



A brief guide on what you need to do and who you need to contact when a relative or friend dies

This leaflet can be made available in large print, Braille, or on an audiotape and can be translated into other languages on request.

Please contact the communications department at:
General Enquiries: 0345 112 0999
Minicom: 0151 260 8628

Address: North West Ambulance Service, Ladybridge
Hall HQ, Chorley New Road, Bolton, BL1 5DD

Our website is at: www.nwas.nhs.uk



We offer our deepest sympathies

We are very sorry for your loss. We understand this is a very upsetting time for family and friends when a loved one dies, but there are many people, including ourselves, funeral directors, registrar offices and the police (if appropriate) that are here to help you.

North West Ambulance Service – what we can and can't do

The attending ambulance crew may have confirmed death via the completion of a Diagnosis of Death (DOD) form. A copy of the form will have been left with the family/friend.

However, they will not have been able to issue a medical certificate for the cause of death (MCCD). If there were no concerns about the death, they will consider the next steps and make contact with either a doctor, who will be able to provide the MCCD. If necessary the police may be contacted who will act on behalf of the coroner (see further information below).

If you need to speak to us at a later date, please contact us on 0345 112 0999 and ask to speak to the patient safety team. Alternatively, if you have any concerns you can call the above number or complete the online form via our website www.nwas.nhs.uk - in the contact us section, click complaints.

The police were called, why?

Police officers attend all incidents of sudden or unexpected deaths that occur outside of a hospital or medical setting. Police are the initial representatives for the Coroner's Office. The attendance of the police will also allow for the ambulance service to be released and continue their duties. If the death is expected, the GP should be able to attend. If we have to request police attendance, we will provide you with a full explanation as to why they have been requested to attend.

Who else you need to contact

You will need to contact the registrar local to where the death occurred **within five days**.

You will also need to contact a funeral director. They can be found online via a search engine, in your local Yellow Pages, your local newspaper or online at www.yell.com

Funeral Directors will offer invaluable help in the early stages of your bereavement.

The Government has a useful step-by-step guide for what you need to do when someone dies, including: registering the death, arranging the funeral, telling the Government about the death, how to check to see if you can get bereavement benefits, dealing with their finances and estate and your own financial position.

The step-by-step guide is available at: www.gov.uk/when-someone-dies

The Government has also set up the **Tell Us Once** service that lets you report a death to most government departments in one step. When you register the death, the registrar will:

- Let you know if the service is available in your area;
- Give you the phone number for the service; and give you a unique reference number to use the service either online or by phone.

For further details about the scheme go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/after-a-death/organisations-you-need-to-contact-and-tell-us-once>

Register offices, further information and contact details

Details of register offices and further information about registering a death can be found at your local council's website – in the 'Births, marriages and deaths' section.

Deaths that need to be reported to the coroner

The registrar will report the following deaths to the coroner if not already reported to by someone else:

- Where was no doctor to issue a medical certificate of cause of death
- Where the deceased was not seen by a doctor issuing the medical certificate either after death or within 14 days before the death
- Where the cause of death was unknown
- Where the cause of death was believed to be unnatural or suspicious
- The death occurred during an operation or before recovery from an anaesthetic
- The death was due to industrial disease or industrial poisoning
- All deaths of children and young people under 18, even if due to natural causes
- Deaths that may be linked to an accident however long ago the accident occurred
- If there is a possibility that the person took their own life, or that they may be linked to drugs or medications whether prescribed or illicit

Inquest

An Inquest is an inquiry into:

- Who has died
- When and where the death occurred, and
- How, meaning by what means, the death occurred
- An inquest is not a trial and it is not the coroner's job to deal with questions of civil or criminal liability. Possible conclusions include: natural causes, accident, suicide, unlawful or lawful killing, industrial disease, and open conclusions where there is insufficient evidence for any other conclusion. Narrative conclusions, which are a short statement of facts found proved, can also be made.

Other organisations that can help at a time of bereavement:

By its very nature death is distressing to everyone. The emotional and physical reactions that follow are usually intense, and may confuse or cause fear and shock. You may experience reactions that are unfamiliar and seemingly out of character, either in yourself or others.

Grief is unique and how we cope individually varies too. Sometimes it can help to express your feelings and share experiences by talking to others. Talking to others who face similar difficulties even if their experience is not the same can be helpful. Offloading feelings in a safe environment can be easier than coping alone.

CRUSE bereavement care

A website dedicated to helping everyone come to terms with a loss, regardless of age, race or belief.

Tel: 0808 808 1677

www.cruse.org.uk

The Samaritans

If you need someone to talk to, the Samaritans will listen and give support.

Tel: 116 123

www.samaritans.org.uk

Age UK

A national organisation for older people.

Tel: 0800 1678 1602

www.ageuk.org.uk

The Citizens Advice Bureau

This service offers free, independent and confidential advice on resolving legal and money problems.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

The WAY Foundation

The foundation provides self-help and support for men and women widowed, up to the age of 50, and their children.

www.widowedandyoung.org.uk

Organ donation

From spring 2020, all adults in England will be considered to have agreed to be an organ donor when they die unless they have recorded a decision not to donate.

Details at: www.organdonation.nhs.uk/uk-laws/organ-donation-law-in-england

Supporting young people following bereavement:

Hope Again is the youth website by Cruse Bereavement Youth Involvement project. It is designed for young people by young people and exists to support them after the death of someone close.

It contains message boards which posts messages from other young people who are grieving about their loss, their experiences and how they have felt at different stages.

The website is www.hopeagain.org.uk or you can telephone 0808-808-1677 Monday to Friday 09:30 to 17:00hrs and 09:30.

Winston's Wish is the UK's childhood bereavement charity that supports children and their families after the death of a parent or sibling.

Tel Contact: 08088020021

www.winstonswish.org

Deaths that need to be reported to the coroner

Please consider letting the following know about the death:

- Hospitals or clinics
- Dentist
- Employers, including any trade unions and voluntary work
- Local authority: Council tax, Social Services, Disabled Parking Permit
- Government agencies: HM Revenue & Customs, Job Centre Plus or The Pension Service (for the Dept. of Work & Pensions)
- Utilities: Gas, electricity, water, telephone, mobile phone, internet providers, TV licence
- Finance: Banks, credit cards, building societies, insurance
- Car: Insurance - if you are insured to drive in the person's name, check with the insurer that you are still covered; DVLA
- Passport office: To cancel the passport and return it if requested. Tel: 03000 222 0000 or click on www.gov.uk and search for Passport Office
- NHS equipment
- Library, clubs and associations
- DVLA, blue badges, electoral services