Gate  
Southampton  
SO31 7GH  
**01489 885525**

**Matthews, B**

7 Middle Road  
Park Gate  
Southampton  
SO31 7GH  
**01489 572416**

*Totton***Beavis Funeralcare**

19 Water Lane  
Totton  
Southampton  
SO40 3DG  
**023 8086 4664**

**Powell, H & Son**

11 - 13 Eling Lane  
Totton  
Southampton  
SO40 9GB  
**023 8086 2249**

*Waterside***Hallum Funeralcare**

185 Long Lane  
Holbury  
Southampton  
SO45 2PA  
**023 8089 3729**

**Diamond & Son**

191 - 195 Long Lane  
Holbury  
Southampton  
SO45 2PD  
**023 8089 4124**

**Waterside Funeral Home**

11 - 13 The Marsh  
Hythe  
Southampton  
SO45 6AJ  
**023 8084 0202**

**New Forest Funerals**

Bank House, The Square  
Fawley  
Southampton  
SO45 1DD  
**023 8089 0339**

*Lyndhurst / Lymington / Brockenhurst***Co-operative Funeralcare**

27a St Thomas Street  
Lymington  
Hants  
SO41 9NE  
**01590 677170**

**Diamond & Son**

9 - 11 Lower Buckland Road  
Lymington  
Hants  
SO41 9DN  
**01590 672060**

**Hallum Funeralcare**

54 Brookley Road  
Brockenhurst  
Hants  
SO42 7RA  
**01590 624345**

**Sturney, J**

62 High Street  
Lyndhurst  
Southampton  
SO43 7BJ  
**023 8028 2264**

*Eastleigh / Chandlers Ford / Bishops Waltham***Co-operative Funeralcare**

10 High Street  
Eastleigh  
Hants  
SO50 5LA  
**023 8065 3456**

**Rogers, A H & Sons**

64 Market Street  
Eastleigh  
Hants  
SO50 5RD  
**023 8061 2435**

**Bush, W G**

73 Leigh Road  
Eastleigh  
Hants  
SO50 9DF  
**023 8061 2463**

**Capper, Paul**

95 Leigh Road  
Eastleigh  
Southampton  
SO50 9DR  
**023 8064 2929**

**Bush, W G**

163 Hursley Road  
Chandlers Ford  
Southampton  
SO53 1JH  
**023 8025 2088**

**Wessex Funeral Services**

2a Whalesmead Road  
Bishopstoke  
Eastleigh  
SO50 8HB  
**023 8037 1677**

**Chamberlain, Nigel & Partners**

The Gate House  
Victoria Road  
Bishops Waltham  
Southampton  
SO32 1DJ  
**01489 892640**

*Romsey***Cheater, A H**

122 The Hundred  
Romsey  
Hants  
SO51 8BY  
**01794 513393**

**Co-operative Funeralcare**

2 Plaza Parade  
Winchester Road  
Romsey  
Hants  
SO51 8JA  
**01794 516853**

*Winchester***Steel, Richard & Partners**

4 Chesil Street  
Winchester  
Hants  
SO23 0HU  
**01962 862333**

**Steel, Richard & Partners**

12 - 14 City Road  
Winchester  
Hants  
SO23 8SG  
**01962 862333**

**Bereavement care**  
Victoria House (MP 310)  
Southampton General Hospital  
Tremona Road  
Southampton  
SO16 6YD

**023 8120 4587**

**If you need a translation of this document,  
an interpreter or a version in large print,  
Braille or on audio tape, please telephone  
023 8120 4688 for help.**

**[www.uhs.nhs.uk](http://www.uhs.nhs.uk)**