



**Northumbria Healthcare**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# What to do following an expected death at home

Issued by the Out of Hours District Nursing Service

You may be feeling anxious or worried about what to do following an expected death at home; this is a practical guide to what needs to happen next. You can find a list of useful contact details at the end of the leaflet.

## **Does the GP need to visit?**

There is usually no need for a GP to attend if the death is expected. A GP or nurse will be able to perform verification of death.

## **Will the coroner need to be informed?**

In some circumstances the coroner may need to be informed. If the death has taken place out of GP surgery hours, nurses will visit to verify the death. If a referral to the coroner is required they will arrange for the police to visit on behalf of the coroner. The usual police procedure is to take a statement from family members or carers, then organise for the deceased to be transferred to the nearest hospital mortuary.

For further information please see the following leaflet:

“A Guide for Community Referrals to the Coroner’s Office in North Tyneside & Northumberland”

## **When do I contact the funeral director?**

After the GP or district nurse has verified the death, you can contact the funeral director of your choice.

This does not need to be done immediately, you may want to gather the family together and say your farewells for a short while first.

Your chosen funeral director will guide you through the formalities of the funeral arrangements, and deal with any questions you may have.

## Why do I need a medical certificate?

A medical certificate will be issued by the GP practice where the deceased person was registered. This is needed to register the death for burial or cremation.

Once the deceased has been taken to the funeral home you need to contact their GP and ask for a medical certificate to be issued.

Arrange a convenient time with the GP practice to collect the certificate. Take the certificate with you when you go to the Registry Office.

## How do I register the death?

The death must be registered at the Registry Office closest to where the deceased person lived, within five days of the death occurring. The Registrar will usually make an allowance if the death occurs at the beginning of a bank holiday weekend.

Any member of the family or anyone present at the death can go to the Registry Office on behalf of the family. This is currently done by telephone appointment; however, it may be subject to change in the future.

The Registrar will contact you after they receive the medical certificate from the deceased's GP surgery and go through the process of registering the death over the phone. You may be asked to provide the full name of the deceased, their date of birth and place of birth. If possible the deceased's NHS medical card, birth certificate and any marriage certificate should be available as well.

The registrar will give the person registering the death a certificate for burial or cremation (sometimes know as the 'Green Form'); a certificate of registration of death, (Form BD8); and the Death Certificate.

Your chosen funeral director will require the certificate for burial or cremation. The certificate of registration of death, (Form BD8), may be required by the Department for Work and Pensions (Social Security).

The Death Certificate is for you to keep, but you may be asked to provide it for example to insurance companies.

You can ask for more than one copy of the Death Certificate, additional copies are available for a fee and the Registrar will advise you of this at the time of registering the death.

You can get a helpful booklet on other matters that may need attending to following a death from the Registry Office.

## **What should I do with any leftover medication?**

Medication which has been administered by the community nurses may need to be counted and disposed of in an appropriate container when they visit. Any other medication belonging to the deceased should be taken to the pharmacy for disposal.

## **What should I do about equipment that was provided?**

The district nurse will contact you to arrange a convenient time to remove any syringe driver equipment belonging to Northumbria Healthcare Foundation Trust.

For any other equipment such as beds, mattresses etc. obtained through the loans department, please contact the relevant service to arrange a mutually convenient time for collection.

Some items of equipment cannot be collected at weekends and bank holidays.

## **What if I am unsure about anything?**

Your district nurse, GP or the Out of Hours District Nursing Service will help answer any questions you may have, or with anything you are unsure of.

# Equipment Loan Service

## North Tyneside

Telephone:	0191 643 7950
Monday to Thursday	08.30 am - 5.00 pm
Friday	08.30am - 4.30 pm

## Northumberland

Telephone:	01670 730 595
Monday to Friday	08.30 am - 4.30pm

## Newcastle

Telephone:	0191 219 4662
Monday to Friday	08.30 am - 4.30pm

The Equipment Loan Service is not available on Bank Holidays.

## Useful contact details

### Out of Hours District Nursing Service

Northumberland	01670 829864
Newcastle	0191 2823664
North Tyneside	01670 828674

Please telephone NHS 111 when your GP practice is closed.  
Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

### North Tyneside Registry office

Office hours Monday – Friday 9.00am to 4pm  
Telephone 0191 6436164

### Northumberland

Office hours: Monday to Friday – 8.30am to 4.30pm  
Telephone Blyth 0345 600 6400  
Email: [morpethReg@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:morpethReg@northumberland.gov.uk)

### Newcastle

Office hours: Monday to Friday – 8.30am to 4.30pm  
Telephone – 0191 2787878

## Alternative Formats

If you would like a copy of this information in large print, another language, audio tape or other format please call the Contact Centre on 03 44 811 8118.

## Other sources of information

### NHS 111

### NHS Choices

[www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx)

### NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)

[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Freephone: 0800 032 0202

Text: 07815 500015

Email: [northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk](mailto:northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk)

### Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

General Enquiries 03 44 811 8111

[www.northumbria.nhs.uk](http://www.northumbria.nhs.uk)

PIN 603/V4

Review date: May 2024

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