



St Teresa's
DARLINGTON
HOSPICE

Bereavement, A Useful Guide

This booklet is designed to be of practical help to recently bereaved people.

It explains procedures such as registering a death and arranging a funeral.

Introduction

When someone dies there are a lot of formalities and issues confronting those who are bereaved.

We at the Hospice understand that this is a difficult time in which you may feel overwhelmed by all of the things running through your mind.

Our aim is to guide you through this distressing time to help you take the necessary action.

We express our condolences to you, your family and friends.

This booklet is designed to be of practical help to bereaved people. It explains procedures such as registering a death and arranging a funeral.

The information included is not meant to replace advice given by others, but to offer a simple guide to what has to be done.

Whilst we have endeavoured to produce accurate information, St Teresa's Hospice cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions.

**We are here for you, should you
need our support**

As you are reading this booklet, we would like to offer you our sympathy. Should you need any support, please get in touch with our Bereavement Team, either via phone on 01325 254 321 or email at hello@darlingtonhospice.org.uk.

What to do if someone dies

At Home

If someone dies at home, please contact their local GP or District Nurse via the surgery or 01325 746 222. If the death occurs out of office hours telephone 111. Someone will then visit you to verify the death.

You then need to phone your undertaker of choice to arrange transfer to the chapel of rest, at a time suitable for you and your family.

You can contact Medequip UK to arrange collection of medical equipment on a day convenient to you, via phone on 01325 406 400. You can return all medication to the local Pharmacy, and any other dressings or products can be disposed of in your household waste.

In The Hospice

If someone dies in the Hospice, the Hospice staff will verify the death. You will then need to contact the funeral director of your choice (in some cases a prepaid funeral may have been arranged, or the wishes of the person who has died may be written in their Will or Advance Statement).

There are certain circumstances which may require a death to be referred to the Coroner, however, a funeral director can still be contacted and will advise you on how to proceed.

Funeral directors can be contacted 24 hours a day and will visit you to advise and support on all matters regarding the funeral. The burial or cremation will be arranged according to your wishes.

Certification of the death will be performed by a local GP. In the case of a cremation, two GP's signatures from separate practices will be required.

Registering a death

It is important to register a death within five days.

When you are bereaved this may feel like a daunting task, so the following information may help you.

Where To Register A Death

It is best to register a death at the register office in the area where the person died. Registering a death will take about half an hour.

You will need to ring the Register office first to make an appointment.

If, however, the death has been referred to the Coroner, the Coroner's office will contact you and advise you on what to do next.

Registration Offices

The Register Office, Town Hall, Feethams, Darlington, DL1 5RG

Tel: 01325 406 400

35 Cockton Hill Road, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL14 6HS

Tel: 03000 266 000

12 Queens Road, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL10 4AE

Tel: 01609 780780

30 Galgate, Barnard Castle, DL12 8BH

Tel: 03000 266 000

Who may register a death

Most deaths are registered by a relative. If there are no relatives available, the registrar would normally only allow certain people to register a death, including the person making the funeral arrangements or someone present at the death.

What Documents Will The Registrar Need?

When registering the death you will need to take the following documents with you:-

- Medical certificate showing the cause of death.

And if available:-

- Their birth certificate.
- Their marriage certificate.
- Information relating to state pensions or benefits.
- NHS medical card.

You will also need to tell the registrar:-

- The person's full name at the time of their death.
- Any names previously used e.g. maiden name.
- The person's date and place of birth.
- Their last address and occupation.
- The full name, date of birth and occupation of their spouse or civil partner.

What documents will the registrar issue?

- A Green Certificate for Notification of Burial or Cremation (if the coroner has not already issued one). This must be given to the funeral director to enable the funeral to take place. This is free of charge.
- A Certificate of Registration of Death. You will need additional copies of this Death Certificate for pensions and insurance purposes. There is a small charge for each certificate.
- A White Certificate of Registration of Death, which, if required, should be completed and taken to the local Department of Work and Pensions along with any pension or benefits books. This is free of charge.

Informing Other Agencies And Government Departments

Most local authorities, including Darlington, now operate a service called "Tell Us Once". You are usually offered this when you register a death.

This service informs the Department of Work and Pensions of a person's death who can then pass the information onto a number of other government departments and local council services.

If you wish to use the "Tell Us Once" service it is helpful to take the following information with you about the person who died.

- Their national insurance number.
- Their driving licence or licence number.
- Their passport or passport number.

What else do I need to do?

It is important that their Will, if they have one, is found as soon as possible. The Will states what a person wants to happen in the event of their death. It may contain funeral wishes as well as instructions about money, property and possessions. The Will may have been kept at home, with the bank or with the solicitor who drew it up.

Additionally, any remaining medication should be returned to your usual Pharmacy and you should contact the District Nurse on 01325 746 222 to arrange for any equipment to be returned.

You may also wish to consider other formalities such as things which may need returning:

- Payable orders or giro cheques
- Membership cards of clubs and associations
- Library books / tickets
- Season tickets (remember to claim any refunds you are entitled to)

or people who may need to be inform:

- Family members or friends
- Insurance company
- Care services and GP
- Employer and trade union
- Banks / Building Society / Mortgage provider
- Hospital (if applicable)

There is also a free service which ensures unwanted mail, addressed to the person who died, is stopped. To register contact The Deceased Preference Service on 0800 068 4433 or visit www.deceasedpreferenceservice.co.uk.

Arranging a funeral

The funeral is a time for saying good-bye to the person who has died, and for celebrating their life. It also gives family and friends the chance to support and comfort one another.

Before you begin to arrange the funeral it is worth checking to see if the person who died had a pre-paid funeral plan or expressed any wishes about their funeral.

If there is a Will or an Advance Statement, check to see if there are any special requests such as if they wanted to be buried or cremated. It is also helpful to ask yourself what sort of funeral you and other family and friends want.

Choosing A Funeral Director

You don't have to go to a funeral director to organise a funeral; the local cemeteries and crematoria department can help.

However, most people do use a funeral director, who can make all the arrangements on your behalf. Some people choose to get quotes from different firms.

Press Announcement

You may wish to place an announcement in the local or national press about the death, giving details of the funeral and your wishes about flowers or contributions to charity.

Your funeral director will advise you on the options and how to go about this or you may wish to contact a newspaper directly.

Arranging a funeral

Headstones & Remembrance

Information about the Crematorium, Cemeteries, Gardens of Remembrance or Book of Remembrance can be found on your local council's website or by contacting the local cemeteries and crematoria department.

In Darlington, please contact 01325 466 646 or 01325 388 576.

Paying for a funeral

It is important to check if the person who died had a pre-paid funeral plan or an insurance policy which covers the cost of their funeral.

If their financial assets have been frozen it is worth contacting their bank to see how they can assist you until probate is granted. If you, your spouse or civil partner are on a low income or in receipt of certain state benefits you may be eligible for a Funeral Payment from the Social Fund to help you pay for the funeral.

More information will be available from your Funeral Director, the Benefits Office on 0845 606 0265 or your local Citizen's Advice Bureau.

Additionally, you may get help with funeral costs if the person who died was a war pensioner, or through an occupational pension or benevolent fund if they were in employment at the time of their death. If there is no one who can pay for a funeral the local council can pay for and arrange a simple funeral.

Please contact the local cemeteries and crematoria department as soon as possible if this is the case.

Dealing with the Will and the Estate

When someone dies, you may be able to apply for a 'grant of representation'. This gives you the legal right to deal with the person's property, money and possessions (their 'estate').

The right to deal with the estate of someone who has died is called 'probate'.

If there is a Will, the executors are responsible for making sure that what is specified in the Will is carried out and they may need to obtain probate.

If there is no Will then the next of kin can apply but the law decides who can inherit the estate.

If things are straightforward you may be able to deal with the estate yourself.

However, if you require some help and advice when dealing with the estate, this should be sought from a specialist wills and probate solicitor or Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) at the soonest possible opportunity.

You can also contact The Probate and Inheritance Tax helpline on 0300 123 1072 for advice and support.

Talking to children about death and grief

We can't protect children from death. At an early age children gain an awareness of death and begin to form their own beliefs around it. When a death happens, it is important to talk to children about it so as to not leave them alone with fears or misunderstandings that can grow. By talking openly and honestly with children, at a level they can understand, you will enable them to gain a clearer understanding and avoid them feeling isolated or guilty about the way they think or feel.

Children may ask practical questions, such as "what's it like inside a coffin?" or "what does death look like?" instead of talking about their feelings.

Sometimes these might sound unusual or may be difficult for you to answer. However, it can be reassuring for a child if you answer their questions as best you can, even if that means saying "I don't know".

It is also perfectly normal for a child to be asking such questions then very quickly 'puddle jump' out of this and ask "what's for tea" or "can I play on my computer?".

This is a child's way of letting us know they now need to come away from the subject as it may feel overwhelming, not that they don't care or that their new request is more important.

Children will continue to 'jump in and out' of this as they continue to make sense of their new situation.

Talking to children about death and grief

- Explain what has happened in a simple way using clear language, for example saying “died” rather than “passed away” or “lost”.
- Allow time for them to ask questions. If you don’t know the answer, it’s OK to say so.
- A series of short conversations is often better than longer discussions.
- Do not be afraid of showing your own feelings and reassure them that their feelings are natural and normal.
- Offer lots of reassurance and maintain familiar routines as far as possible, this helps children feel safe and secure.
- It is helpful to explain what happens at a funeral and give children the opportunity to attend, or find a way of them being able to say goodbye in their own way.

Remember that you cannot stop children feeling sad - but you can support them by listening and talking. Even if you’re not sure what to say, it is better to talk about what has happened rather than ignore it.

Please contact the Family Support Team at the hospice if you’d like any support or advice on 01325 254 321 or visit our website for more information:

www.darlingtonhospice.org.uk/support-for-children

You can also find helpful resources on the St Teresa's Hospice Wellness Hub Online. Visit the web page, and register to access all the content at:

www.wellnesshub.life

Grief & Bereavement

This experience of loss is different for everyone because every bereavement is unique and intensely personal. There is no right or normal way to grieve.

You may experience a range of feelings and emotions, such as

- deep sadness, anxiety, anger or guilt
- tiredness, helplessness or loneliness
- some people feel shame, others feel relief
- You may also feel some physical sensations such as:
palpitations, dizziness, absent-mindedness, sleeplessness or
have unusual dreams and nightmares.

All of this is normal. It's important to take one day at a time and do what is right for you. Many people find it helpful to talk about how they are feeling. It is also important to let yourself cry and express your emotions.

Be kind to yourself and remember that what you are feeling is normal and will gradually ease.

Bereavement Support

Grief is a natural and necessary process but it can be very painful and may feel frightening. It can even feel as if you are losing control or going mad.

These are normal reactions but if you feel that they are too overwhelming or affecting your ability to cope on a day to day basis you may wish to seek advice from your GP or seek some bereavement support.

Support for you at St Teresa's Hospice

Although family and friends can be a source of support, many people find it helpful to talk to someone who is on the “outside” of their life.

Bereavement Support can help you to make sense of what has happened and adjust to your loss.

The Hospice will contact you by post over the first year of your bereavement to offer you Bereavement Support from our Family Support Team.

This support is confidential and free of charge.

We offer:

- Private, individual one-to-one support - a safe space to talk and share your feelings.
- Bereavement Support Groups provide an opportunity to meet others in a similar situation. These are informal and friendly meetings with trained support workers in attendance to offer additional support and information.
- The Hospice also provides specialist support to children & young adults.

St Teresa's Hospice has a beautiful Book of Remembrance where we record the names of those we have cared for. This is held by our Family Support Team, and can be made available to view on request.

If you would like to speak to someone in confidence, please contact the Family Support Team on 01325 254 321 or visit our website for more information:

www.darlingtonhospice.org.uk/bereavement-care

Important Local Organisations

St Teresa's Hospice Family Support and Bereavement Service

91 Woodland Road, Darlington, DL3 7UA

Phone: [01325 254 321](tel:01325254321) | Website: www.darlingtonhospice.org.uk

House Clearance Service

St Teresa's Hospice's professional Logistics Team carry out a bespoke house clearance service. They will totally clear properties for a nominal charge, and all proceeds will go to the Hospice to directly benefit patients.

- Free house clearance assessments
- Work to your requirements
- Remove all items
- Excellent customer care with our trained team

Phone: [01325 488701](tel:01325488701) | Email: hello@darlingtonhospice.org.uk

Registration Offices

The Register Office, Town Hall, Feethams, Darlington, DL1 5RG

Tel: [01325 406400](tel:01325406400)

35 Cockton Hill Road, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL14 6HS

Tel: [03000 266 000](tel:03000266000)

12 Queens Road, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL10 4AE

Tel: [01609 780780](tel:01609780780)

30 Galgate, Barnard Castle, DL12 8BH

Tel: [03000 266 000](tel:03000266000)

Useful Local Organisations

Citizen's Advice Bureau

- Bennett House, 14 Horsemarket, Darlington DL1 5PT
Phone: 01325 256999
- 23 Newbiggin, Richmond, North Yorkshire DL10 4DX
Phone: 0844 411 1444 or 01748 826532
- 277 High Street, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8DW
Phone: 01609 776551
- The Pioneering Care Centre, Carer's Way, Newton Aycliffe, County Durham, DL5 4PE
Phone: 01325 321234
- 21 Galgate, Barnard Castle, County Durham, DL12 8EQ
Phone: 01833 631486
- Four Clocks Community Centre, 154a Newgate Street, Bishop Auckland, County Durham DL14 7EH
Phone: 01388 606661

Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

AGE UK

Bradbury House, Beaumont Street, Darlington, Co Durham, DL1 5SX
Phone: 01325 362832 | Website: www.ageuk.org.uk/darlington

Samaritans

- 13 Woodland Road, Darlington, County Durham, DL3 7BJ
Phone: 01325 465 465
- 7 Crosby Road, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 1AA
Tel: 01609 776 161

Website: www.samaritans.org.uk

Useful Local Organisations

Winstons Wish

Advice about supporting bereaved children and young people.

Phone: [08452 030405](tel:08452030405) | Website: www.winstonswish.org

WAY Foundation (Widowed and Young)

A national organisation with local groups.

Suite 35, St Loyes House, 20 St Loyes Street, Bedford, MK40 1ZL

Phone: [08700 113 450](tel:08700113450) | Website: www.wayfoundation.org.uk

Lesbian & Gay Bereavement Project

Vaughn Williams Centre, Colindale Hospital, London, NW9 5HG

Phone: [020 8455 8894](tel:02084558894)

The Natural Death Centre

6 Blackstock Mews, Blackstock Road, London, N4 2BT

Phone: [01962 712690](tel:01962712690) | Website: www.naturaldeath.org.uk

National Association of Funeral Directors

618 Warwick Road, Solihull, West Midlands, B91 1AA

Phone: [0121 711 1343](tel:01217111343) | Website: www.nafd.org.uk

National Society of Allied & Independent Funeral Directors

3 Bullfield, Sawbridgeworth, Herts, CM21 9DB

Phone: [01279 726777](tel:01279726777) or [0845 230 6777](tel:08452306777) | Website: www.saif.org.uk

UK Funerals Online

Website: www.uk-funerals.co.uk

For a comprehensive online list of local contacts go to:

Darlington Borough Council's Bereavement Pages

Website: www.darlington.gov.uk

Durham County Council's Bereavement Pages

Website: www.durham.gov.uk

Useful Publications

Help with the cost of a funeral from the Social Fund

SF 200 obtained from the Social Security Office

How to obtain probate (without a solicitor)

PA2 obtained from the Probate Service

What to do about tax when someone dies

IR45 obtained from the Inland Revenue

What to do after a death in England and Wales

D49 obtained from the Department for Work & Pensions

A guide to Bereavement Benefits

NP45 obtained from the Department for Work & Pensions

New Bereavement Benefits

Obtained from Social Security / Benefits Agency

Darlington Crematorium and Gardens of Remembrance

Obtained from Darlington Borough Council

Prepaid Funeral Plans

Obtained from National Association of Funeral Directors

Celebrating a life with respect and dignity

Obtained from Tyne Tees Celebrants (Humanist)

Tributes in Memory

Many people choose to support a charity in memory of their loved ones.

By making a donation to St Teresa's Hospice in memory of a loved one, you will be providing a lasting tribute and your kind gesture will enable the charity to continue their much needed work.

Most charities will have information of their tributes on their website.

While there is no obligation to do so, St Teresa's Hospice offers the following ways to leave a tribute in someone's memory.

Make a Donation

You can give a one off or regular donation in memory of a friend or family members. Your generous gift will enable us to continue the specialist care that we gave to your family.

Donations in Lieu of Flowers

Many people prefer to ask friends and relatives to make a donation to support the work here at St Teresa's Hospice, in lieu of flowers at a funeral service. Funeral Directors are usually happy to organise collecting the contributions and take responsibility for forwarding them to us. You can also request our St Teresa's Hospice Collection Boxes which can be used to collect donations.

Memory Tree

With the generous support of Darlington Building Society we created a special memory tree within our In Patient Unit at the Woodlands. You are invited to leave a lasting tribute to a loved one, whether or not they were cared for by the Hospice. Once your leaf is added to the memory tree you will be invited to view this in your own time.



Get in Touch

If you need any further advice or support, please get in touch with our Family Support and Bereavement Teams:

 01325 254321

 hello@darlingtonhospice.org.uk

St Teresa's Hospice, The Woodlands, 91 Woodlands Road, Darlington, DL3 7UA

