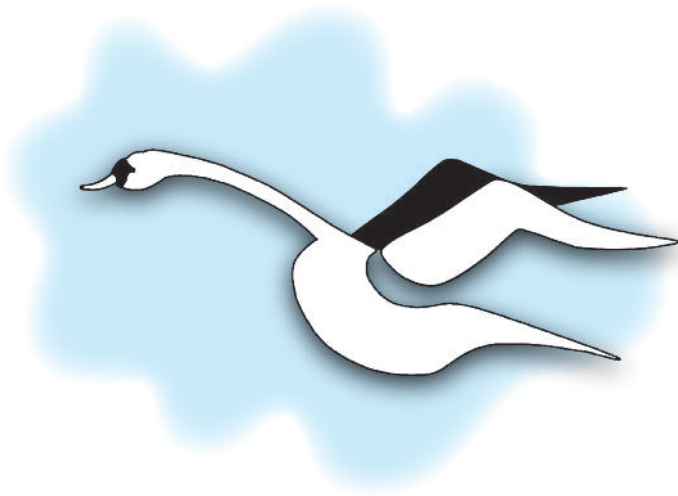


Helpful information after a death

Bereavement Services

Information for families



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Bereavement Services

On behalf of Leicester's Hospitals we extend our sincere sympathy to you and your family at this sad time.

This booklet aims to provide useful help and advice to assist you during the early days of your bereavement. Please do not hesitate to ask if you are not clear about anything. Our staff will always be pleased to help you.

Leicester's Hospitals seek to meet the needs of all members of our community when someone close to them has died. If you have any religious, cultural or other needs, please tell us. This includes requests for urgent certification where there are specific religious or cultural requirements. During normal office hours you can tell the Bereavement Services Office staff when you phone them. At other times please tell the nursing staff.

PLEASE DO NOT ATTEND THE BEREAVEMENT SERVICES OFFICE. Please contact us and we will explain the process for death registration.

Please contact the appropriate Bereavement Services Office:

Leicester Royal Infirmary

0116 258 5194 or 5196

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:00pm

Leicester General Hospital

0116 258 4235 or 4236

The office is staffed part-time, but phones are answered:

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:00pm

Glenfield Hospital

0116 258 3401 or 3417

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:00pm

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Section 1 - Practical issues

Practical advice - what to do first

After the death of a relative or friend in hospital there are certain things which need to be done. Please contact the hospital Bereavement Services Office who will be able to support you. We will explain the process for collecting the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. The contact details and opening hours are on the inside front cover.

The person organising the funeral will need to contact a funeral director. You don't have to wait until you have the Death Certificate. However, you should not set a firm date for the funeral until you have the Death Certificate. This is because sometimes a Coroner needs to be involved.

Before arranging the funeral you should find out if the deceased person made a Will and locate it or talk to the solicitors who hold it. Check if the Will gives information about the deceased person's wishes for their funeral. A Will also gives the names of the "executors". The executors are the people legally entitled to deal with the deceased person's estate. A firm of solicitors can help you with the administration of the estate and any questions relating to tax issues that may arise.

Paperwork needed after a death

When someone dies in hospital there is paperwork that needs to be completed by law. We are here to help you with the paperwork. The Bereavement Services Office works alongside various professionals to ensure these forms are completed as quickly as possible, but is dependent on the availability of doctors who are allowed to complete the certificate, so sometimes this can take longer than we would like.

All deaths need to be registered with the Registrar of births, Deaths and Marriages. Once the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death is complete it will be emailed to the Register Office. The Registrar will inform you of the process to obtain a Certified Copy of the Death Certificate (usually called the "Death Certificate") you will also be given a Certificate for Burial or Cremation (also known as the green form) which you should hand to your chosen funeral director. If the deceased person is to be buried, this is the only paperwork needed.

If a cremation is to take place, there is an additional form to be completed. A doctor at the hospital will complete the form and is then given to the funeral director.

During this process you may receive a call from one of the hospital's Medical Examiners (see "The Medical Examiner" on page 5).

Once all the cremation paperwork is completed, Bereavement Services will liaise with your chosen funeral director so that the deceased person can be taken into their care. The cremation form is emailed to the funeral director who will then send it to the crematorium.

The Council requires the papers at least 72 hours before the funeral is due to take place. It is suggested, that you allow at least **5 clear working days** from the date of the death of your loved one to the cremation in order to avoid the risk of the funeral not being able to go ahead.

The Medical Certificate of Cause of Death

The Medical Certificate of Cause of Death will be prepared and emailed to the Registrar.

Calling the Bereavement Services Office

The contact details and opening hours are on the inside front cover. When you call, the Bereavement Services Officer will need to know:

- The full name of the deceased person.
- The name and contact details of the next of kin
- Your relationship to the deceased person and your contact details, if you are not the next of kin.
- If known, whether the funeral is to be a burial or cremation.
If there is a Will you can check this for instructions.

We aim to have everything completed as quickly as possible but there are sometimes delays that we cannot control.

The Medical Examiner

All deaths in our hospitals are discussed with one of our Medical Examiners to agree the cause of death and whether a death requires referring to the Coroner. Where a death has not been referred to the Coroner, the Medical Examiner will aim to speak with the next of kin (or their chosen person) by telephone to explain the cause of death and answer any questions they may have.

In order to make sure that the hospitals learn from patients and families' experiences of care, a Medical Examiner will also look at ("screen") the recent medical records of the deceased and ask about the care your loved one received, good or bad. In some instances this will lead to a fuller review of the care or an investigation so that lessons can be learned. The views of the bereaved are an important part of this process and the outcomes from a review or investigation can be shared with the next of kin (or their chosen person) by the **Bereavement Support Nurses** or **Patient Safety Team** (see "Reviews after deaths" section).

All families will be contacted by the Medical Examiner Service but if you have further questions or concerns related to your loved one's End of Life Care, please contact one of our **Bereavement Support Nurses** (see page 14).

How to register a death

All deaths must be registered in the "registration district" where the death happened. The Leicester hospitals are in the Leicester City registration district. Registration should usually be done within 5 days of the death although this is frequently extended. If the death has been referred to the Coroner, the procedure is slightly different and we will tell you about this if needed.

The Bereavement Services Office will email the name and contact details of the patient's family member to the Leicester City Registrar. The Registrar's Office will then phone the family member to book an appointment for you to attend to register the death

Who can register a death

Regulations state that only certain people can register a death with the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

Your appointment at the register office

In readiness for your appointment, we recommend that you complete the answers to the questions on the next page and have this list with you when attending the Register Office.

Fees to correct Registration Entries

Please note that any changes to a registration once you have signed the register page will be subject to a Government enforced fee. Please be certain that the information you provide to the Registrar and spellings are correct at the time of registration.

What was the deceased person's full name ? Include any other names that they used through-out their lifetime.	
What was the date of death?	
What was the place of death?	
What was their date of birth?	
What was their place (town) of birth?	
What was their most recent job (occupation)?	
What was their most recent usual address?	
Were they receiving a pension or benefits?	
If they were married, or a widower, what was the full name, date of birth and occupation of their husband or wife (spouse)?	
If the deceased person was married what is the date of birth of the surviving partner?	
If you have it, the Medical Card or a hospital letter of the deceased person can be useful. The Registrar will take a note of the NHS number.	
It is helpful if you have any ID documentation for the deceased person to hand (passport, driving license, birth/marriage certificate etc).	

The Registrar will produce :

"A Certificate for Burial or Cremation" (also known as the "Green Form"). You will not receive this form if there is a Coroner's Inquest.

You will be able to buy a **"Certified Copy of An Entry Certificate"** (often called the Death Certificate), which is needed for any private pension claims, insurance policies and financial matters; normally 2 or 3 copies would be enough.

"A Certificate of Registration of Death" (also known as the "White Form"). This is for Social Security purposes only.

Tell Us Once

The Registrar will explain how you can use the "Tell Us Once" service to inform central and local Government departments about a death. This service will save you having to write or telephone each service individually. The Registrar will advise you which Government departments can be notified.

The Coroner

There are 3 main reasons why a case is referred to the Coroner:

- A death has been sudden and unexpected.
- A person has been ill but the doctor confirming the death is not certain why it happened at that particular time.
- A death has been caused as a result of an accident or unusual circumstances.

The Coroner will look at the case and decide what happens next. They may order an examination called a post-mortem to find out the exact cause of death. The Coroner will decide whether an inquest is needed, which is a "fact finding" exercise that aims to find out the reasons for someone's death.

If the Coroner is involved, a certificate to register the cause of death will be given to the Registrar by the Coroner.

Where the death is reported to the Coroner, particularly when the GP has not been involved, for example deaths in the hospital Emergency Department, then the Police may visit you. The reason for this is that Police Officers also act as Coroner's Officers and they would be visiting you in order to find out more about the deceased person, next of kin etc, which they will pass on to the Coroner.

The staff at the Coroner's Office are very helpful and will answer any questions you may have. You will need to contact them as soon as possible in order to discuss details relating to your relative or friend. The address is:

The Coroner's Office
The Town Hall
Town Hall Square
Leicester
LE1 9BG
0116 454 1030

Coroner's Office Opening Hours:

Monday to Thursday 9:00am - 4:00pm
Friday - 9:00am - 3:30pm
Weekends and Bank Holidays - Closed

You will only need to visit the Coroner's Office if you are asked to do so. If this becomes necessary a member of the Bereavement Services staff will explain to you what you will need to do and will give you a leaflet issued by the Home Office explaining the work of the Coroner. It can also be downloaded from here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-coroner-services-and-coroner-investigations-a-short-guide

Hospital Post-Mortem

Occasionally a hospital doctor will ask for a further examination of a deceased person's body, usually to find out why someone has died. For this to happen, the next of kin must give permission. For some families, having more information can be helpful, but others may feel that consenting to more investigations feels difficult. Our team will help you understand the reasons for the request and support you in making a decision.

You do not have to agree if you do not want to. It is also possible for the next of kin to request a post-mortem examination. Again, a consent form must be completed before this can take place.

If a post-mortem goes ahead, you can request a copy of the post-mortem report in "lay-person's" language, which will explain any medical terms.

It is helpful to let your funeral director know if a post mortem is taking place.

The doctor will still issue a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death to enable you to register the death.

Choosing a funeral director

The choice of a funeral director is important, as you should feel comfortable and confident with them. The hospital does not recommend or endorse any of the firms who have advertised in this booklet.

You can ask any funeral director for an estimate of cost before making your decision. Many people ask at least 2 firms for a quote as charges can vary a lot. The National Association of Funeral Directors can also give advice (see page 19).

Cremation

A deceased person cannot be cremated until the cause of death is definitely known. There is a form that needs to be completed but the Bereavement Services Office will organise this on your behalf. This form will be collected by your funeral director. The local authorities set the costs of the cremation form.

Ashes can be scattered in a garden of remembrance or in a favourite place, although you will need permission from the landlord or person responsible for the land before doing this. Ashes can be buried in a churchyard or cemetery, or they can be kept. Your funeral director can organise this for you.

Burial

The cost of a grave space can vary. The costs will normally be higher for the burial of someone who lives outside the Council or Parish boundary for the chosen cemetery. If a grave space has been paid for in a cemetery, there will be a Deed of Grant.

Your funeral director can advise you of the fees for a burial.

Financial help

If you receive certain benefits (eg Universal Credit) you can apply to the government for a Funeral Expenses Payment to help pay for the costs of the funeral. You can download the form here:

www.gov.uk/funeral-payments/eligibility or call 0800 731 0469.

There are many other possible sources of financial help. Information about charitable grants can be found online. For example you can search the following sites:

- www.funeralguide.co.uk
- www.turn2us.org.uk

People to tell

There are various people and organisations that need to be told about the death. **Tell Us Once** is a service that lets you report a death to most government organisations in one go. See: www.gov.uk/after-a-death/organisations-you-need-to-contact-and-tell-us-once. You will be invited to register this by the Register Office.

Other people you should inform include:

- Solicitor. If there are any difficulties with legal issues or questions about the estate you may contact a solicitor or the Citizen's Advice Bureau.
- Local social services - if they provide services such as home care, meals or transport to day centres
- Suppliers of equipment or mobility aids, whether NHS or another organisation such as the British Red Cross as these may need returning.
- GP and any other hospitals.
- Banks and Building Society. If it is a joint account the partner can continue to draw cash. The Probate Office will advise on whether it is necessary to obtain Probate or Letters of Administration (see the "Advice and Support").
- A child's or young person's teacher, employer or college should be informed if a parent, brother, sister, grandparent or other close relative or friend has died.
- Car insurance company. The policy held by the person that has died is no longer valid and other people driving under this policy are not legally insured.
- Home insurance company if applicable.
- Any clubs or subscriptions this person had.
- Gas, electricity, telephone and internet companies, local newsagent and milk deliveries (if applicable).
- If living in rented accommodation the council or private landlord should be told.

Section 2 - Help and support

What grief may feel like

Grief is a very personal experience. There are no rules or a "correct" way to grieve. However, there are some feelings that many people have. These notes do not give a complete list and you may not feel every one of these emotions.

Grief can be a very frightening experience. You may have periods of confusion and/or forgetfulness. Some people feel numb or that they have low energy and don't feel like doing normal daily activities. Please be kind to yourself; maybe reduce the number or size of the tasks which you expect of yourself and allow yourself a little more time to complete jobs. Make sure you look after yourself; it is good to eat regularly and take some gentle exercise.

You may feel **anger**; maybe towards the person who has died for leaving you or at others, such as family members, health care professionals or God, for not being able to prevent the person from dying. Some people feel relief that their loved one is no longer struggling in pain and others have difficulty accepting the loss and so have a sense of denial at the events surrounding the illness and/or death.

There are often feelings of **guilt** for many different things said, done or left undone. Many people report that they feel an intense feeling of injustice and unfairness at their loss.

There is also no particular order to these feelings and you may not experience them all. It is important to know that there is no set time-frame for feelings of grief, nor a time-limit.

The deep feelings of missing your loved one may continue for a very long time. Some people say that they continue to "see" or "hear" the one they have lost for a long time, and can have vivid dreams, which can be upsetting.

It can feel like the world has moved on and forgotten you in your grief. It might provide comfort to recall happy memories and to talk to others who knew the person who died. It may be wise not to make important decisions whilst your grief still feels strong.

If you are struggling with your grief and you would like someone to talk to, there are a number of organisations which may be able to offer support. Some may offer counselling, others information and a few provide support groups. You can also talk to our Bereavement Support Nurses or your GP.

Advice and support

It can sometimes be easier to talk to a stranger about things that you are going through than it is to talk to a person who is close to you.

The Bereavement Support Nurses are here to talk confidentially with any member of your family about their bereavement. Although they are not a counselling service, they can provide details of organisations that are.

When you speak with the Bereavement Service Officers, the team will ask how the family would prefer to be contacted by the Bereavement Support Nurse. They will normally contact the next of kin or chosen person in 6 to 8 weeks after the death, but any family member can make contact with them at any time.

If your family would like to provide feedback about their experience or have any questions or concerns about the End of Life care your loved one received, the Bereavement Support Nurses can help to find the answers or arrange for you to meet one of the doctors or nurses. Next of kin consent will be required to share any information. Their contact details are:

- bereavementsupportservice@uhl-tr.nhs.uk
- 0116 258 4380 or 0116 258 6776
- 07950 868337 or 07811 024811

The Hospital Chaplains are also available to provide a "Listening Ear". They come from a variety of religious religions and beliefs, including Non-religious chaplains. Their contact details are:

- chaplaincy@uhl-tr.nhs.uk
- Leicester Royal Infirmary Chaplaincy: 0116 258 5487
- Leicester General Hospital Chaplaincy: 0116 258 4243
- Glenfield Hospital Chaplaincy: 0116 258 3413

The Patient Information and Liaison Service (PILS) is a service run by the hospitals to provide advice and help. You can also contact them if you wish to raise a concern or make a formal complaint about the care your loved one received. Their contact details are:

- pils@uhl-tr.nhs.uk
- 08081 788337
- or you can write to us at:
Patient Information and Liaison Service
The Firs
Glenfield Hospital
Groby Road
Leicester
LE3 9QP

The **NHS Complaints Regulations** state a complaint must be made within 12 months of the incident happening or within 12 months of you realising you have something to complain about. However, if you have a reason for not complaining to us sooner we will review your complaint and decide whether it would still be possible to fairly and reasonably investigate. If you are not satisfied with our response to a complaint you can contact the **Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO)**: www.ombudsman.org.uk/publications/my-expectations-raising-concerns-and-complaints

The Bereavement Services Office has a wide variety of leaflets from organisations dealing with bereavement or bereavement related issues. Please ask at the Bereavement Services Office.

Listed below are several organisations that can offer bereavement support.

Useful contacts

AGE UK LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND offers information and advice and support available within the local community to older people and their carers.

- Phone: 0116 299 2233
- National helpline: 0800 009966
- Website: www.ageuk.org.uk

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS UK AND EIRE provides help and support for families and friends of those who have died of alcohol related illness.

- Phone: 020 7403 0888
- Website: www.al-anonuk.org.uk

BEREAVEMENT ADVICE CENTRE offers support and advice on the practical issues when someone dies.

- Phone: 0800 634 9494.
- Website: www.bereavementadvice.org

CARDIAC RISK IN THE YOUNG (CRY) supports young people (up to 35 years) diagnosed with life-threatening heart conditions and offers bereavement support to families

- Phone: 01737 363222
- Email: cry@c-r-y.org.uk

CHILD BEREAVEMENT UK supports for parents who have lost a child (of any age, including adults) and also for children and young people who are bereaved, their family and carers who are supporting the child.

- Phone: 01494 568 900 Free phone 0800 02 888 40
- Website: www.childbereavementuk.org
- Email: enquiries@childbereavementuk.org

CHILD BEREAVEMENT NETWORK is a list of services throughout the UK that offer support to bereaved children and young people as well as other information and resources.

- Phone: 0207 843 6054
- Website: www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk

CHILD LINE for when a child just needs to talk in confidence.

- Phone: 0800 1111

COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS is a network of bereaved parents provide support for other parents and siblings after the death of a child (of any age, including adults).

- Helpline: 0345 123 2304
- Website: www.tcf.org.uk

COPING WITH CANCER offers counselling, befriending services, disease specific support groups and complementary therapies to anyone affected by cancer within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. They also run a solicitor's surgery for those struggling with any legal issues or would like some advice. You may refer yourself, a friend or ask your GP to make a referral.

- Phone: 0116 223 0055
- Website: www.c-w-c.org.uk

THE COUNSELLING DIRECTORY helps people to find a private counsellor.

- Website: www.counselling-directory.org.uk

CRISIS HELPLINE offers people easier access to support and guidance if they experience a mental health crisis.

- Phone: 0808 800 3302 (2pm-9pm weekdays)
- Email: Leicestershire.Helpline@RichmondFellowship.org.uk

CRUSE BEREAVEMENT CARE acts as a listening service for those or someone they know who has been affected by a death. They provide information on practical and financial matters and details of support groups and counselling available.

- Phone: 0116 288 4119
- National Helpline: 0808 808 1677
- Website: www.cruse.org.uk

THE GOOD GRIEF TRUST provides practical help and advice to the newly bereaved and links to bereavement support organisations.

- Website: www.thegoodgrieftrust.org

WWW.HOPEAGAIN.ORG.UK is run by Cruse and is a website for young people to share stories and receive support.

- Website: www.hopeagain.org.uk

THE LAURA CENTRE offers counselling for parents and carers of children (of any age) who have died as well as offering counselling to children who have lost a parent. Their website also gives information relating to needs which may be specific to bereaved children and teenagers.

- Phone: 0116 254 4341
- Website: www.thelauracentre.org.uk

LEICESTERSHIRE AIDS SUPPORT SERVICE (LASS) offers a free and confidential service, including bereavement support for people affected by HIV/AIDS in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

- Phone: 0116 255 9995

LEICESTER COUNSELLING CENTRE is a charity that aims to provide affordable, high quality, professional counselling to the communities of Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland.

- Phone: 0116 255 8801
- Website: www.leicestercounsellingcentre.co.uk

LET'S TALK provides psychological care (cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and counselling through the NHS).

- Phone: 0116 292 7010 (for those living in Leicester)
- Website: www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/leicestercity
- Phone: 01509 56 1100 (for those living in Leicestershire and Rutland)
- Website: www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/leicestershire-county-and-rutland-service

LOROS offers a counselling service. Please ask your GP to refer you.

- Website: www.loros.co.uk

MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT provides physical, financial and emotional support and information, plus an online support community.

- Website: www.macmillan.org.uk

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS supports its members in arranging meaningful funerals, and caring for bereaved people, providing advice, advocacy & support.

- Website: nafd.org.uk

RIP-RAP provides online advice and support service for young people (12-16 years) who have lost a parent through cancer.

- Website: www.riprap.org.uk

THE SAMARITANS is available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those that may lead to suicide.

- Phone: 0116 270 0007
- National helpline: 116 123 (free to call)
- Email: jo@samaritans.org

SHAMA WOMEN'S CENTRE offers free bereavement counselling support to men, women and children with special emphasis on minority ethnic communities. They have multi-lingual staff.

- Phone: 0116 262 5876 (to book a confidential counselling session)
- Phone: 0116 251 4747 (for general enquiries)

SILVERLINE is a 24/7 call line for those in need of someone to talk to and offers information, friendship and advice for older people 50+. "There is no need to be alone". Confidential and free.

- Phone: 0800 4 70 80 90.
- Website: www.thesilverline.org.uk

SURVIVORS OF BEREAVEMENT BY SUICIDE is a self-help group that offers support to families and friends of those who have committed suicide.

- National helpline: 0300 111 5065
- Website: www.uksobs.org

THE TOMORROW PROJECT TEAM supports those bereaved by suicide. Within 72 hours they will contact you to provide information and a named support worker.

- Phone: 0115 880 0280
- Website: www.tomorrowproject.org.uk
- Email: bereavement@tomorrowproject.org.uk

THE VICTIM SUPPORT GROUP offers emotional and practical support to those who have been bereaved due to a crime that has been committed.

- Phone: 0116 249 3328

WAY - WIDOWED AND YOUNG offers a peer-to-peer support network for anyone who's lost a partner before their 51st birthday - married or not, with or without children, whatever their sexual orientation.

- Website: www.widowedandyoung.org.uk

WAYUP is available for those aged 51+

- Website: www.way-up.co.uk.

WINSTON'S WISH is a childhood bereavement charity in the UK offering practical support and guidance to bereaved children, their families and professionals. The Winston's website has extensive resources for parents, carers and schools as well as many areas for children and young people.

- Phone: 01242 515 157 (General Enquiries).
- Helpline: 0845 203 0405
- Website: www.winstonswish.org.uk
- Email: info@winstonswish.org.uk

Remember, people want to help. If you need to know how and where to find help, our hospital staff will be pleased to help you.

Section 3 - Some terms explained

Burial - the placing of a body in a grave.

Coroner - an independent official person who investigates the cause of death if it has been sudden, unexpected or if the death might not be due to natural causes.

Cremation - to reduce the body to ashes by burning.

Death certificate - an official document issued by the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages when the death is registered at the Register Office.

Funeral Director (also called undertaker) - someone whose business is preparing the body for burial or cremation and arranging and managing funerals.

GP - stands for General Practitioner, the family doctor.

Green form - the certificate which authorises the funeral director to carry out the burial or cremation.

Medical certificate of cause of death - an official document issued by a doctor, stating the date, place and cause of a person's death. This document is taken to the Register Office to register the death and to obtain the Death Certificate.

Medical Examiner - a senior doctor (consultant) who looks at the medical notes and talks to the deceased person's family to see if any lessons can be learnt from the patient's care.

Post Mortem Examination - an examination of the body after death to try to find the cause of death.

Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages - an official recorder of births, deaths and marriages.

Will - a legal declaration of someone's wishes for what should happen after their death.

Section 4 - A lasting way to celebrate a life

Sending flowers has been a traditional way to show a mark of respect for a life now sadly passed. An alternative gesture is a donation in their memory. A donation can help the ward, department or condition that is most personal to you. The money will be spent in the area of your choice to improve the facilities and care for our patients, visitors and staff, helping us to provide the best possible service to all those in our care.

If you wish to make a donation in memory of someone special please do not hesitate to get in touch with the "Leicester Hospitals Charity".

- Phone: 0116 258 8709
- Email: fundraising@uhl-tr.nhs.uk
- Website: www.leicesterhospitalscharity.org.uk
- Leicester Hospitals Charity

Belgrave House

Leicester General Hospital

Gwendolen Road

Leicester

LE5 4PW



Section 5 - Improving the care we provide

Reviews after deaths

Where questions or a concern is raised about the "experience" of care (for example, around communication with families) a "Clinical Review" of a patient's records may be requested by the Medical Examiner or Bereavement Support Nurses or on behalf of the family directly from the clinical team involved.

As part of the national **Learning from Deaths** process, **Structured Judgement Reviews** (SJRs) are carried out by a senior doctor who was not directly involved in the patient's care. An SJR is a review of the patient's records, and the reviewer is asked to look at each aspect of care and how well it was provided. SJRs are routinely carried out when a patient has undergone an elective (waiting list) procedure or was known to have a severe mental health illness or learning disability. An SJR may also be requested if the Medical Examiner and /or the next of kin raise a concern about the patient's care that has not been fully answered.

If potential areas for learning are identified, they are discussed within the speciality by senior multi-disciplinary team members.

Part of the **Bereavement Support Nurses'** role is to feedback to families (if requested) the outcome of any reviews undertaken and details of any learning or actions being taken.

In a small number of cases the findings from the SJR may lead to a **Patient Safety Investigation** if there was a problem in care which was thought to have led to harm or a patient's death. The purpose of the investigation is to find out what happened and why. This is to identify any potential learning and to reduce the risk of something similar happening to another patient in the future.

If an investigation is to be held, we will inform the next of kin and explain the process. We will also ask about how, and when, the next of kin would like to be involved and keep them up to date with the progress. We will explain how we will include them in setting the terms of reference (the topics that will be looked at) for the investigation. Investigations may be carried out internally or by external investigators, depending on the circumstances.

The next of kin's comments should be taken into account in the report. After the report has been completed the Patient Safety Team will make arrangements to meet the next of kin, or their chosen family contact to discuss the findings of the investigation.

You may find it helpful to get independent advice about taking part in investigations and other options open to you. Some people will also benefit from having an independent person to accompany them to meetings, etc. There are details of independent organisations that may be able to help later in this leaflet. Families are welcome to bring a friend, relative or advocate with them to any meetings.

If a patient dies following an unexpected or unintended incident that led to harm, staff must follow the **Duty of Candour Regulation/Policy**. The charity AvMA (Action Against Medical Accidents) has produced information for families on Duty of Candour which is supported by the Care Quality Commission.

Please note, families do not have to wait until an investigation is complete if they wish to make a complaint - both processes can be carried out at the same time. For example, a complaint can trigger an investigation if it brings to light problems in the care that were not previously known about. However, if both the complaint and investigation are looking at similar issues, we may not be able to respond to the complaint until the investigation is complete.

If you would like to request access to your loved one's medical records, please call the Access to Health Records department on 0300 303 1563 or you can go onto our website and download the application form www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/patients/patient-and-visitor-services/health-and-medical-records/

Independent information, advice and advocacy

If you raise any concerns about the treatment we gave your loved one, we will provide you with information and support; and do our best to answer the questions you have. However, we understand that it can be very helpful for you to have independent advice. We have included details below of some of the organisations where you can find independent specialist advice to support an investigation into your concerns. These organisations can also help ensure that medical or legal terms are explained to you.

Local/regional organisations

POhWER: offers general advocacy services in the south and midlands and independent health complaints advocacy to support people to complain about NHS services.

- Phone: 03004562370
- Website: www.pohwer.net

National organisations

ACTION AGAINST MEDICAL ACCIDENTS (AvMA) is an independent national charity that specialises in advising people who have been affected by lapses in patient safety ("medical accidents"). It offers free advice on NHS investigations; complaints; inquests; health professional regulation and legal action regarding clinical negligence. Please note that there is a three year limitation period for taking legal action. Most advice is provided via its helpline or in writing but individual advocacy may also be arranged. It can also refer to other specialist sources of advice, support and advocacy or specialist solicitors where appropriate.

- Phone: 0845 123 23 45
- Website: www.avma.org.uk

ADVOCACY AFTER FATAL DOMESTIC ABUSE specialises in guiding families through Inquiries including domestic homicide reviews and mental health reviews, and assists with and represent on Inquests, Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) inquiries and other reviews.

- Phone: 07768 386 922
- Website: www.aafda.org.uk

CHILD DEATH HELPLINE: provides a freephone helpline for anyone affected by a child's death, from pre-birth to the death of an adult child, however recently or long ago and whatever the circumstances of the death and uses a translation service to support those for whom English is not a first language. Volunteers who staff the helpline are all bereaved parents, although supported and trained by professionals.

- Phone: 0800 282 986 or 0808 800 6017
- Website: www.childdeathhelpline.org.uk

HUNDRED FAMILIES: Offers support, information and practical advice for families bereaved by people with mental health problems, including information on health service investigations.

- Website: www.hundredfamilies.org

INQUEST: Provides free and independent advice to bereaved families on investigations, inquests and other legal processes following a death in custody and detention. This includes deaths in mental health settings. Further information is available on its website including a link to "The INQUEST Handbook: A Guide For Bereaved Families, Friends and Advisors".

- Phone: 020 726 3111 option 1
- Website: www.inquest.org.uk

NATIONAL SURVIVOR USER NETWORK: is developing a network of mental health service users and survivors to strengthen user voice and campaign for improvements. It also has a useful page of links to user groups and organisations that offer counselling and support.

- Website: www.nsun.org.uk

PATIENTS ASSOCIATION: Provides advice, support and guidance to family members with a national helpline providing specialist information, advice and signposting. This does not include medical or legal advice. It can also help you make a complaint to the CQC.

- Phone: 020 8423 8999.
- Website: www.patients-association.org.uk

RESPOND: Supports people with learning disabilities and their families and supporters to lessen the effect of trauma and abuse, through psychotherapy, advocacy and campaigning.

- Website: www.respond.org

SUPPORT AFTER SUICIDE PARTNERSHIP: Provides helpful resources for those bereaved by suicide and signposting to local support groups and organisations.

- Website: www.supportaftersuicide.org.uk

Acknowledgement

The information in this section incorporates information from the "Information for families following a bereavement" booklet and in parallel with "Learning from Deaths - Guidance for NHS Trusts on working with bereaved families and carers", which can be found at: www.england.nhs.uk/publication/learning-from-deaths-information-for-families

Other organisations that may be of help

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs)

Clinical commissioning groups pay for and monitor services provided by NHS Trusts. Complaints can be made to the relevant CCG instead of us, if you prefer. Please ask us for contact details of the relevant CCG(s) or visit the website.

- Website: www.england.nhs.uk/ccg-details

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO)

The PHSO make final decisions on complaints that have not been resolved by the NHS in England and UK government departments. They share findings from their casework to help parliament scrutinise public service providers. They also share their findings more widely to help drive improvements in public services and complaint handling. If you are not satisfied with the response to a complaint, you can ask the PHSO to investigate.

- Phone: 0345 015 4033
- Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

The CQC is the independent regulator for health and adult social care in England. The CQC is interested in general intelligence on the quality of services, but please note that they do not investigate or resolve individual complaints. Feedback can be reported on the "My Experience" page of their website.

- Website: www.cqc.org.uk

National Reporting and Learning System (NRLS)

Members of the public can report patient safety incidents to the NRLS. This is an NHS database of incidents that is used to monitor patient safety issues. Please note though that reports are not investigated or responded to.

- Website: www.improvement.nhs.uk/resources/report-patient-safety-incident/

NHS England – Specialised services

Specialised services support people with a range of rare and complex conditions. They often involve treatments provided to patients with rare cancers, genetic disorders or complex medical or surgical conditions. Unlike most healthcare, which is planned and arranged locally, specialised services are planned nationally and regionally by NHS England. If you wish to raise a concern regarding any specialised services commissioned in your area, please contact NHS England's contact centre in the first instance.

- Phone: 0300 311 22 33
- Email: england.contactus@nhs.net

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)

The NMC is the nursing and midwifery regulator for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. It has introduced a new public support service that puts patients, families and the public at the centre of their work. The service is already providing support and a full service will be up and running by autumn 2018. More information can be found within the "concerns about nurses or midwives" section on its website.

- Website: www.nmc.org.uk

General Medical Council (GMC)

The GMC maintains the official register of medical practitioners within the UK. Its statutory purpose is to protect, promote and maintain the health and safety of the public. It controls entry to the register, and suspends or removes members when necessary. Its website includes "guides for patients and the public", which will help you decide which organisation is best placed to help you. More information can be found within the "concerns" section of its website.

- Website: www.gmc-uk.org

Healthcare Safety Investigations Branch (HSIB)

HSIB's purpose is to improve safety through effective and independent investigations that do not apportion blame or liability. HSIB's investigations are for patient safety learning purposes. Anyone can share cases with HSIB for potential investigation (but an investigation is not guaranteed).

- Website: www.hsib.org.uk

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The Trust makes every effort to ensure that the information in this booklet is accurate and up to date, but cannot guarantee that it is so.

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