

Bereavement

Some practical information about
what to do when a loved one dies
at the hospice



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Following a death, there is a lot to think about, at a time when you may not want to think about anything at all. With this in mind, we have prepared some guidance to assist you in taking those steps, and ensure you know that you are not alone.

If you need advice at any stage, then remember that we at Ashgate Hospice are here for you, so do not hesitate to contact us by calling us on **01246 568 801**, emailing **info@ashgatehospice.org.uk** or writing to us at **Ashgate Hospice, Ashgate Road, Old Brampton, Chesterfield S42 7JD**.





Things you need to know

- Registering a death is a legal requirement. You need to do it in person; unfortunately it cannot be done by Ashgate Hospice staff on your behalf.
- A death should normally be registered within 5 days of the death.
- You need to register the death at a Register Office – please see overleaf the list of Register Offices in the Derbyshire area.
- Please let our nursing team know as soon as possible whether you are thinking of a burial or cremation. This is because our staff need to complete an additional form for cremations, which will be passed directly to your funeral director.
- Please also let us know as soon as possible which funeral director you have chosen so that our team can liaise with them directly. The person who has died cannot be released until we have confirmation of the funeral director. Please see information sheet on arranging a funeral which will guide you through the process.

Step 1

Please call the Register Office to make an appointment to register the death. This will only be possible if the Registrar has received an e-mailed certificate from Ashgate Hospice.

Step 2

When you call you will be given an appointment time. For your appointment you will need the following information on the person that has died:

1. Date of Birth
2. Place of Birth
3. Last Home Address (which may be a nursing home)
4. Occupation
5. Marital Status
6. NHS Medical Number (if you have it)
7. Date of admission into Ashgate Hospice (please call us if you need a reminder of this 01246 568801)
8. Whether you have chosen a burial or cremation

Step 3

The registrar will give you:

- A Certificate of Registration of Death – this costs around £11.00, which is payable at the appointment
- A green form for the funeral director
- In addition you may wish to purchase more copies of the Certificate of Registration of Death. These are also about £11.00 each if you buy them when you register and you can do this at this appointment. Most places, such as the bank, social security, insurers and solicitors will need to see an original – not a photocopy. If the person who has died has a great deal to sort out or cancel (credit or store cards, mobile phone contracts, life insurances, etc) you may require more than one copy, so it is advisable to buy some.
- The MCCD (Death Certificate) will be emailed to the Register Office by Ashgate Hospice. These are not always available on the same day the person died, the Registrar will need to receive the emailed certificate before you can make an appointment to register the death.



A registrar will explain the Tell Us Once service when you register the death.

They will either:

- complete the Tell Us Once service with you
- or give you a unique reference number so you can use the service yourself online or by phone.

You must use the service within 28 days of getting your unique reference number.

Tell Us Once will notify:

- HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) – to deal with personal tax and to cancel benefits and credits, for example child benefit and tax credits
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) – to cancel benefits and entitlements, for example universal credit or state pension
- Passport Office – to cancel a British passport
- Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) – to cancel a licence, remove the person as the keeper of up to 5 vehicles and end the vehicle tax (you must contact DVLA separately if you either sell the vehicle or keep it and tax it in your own name)
- the local council – to cancel housing benefit, council tax reduction (sometimes called council tax support), a Blue Badge, inform council housing services and remove the person from the electoral register
- Veterans UK – to cancel Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments.

HMRC and DWP will contact you about the tax, benefits and entitlements of the person who died.

Tell Us Once will also contact some public sector pension schemes so that they cancel future pension payments.

Tell Us Once service: www.gov.uk/after-a-death/organisations-you-need-to-contact-and-tell-us-once.

Contact details of Register Offices:

The following offices are open to the public, but all are strictly by appointment only owing to high demand for their services since the pandemic.

Ashbourne Register Office

Ashbourne Library, 2 Compton, Ashbourne, DE6 1DA

01629 533 968

ashbourne.registrars@derbyshire.gov.uk

Bakewell Register Office

Town Hall, Bakewell, DE45 1BW

01629 535 261

bakewell.registrars@derbyshire.gov.uk

Buxton Register Office

Buxton Library, Kents Bank Road, Buxton, SK17 9HW

01629 535 075

highpeak.registrars@derbyshire.gov.uk

Chesterfield Register Office

Town Hall, Rose Hill, Chesterfield, S40 1LP

01629 533 110 or 01629 533 111

chesterfield.registrars@derbyshire.gov.uk

Glossop Register Office

Municipal Buildings, Market Place, Glossop, SK13 8PN

01629 535 075

highpeak.registrars@derbyshire.gov.uk

High Peak Register Office

Town Hall, New Mills, High Peak, SK22 4AT

01629 533 075

highpeak.registrars@derbyshire.gov.uk

For further information visit www.derbyshire.gov.uk/community/births-deaths-marriages-and-civil-partnerships/register-offices/register-offices-in-derbyshire.aspx



Following a death, you will need to arrange a funeral service. In the UK, it is a legal requirement that a death is certified and registered, and that the body is properly taken care of, either by burial or cremation.

Saying goodbye

Funeral services are an important part of saying goodbye, and often families want them to be a celebration of their loved one's life, as well as an opportunity to mourn. At this difficult time, taking care of practical affairs can be daunting, stressful and frustrating. Try and keep a "to do list" and record who you have contacted and when.

Making arrangements

Some families may have discussed with the person what they wanted, or they may have left a letter or details with someone. Others may not have discussed this at all. Whilst some people find making funeral arrangements reflective and therapeutic, others find it highly stressful and deeply upsetting. If family or friends have said: "let me know if there is anything I can do", now is a good time to say: "yes please" and get them to help you with some of the administration that needs to be done.

The expected time frame

There is no legal minimum or maximum time frame between the death and the funeral, so you do have some flexibility to wait until you feel strong enough to deal with making arrangements. However, some funeral directors may levy a charge if this period exceeds four weeks. This is something to discuss with your funeral director.

Choosing a funeral director

Whatever type of funeral you would like, the first thing you need to do is select a funeral director. Legally, you do not have to use a funeral director, although the vast majority of people do find it helpful to have some professional support. Funeral directors are listed in local newspapers or can be found online.

Ask family and friends who they might recommend, or if you feel able to, you can talk to several funeral directors to make a decision as to who you feel most comfortable with. This might be a time when you could ask someone to support you and perhaps come with you or make the calls for you. The funeral director will be happy to give you an estimated cost for your choice, or help you plan something to suit your budget.

Some people may have purchased a funeral package before they died. If this is the case, you need to notify the funeral director as soon as you can.

Usually, your chosen funeral director will take the person who has died to their premises and will keep them there until the funeral takes place.

Support with paying for the funeral*

You could get a Funeral Expenses Payment (also called a Funeral Payment) if you get certain benefits and need help to pay for a funeral you are arranging. If you receive money from the deceased's estate, your funeral expenses payment will be deducted from any money you get. The estate includes any money or property they had, but not a house or personal things left to a widow, widower or surviving civil partner.

* For more information, please visit www.gov.uk/funeral-payments
For step-by-step guide, including up-to-date information and links to benefit advice, visit www.gov.uk/when-someone-dies



There are no rules about grief and bereavement. It is very individual to you. Even when other family members or friends have been bereaved by the same death, your relationship with the person was unique to you, and therefore your experience of this bereavement will also be unique to you.

There are lots of thoughts and feelings that you may experience. Unfortunately, whilst we cannot say when and if you will experience these, we have found that people find it helpful to know what they might expect.

Grief affects us emotionally, physically and can affect our mental health. There's no 'right' way to grieve and we each react in our own way.



You may feel:

Shock, disbelief or numbness – although you understand logically that the person has died, it can take some time for your heart to catch up and for you to really feel the loss.

Anger – whilst anger is a common emotion when someone has died, it can be very difficult to cope with. Some people find it helpful to write about their feelings. Do not feel surprised if you sometimes feel angry with the person who has died. Try and share these feelings with someone who you trust.

Guilt – "Did I do enough?" "Could I have prevented this?" "If only I had..." "How can I smile when this has happened?" These kinds of feelings are common. Again, talking them through with someone who is able to listen can help to put these feelings into perspective.

Relief – you may feel relieved for the person who has died or you may feel relief for yourself. Watching someone who is important to you die is difficult, and it is understandable to feel an element of relief when this part of the journey is over. It does not mean that you wished them dead or made it happen. It reflects the difficult and challenging time you have been through and witnessed.

"I can't go on" – feeling overwhelmed by grief may make you feel that you are unable to cope. Many people describe it as feeling like they are going mad. If you are concerned about how you feel, try and talk to your GP. Contacting your GP means they are aware of how you are feeling and can help monitor and signpost you to additional support. If you have a relative or friend who you are able to talk to, share your feelings with them.

You may feel physically unwell. It is not uncommon for people to experience physical symptoms of their grief. It is important to talk to your GP to rule out physical illness. Try and rest as much as you can, eat as healthily as you can, and drink plenty of fluids.

You may not want to talk. You may or may not want to "get over it". You may or may not want to scream. You may or may not feel angry. You might feel relieved, numb, empty, guilty, happy, devastated, confused, panicked or many other things. There is nothing wrong with any of these feelings. Remember that those around you may not be having the same reactions. Give each other space, time and understanding.

It is common for people to become irritable and critical of themselves and others following a bereavement. These feelings are all very natural. What is important is that you give yourself some time to grieve and adjust. You need to come to terms with your loss in whatever way is right for you.

You may find it very hard to sleep whilst you are grieving. You might feel restless and particularly lonely or reflective at certain times. You may also be run down after a long period of being a primary carer, or visiting Ashgate Hospice every day, and this might lead to you becoming ill. Your GP is there to help you through this period – talk to them about how you are feeling. They may also be able to recommend help and support.

How can Ashgate help?

During this time, you may feel you need the support of others. Speaking to someone can reduce your sense of isolation and stress, and sharing your feelings and fears can help you be less overwhelmed by them. The Supportive Care Service gives you an opportunity to talk to someone who cares, but is not directly involved in your situation.

Ashgate Hospice offers a confidential supportive service to the family, friends and other close partnerships of our patients. If you have any worries, questions or concerns, it is worth contacting the Supportive Care service on **01246 568 801** or email **supportivecarereferrals@ashgatehospice.org.uk**.

A member of the team will speak to you on the phone. It may be that we can give you the help you need over the phone, or we may invite you in for an assessment appointment to plan the best way of supporting you.

We offer telephone or face to face support, counselling, spiritual care and support groups. We work with children and young people, and provide advice for parents, teachers, social care staff and families, and we also sign post to other services.



It can be hard to know how to talk about the death of a loved one with a child. The level of understanding of the meaning of death and individual responses will vary according to each child. Even very young children will have some awareness of the death and feel sadness and distress, which they may not be able to express openly. Sometimes seeing a parent or grandparent upset, or knowing things are being talked about that they are not party to, is as frightening as the death itself.

There is no right or wrong way to handle this, but there are some things to consider which may help.

- **Children are resilient and capable of managing a great upset.** Providing they have the correct information and understand that the adults that care for them will still take charge.
- **Try to be open and honest with children and young people.** Explain things in age-appropriate terms using the correct words – avoid euphemisms. It can be tempting to protect children by saying things like "grandma has gone to sleep", however, this can be confusing for a child who does not then understand why grandma can't wake up, or it can cause anxiety for the child when other people are going to sleep or want them to.
- **Young children can only process information in small chunks.** They may return to the subject frequently in order to help them understand exactly what has happened. They may jump in and out of their grief, which can be hard to understand when you feel so completely overwhelmed by it yourself.
- **Reassure and support the child.** Allow them to grieve and show their feelings and emotions. Tell them how you are feeling so that they know it's alright to be sad or angry.

- **Include and involve children in planning events surrounding a death.** It can be very helpful for children to be involved in the planning of the funeral and to attend the funeral if they want to. Again, if you are open and honest and explain what to expect, they cope very well with attending the funeral and can actually find it very beneficial in coming to terms with the bereavement.
- **Try to maintain routines the best you can to help the child remain secure and feel safe.** Keep other adults who care for the child informed, especially their school, nursery or childminder.
- **It may be helpful for a child to use workbooks,** make memory boxes, write letters, draw or make a special photo album as a way of expressing how they feel.

Our Ashgate Hospice Supportive Care Team is available to help families pre and post bereavement. They are happy to talk to you about any questions or concerns you may have about children and young people who have been affected by bereavement.



Phone us on **01246 568 801** or email **supportivecarereferrals@ashgatehospice.org.uk**

Remembering your loved one



Remembering Your Loved One

There are many ways you can celebrate and remember your loved one after they have died. You may choose to raise funds in memory of your loved one for Ashgate Hospice, which will help more patients and their families get the care they need, when they need it.

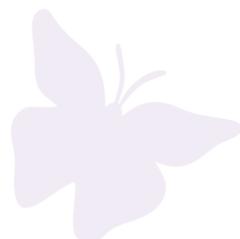
Tribute Funds

A tribute fund is a lasting way to honour and celebrate the life of someone you love. It is an online page which acts as a lasting place of comfort and remembrance. Once you have set up your tribute fund, you will be able to share this with family and friends who may wish to donate. You can share photos, stories, light candles and add messages, all whilst making a difference to local patients who need specialist hospice care. To find out more or to create a tribute fund, go to www.ashgatehospice.org.uk/tribute-funds.



Tree of Life

Adding your loved one's name to our Tree of Life at the hospice is a wonderful way to honour them whilst supporting the work of the hospice through a regular gift. You can choose whether you would like to have a stainless steel leaf, apple or dove engraved and placed on the Tree. You and your family will be invited to the hospice to place your loved one's emblem on the Tree of Life, otherwise we can do this on your behalf. You will then be welcome to come and view the Tree at any time. To find out more or to set up your dedication, go to www.ashgatehospice.org.uk/tree-of-life/.



Memorial Events

From our Sparkle Night Walk in the summer to Light Up a Life in the winter, we want to provide everyone with as many opportunities as possible to come together and pay tribute to those who have died. If you'd like to hear more about our upcoming events or to get help planning your own event for the hospice, please don't hesitate to contact the Fundraising Team on the contact details below.



Leaving a gift in your will

One in five of our patients is cared for by the gifts we receive in wills. You don't need to be wealthy to make a lasting difference to patients and families who will need to access our care in the future. A gift of any size can make a huge impact.

Go to www.ashgatehospice.org.uk/gifts-in-wills/ to find out more.

Help with your fundraising

If you would like support with your fundraising or if you have any questions, please call the Fundraising Team on **01246 567250** or email fundraising@ashgatehospice.org.uk and we will be more than happy to help you. If you'd like to sign up to our email list, you can do so by going to www.ashgatehospice.org.uk/keeping-in-touch.

If you would like to discuss any element of our service or your experience at Ashgate Hospice, please do not hesitate to contact us by calling us on **01246 568 801**, emailing info@ashgatehospice.org.uk or writing to us at Ashgate Hospice, Ashgate Road, Old Brampton, Chesterfield, S42 7JD.

Continuing support and useful contacts



Supportive Care Team

Ashgate Hospice
Ashgate Road
Old Brampton
Chesterfield S42 7JD
01246 568 801
supportivecarereferrals@ashgatehospice.org.uk
www.ashgatehospice.org.uk

What to do when someone dies

Step by step guide including up-to-date information and links to benefits advice
www.gov.uk/when-someone-dies

National Association of Funeral Directors

618 Warwick Road
Solihull B91 1AA
0121 711 1343
www.nafd.org.uk

The Natural Death Centre

01962 712 690
www.naturaldeath.org.uk

Department for Work and Pensions

08007 310 469
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions

Probate and Inheritance Tax Helpline

03001 231 072

Cruse Bereavement Support

0808 808 1677
www.cruse.org.uk

The Good Grief Trust

www.thegoodgrieftrust.org

Winston's Wish

Charity for bereaved children
08088 020 021
www.winstonswish.org

WAY Foundation (widowed and young)

Suite 14, College Business Centre
Uttoxeter Road
Derby DE22 3WZ
0300 201 0051
www.widowedandyoung.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau

6-8 Broad Pavement
Chesterfield S40 1RP
08082 787 843
www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Town Hall
Bank Road
Matlock
Derbyshire DE4 3NN
08082 787 954

Clay Cross
Unit 1
Bridge Street
Clay Cross S45 9NG
08082 505 702

26 Spring Gardens
Buxton
Derbyshire SK17 6DE
0808 278 7954

The Compassionate Friends

TCF is a charitable organisation providing support and care of bereaved parents and their families
0345 123 2304
www.tcf.org.uk

Tell Us Once

Tell Us Once is a service that lets you report a death to most government organisations in one go.
www.gov.uk/after-a-death/organisations-you-need-to-contact-and-tell-us-once