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**United Lincolnshire
Hospitals**
NHS Trust

Information and advice following your bereavement

Lincoln County Hospital



Introduction

We would like to express our sympathy and sincere condolences to you and your family at this sad time.

In the first weeks of bereavement we know that it is a particularly difficult time and you will need to deal with several practical matters. This booklet aims to provide some useful help and advice during the early days of your bereavement. Hospital staff are aware that every loss is unique and that everybody grieves differently.

The bereavement staff are available to offer help and advice to guide you through the next few days and to ensure that the practical arrangements are handled in a very sensitive and timely manner.

The booklet has been divided into two parts:

- Part 1 gives advice on the immediate practical tasks that need to be undertaken following a bereavement.
- Part 2 gives information on bereavement and grief, with contact numbers and advice for ongoing support for you and your family.

Part 1: Immediate Practical Tasks

The Hospital and Bereavement Office

- How can we help at the hospital?..... 2
- Collecting the necessary paperwork..... 2-3
- Parking..... 4
- Visiting..... 4
- The Chaplaincy Teams..... 4

• Informing the GP.....	4
-------------------------	---

Registering the death at the Registration Service

• Registering the death and Registration Service contact details.....	5-6
• Who can register the death?.....	7
• What you need to take to the Registration Service.....	7
• Further information required by the Registration Officer.....	8
• Certificates and forms.....	8
• Documents you will receive from the Registration Officer.....	9-10

The Coroner, sudden deaths and post-mortems

• The role of the Coroner.....	11
• Post-mortem examinations.....	12
• Contact the Lincolnshire Coroners Service.....	12

Tissue Donation.....	13-14
-----------------------------	--------------

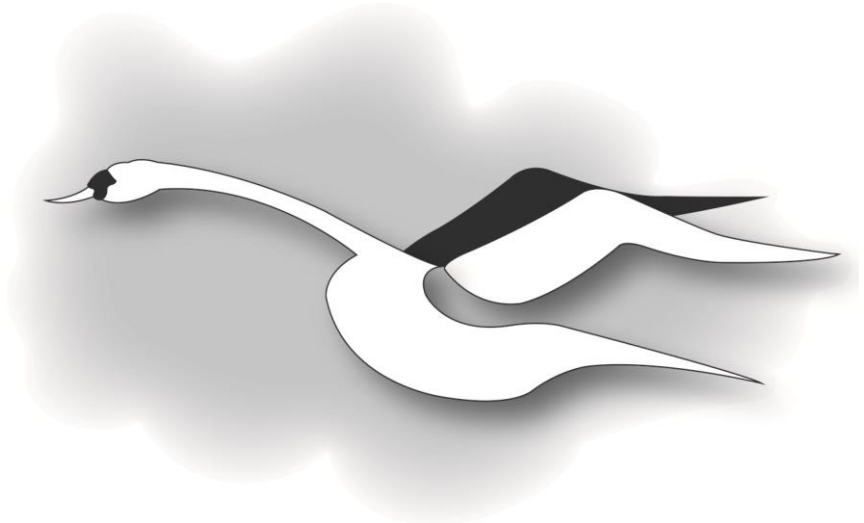
Funeral Arrangements

• Arranging the Funeral.....	15
• Paying for the Funeral.....	16

Part 2: Coping with your emotions

• Finding support.....	18
• Grieving.....	18-20
• Support groups.....	21-22

Part 1: Immediate practical tasks



The Hospital and Bereavement Office

How can we help at the hospital?

You may contact the relevant department by telephoning:

Lincoln County Hospital

Bereavement office01522 573403 Switchboard
.....01522 512512

Office hours are: 10am to 4pm, Monday – Friday

Collecting the necessary paperwork

The first step is to telephone the Bereavement Office to enquire how and when to collect the necessary paperwork.

In most instances when someone dies in hospital, the doctor attending the deceased will complete and issue a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. It will be in a sealed envelope,

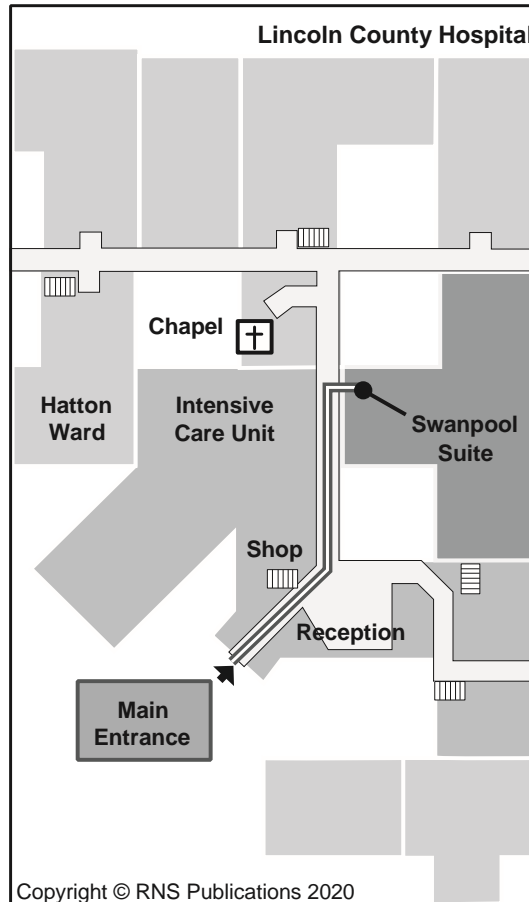
addressed to the Registrar; this is the document you will need when registering the death.

It will be necessary to return to the hospital in order to collect the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death and the deceased's belongings.

Please be aware that in the days following a death, you will receive a telephone call from the Medical Examiner.

The Medical Examiner is a Doctor who was not part of any team that cared for your relative and undertakes an independent review of your relative's care and the cause of death.

The Medical Examiner will be able to discuss the cause of death with you if you wish to and answer any questions.



Lincoln County Hospital

The Bereavement Centre - The Swanpool Suite at Lincoln County Hospital is located near the main entrance of the hospital.

Parking

When you come to the hospital to collect the paperwork, you will not have to pay for car parking. Please speak to the Bereavement Officer who will be able to assist you.

Visiting a Deceased Patient

When a patient dies in the hospital, they will be taken to the mortuary where they will remain until they are collected by the Funeral Director.

If you wish to visit the deceased, you can discuss this with the Bereavement Office or the ward staff.

Out of office hours, you are advised to contact the ward where the patient was last cared for, who will be able to advise when a visit can be arranged.

You will, of course, also be able to pay your last respects at the Funeral Director's Chapel of Rest, where they have specialist facilities. Please discuss this with the Funeral Director when you are making the funeral arrangements.

The Chaplaincy Teams

Hospital Chaplains offer spiritual, religious and pastoral care to people of all faiths and none. Hospital Chaplains can also offer religious guidance and advice after a patient has died. If you would like to talk to a Chaplain, please let any member of staff know, or contact the Chaplains directly.

Lincoln County Hospital- 01522 573080

Informing the GP

The hospital will notify the patient's death to the GP.

Registering the death at the Registration Service

The registration of a death is legally required within five days. This does not apply if the death is referred to the Coroner.

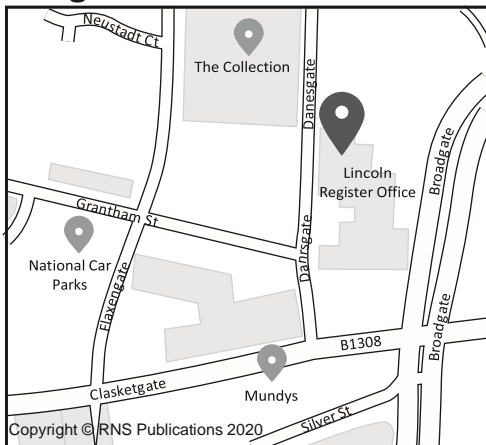
To prevent any unnecessary waiting, all Registration Offices in Lincolnshire operate an appointment system.

You must make an appointment before you go to the Registration Office. You cannot do this until the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death is completed.

To make an appointment to register the death in Lincolnshire, please telephone the central Customer Service Centre on **01522 782244**

You should allow approximately 45 minutes for the registration.

Registration services closest to the hospitals are:



The Lincoln Registration Service

Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths

4 Lindum Road

Lincoln

LN2 1NN

(Please note that there is no public parking at the Register Office and the entrance is via Danesgate)

There are other Registration Offices within Lincolnshire, located in Boston, Bourne, Gainsborough, Grantham, Horncastle, Long Sutton, Louth, Skegness, Sleaford, Spalding and Stamford.

For more information, please visit the following website or call 01522 782244.

www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/births-deaths-ceremonies/find-registrationoffice

Who can register the death?

The person registering the death should be one of the following:

- A relative of the deceased who was present at death.
- A relative of the deceased who was in attendance during the illness.
- A relative residing, or being, in the county where the death occurred.
- A person present at the death.
- The person making the funeral arrangements.

What you need to take to the Registration Service

In addition to the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death, the person registering the death will need to take:

- The deceased's medical card
- Birth certificate
- Marriage/civil partnership certificate – if applicable

If these are not available, please advise the registration office staff when you telephone to make your appointment (01522 782244).

Further information required by the Registration Officer

In all cases, the following information about the deceased will be required:

- The dates and places of birth and death
- The full name
- The marital or civil partnership status and maiden name/ other names used – if applicable
- The home address
- The last occupation (even if retired)
- The full name and occupation (or past occupation) of the husband/wife/civil partner of the deceased, if the deceased was married, widowed, a civil partner, or a surviving civil partner
- The date of birth of the surviving partner, if the deceased was married or in a civil partnership at the date of death

Certificates and Forms

A green form is issued to you by the Registration Officer, to take to the funeral director. In some circumstances, this may be issued by the Coroner and not the Registration Office.

You will also need to purchase Death Certificates (no free certificate is issued). A Death Certificate is a certified copy of the entry in the Death Register. Death Certificates may be required by banks, building societies, solicitors and for some insurance and pension claims. Most companies will return the certificate to you. You may purchase as many certificates as you wish at the time of registration and they can also be ordered after the registration at a later date, although these are more expensive.

Documents you will receive from the Registration Officer

After the information has been recorded into the death register, the Registration Officer will issue the necessary forms and certificates.

The Registration Officer will give you:

- A Death Certificate
- A Certificate for Burial or Cremation (often called the 'green form') giving permission for the body to be buried or for an application for cremation to be made
- A Certificate of Registration of Death (form BD8) issued for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

In Lincolnshire there is a free, secure and confidential service called 'Tell Us Once' (TUO) immediately following a death registration. This service informs the Department for Work and Pensions and other Central and Local Government Departments of the death. The Customer Service Centre will give you more details when you book the appointment.

If you wish to use the service, it would be useful to bring the following information with you to the appointment:

- Deceased's National Insurance Number
- Deceased's surviving husband, wife or civil partner's National Insurance Number
- Next of kin's name, address and telephone number
- Information about any benefits and services the deceased may have been receiving (e.g. state pension, income support, housing benefit, library card etc)
- Name and address of the person dealing with the deceased's estate (if different)
- Driving Licence (if held), or Driver Number if licence not available
- Passport (if held) or Passport Number if passport not available• Blue Badge (if held)

If you are unable to locate any of this information/documents in time for your appointment, please don't worry, you will still be able to use the service later by telephone. The Registration Officer will

give you a unique reference number and a telephone number to call.

Before you leave the Registration Office, you will be given a letter with a reference number. This shows the departments they have notified on your behalf, together with contact details in case of a query.

They will treat all your information securely. The organisations that are given your information will use it to update their records, but only as the law allows.

The Tell Us Once service is a project between County Councils, District and Borough Councils and departments across Government.

The Coroner, sudden deaths and post-mortems

The role of the Coroner

In order to establish the cause of a sudden or unexpected death, it is sometimes necessary for a Coroner to order a post-mortem examination of the deceased. A Coroner is an independent officer with statutory responsibility for the legal investigation of the cause of death in particular circumstances; your consent is not required. The Coroner's officer will maintain contact with you throughout this time. They will inform you once the Coroner has issued the relevant document that is required by the Registrar in order to register the death and will also provide consent to proceed with funeral arrangements. Please note that in the event of a Coroner's post-mortem, you will not need to collect a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death from the hospital.

Supportive, explanatory literature on both hospital and Coroner's post-mortems is available upon request.

In some instances there is a legal requirement for the doctor to refer a death to the Coroner. About one third of all deaths are referred to the Coroner. The Coroner may decide that death was natural and will allow a doctor to issue a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. If this is not possible, the Coroner may ask a pathologist to examine the body by means of a post-mortem examination. The Coroner's Officer will contact you and give advice and guidance on the necessary procedures. If the post-mortem examination shows the death to have been of natural causes, the Coroner will issue a certificate and this will be sent to the Registrar directly. The Coroner will advise you once this

certificate has been issued and you may then make an appointment to register the death at the Register Office.

Hospital Post-mortem examinations

The doctor who has been looking after your relative may ask your permission for a post-mortem examination. The doctor will already know the cause of death but a post-mortem would establish whether there were any further contributory causes of death and may assist in the future treatment of other patients. A hospital postmortem requires the consent of the next of kin. The procedure will be thoroughly explained to you and there will be no pressure exerted on you to agree to a post-mortem. If you agree, you will be able to change your mind at any time before the post-mortem takes place. The Bereavement Office staff will guide you through the process.

Please be aware that you should be able to see your relative afterwards.

Contacting Lincolnshire Coroners Service

The centralised Coroner's Office contact details below cover all of Lincolnshire; Lincoln, Gainsborough, Caistor, Louth, Horncastle, Skegness, Sleaford and Grantham, Stamford, Bourne, Boston, Long Sutton and Spalding:

Telephone: 01522 885217

Email: LincsCoroner@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Tissue donation

Most people who die can donate some kind of tissues for transplantation.

Many people are aware that hundreds of lives are saved every year by donated organs, such as hearts and kidneys. Many people do not realise that donated tissues such as skin, bone and heart valves can dramatically improve the quality of life for others and even save lives. As many as fifty people can be helped from the donation of one person.


Which tissues can be donated?

Eyes: Eyes can help restore sight to people with cornea problems (the clear part of the eye). This may be a result of damage caused by eye disease or injury, or defects from birth and the white part of the eye (the sclera) can be used in operations to rebuild the eye.

Heart Valves: Heart valves can be transplanted to save the lives of children born with heart defects and adults with damaged heart valves.

Skin: Skin can be used as a natural dressing, helping to treat people with serious burns. This can save lives by stopping infections, helping to reduce scarring and reduces pain.

Bone: Bone is important for people receiving artificial joint replacements, or replacing bone that has been removed due to illness or injury. It helps reduce pain and improve mobility.



Tendons: Tendons, the elastic-like cords that attach bones and muscles to each other, can be donated to help rebuild damaged joints, which helps people move more easily.

Can we choose which tissues to donate?

Yes. Only those tissues for which you have given permission will be donated.

Is there an age limit to tissue donation?

Age is generally not a barrier to donation. However, heart valves and tendons can only be donated up to the age of 60.

Can anyone become a tissue donor?

Almost anyone can be considered for tissue donation but there are a few medical conditions which may mean that tissue donation is unsuitable.

How long after death can tissue be donated?

The best time is within 24 hours after someone has died. However, sometimes it is possible to donate up to 48 hours after death.

For further information and advice, please speak to the ward staff.

Funeral arrangements

Arranging a funeral and choosing a Funeral Director

You do not have to wait until you have registered the death before contacting a Funeral Director. Funeral Directors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Contact a Funeral Director when you feel ready. They can visit you in your home if preferred and will help you make arrangements for the funeral. They will contact the hospital and arrange to collect the deceased person and organise cremation papers, if required. If your relative requires a postmortem ensure you inform the Funeral Director.

Once your relative is with the Funeral Director, you will be able to visit them at their Chapel of Rest, where you can spend as much time as you need. Sometimes, families decide they would like their relative to spend time at home, usually in the hours before the funeral. This can be arranged with the Funeral Director. You will also need to think about the clothes you would like them to wear. Take your time and don't rush into any decisions.

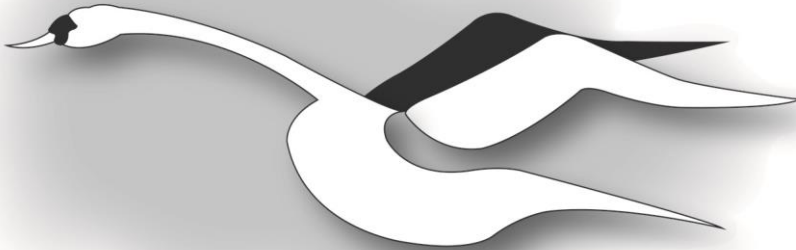
Funeral costs

You may request a written quotation so you know what costs are involved. Funeral costs may be paid in different ways including:

- From the estate of the deceased
- A funeral payment scheme may exist. Check paperwork to see if a plan exists
- Money from a life insurance policy or pension scheme
- The deceased's bank or building society may agree to release funds to pay for funeral costs
- You or the executor may need to pay and then recover the money from the estate later
- Funeral costs for the same services may vary considerably from one funeral director to another. You would be advised to get more than one quote to compare costs and services
- Disbursements are fees paid to others, for example, for doctors certificates, a minister, newspaper announcements, flowers or the crematorium

You may be eligible for a funeral expenses payment if you get certain benefits and need help to pay for the funeral you are arranging. Visit www.gov.uk/funeral-payments for more information.

Part 2: Coping with your emotions



Finding support

It's not unusual at times to feel that you're overwhelmed by the intensity of your grief. Friends and colleagues can help by letting you talk about it at your own pace for as long as it takes, by simply being there and acknowledging your feelings, and by not being shocked by them.

You may find you cannot and do not want to express your anguish and grief to members of your family or friends for fear of hurting them and causing them more pain. Although it is important to share your feelings with your family and friends, it can also be very helpful to find someone else to talk to and listen to how you are feeling. There are specialist agencies and groups that offer support.

Grieving

Sudden and unexpected death

A sudden, accidental, unexpected death shatters the world, as we know it. It is often a loss that does not make sense. The sudden death leaves us feeling shaken, unsure and vulnerable. The grief response following a sudden loss is often intensified since there is little and or no opportunity to prepare for the loss, say goodbye, finish unfinished business or prepare for bereavement. We are suddenly forced to face the loss of a relative or friend instantaneously and without warning.

A sudden tragic event shatters our sense of order and thrusts us into a world changed forever. We may experience a greater sense of vulnerability and heightened anxiety. The safe world we once knew, no longer exists. We fear for our family, our friends and ourselves and we may become preoccupied with thoughts that this will happen again.

It is very important that you try to take care of yourself. You are dealing with an event that is beyond your control and it is important to do things that help you re-establish your sense of control over your world. It is also important to focus on the basics the body needs for day-to-day survival. Take it one hour at a time, one day at a time.

Expected Death

If the death was expected, you will still find yourself in a state of shock at the news of their death. No matter how hard we try to be prepared, the death of someone close to us will affect us enormously and change our world, as we knew it.

Immediately following your bereavement

How you respond to a death or a bereaved person will be very individual and personal. These are some of the things people often say when someone dies. They may help you to feel that you are not completely alone.

Your first response to bereavement is almost inevitably the feeling that it can't be real, that it has not actually happened. These feelings may be accompanied by feelings of numbness - what many commonly call, "shock" - and a general sense of things being unreal. Some describe this sense of unreality as "living in a haze" or "moving in slow motion." This numbness is often mixed with and followed by the more familiar signs of grief: extreme, painful sadness and fear as well as physical problems such as insomnia and a loss of appetite.

After the funeral

The first week or so after a death is a busy time: telling others, registering the death and making funeral arrangements. The full reality of the death may not hit you until after this time, when friends and family may have moved away and the real pain of grief begins.

After the initial impact, you may find that you're up one minute and down the next. This is normal. Confusion, disorganisation, anger and guilt are common feelings, which may fluctuate over the coming months, giving way to apathy, sadness and depression as time goes on.

You may have questions come to mind that you haven't thought of before, or you may be thinking about the deceased persons care and not be sure what happened and why. Please contact us and we will do all we can to answer any questions or concerns that you may have. Please contact the Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS) on 01522 707071 or email pals@ulh.nhs.uk and we will find the best person to answer you.

Support Groups

There are a number of organisations which may be able to offer help, advice, support and comfort during this difficult time. Listed below are some available:

AGE UK

Working with and for older people.

Free National Helpline: 0800 055 6112

Website: www.ageconcern.org.uk

Bereavement Support Network

Offering information and advice on all practical issues regarding bereavement.

National Helpline: 0808 168 9607

Website: www.bereavementadvice.co.uk

Bereavement Care

Promoting the well-being of bereaved people.

National Helpline: 0808 808 1677

Website: www.cruse.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau (ADVICE LINE)

T: 03444 111 444

Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Lincolnshire Centre for Grief and Loss A

counselling and training service.

Telephone: 01522 546168

Website: www.lcgl.org.uk

Macmillan Cancer Support

Offering emotional and financial support.

Telephone: 0808 8080000 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 8pm)

Website: www.macmillan.org.uk

Marie Curie Cancer Care

Providing free nursing care and support to patients and families.

Freephone: 0800 090 2309

Website: www.mariecurie.org.uk

St Barnabas Lincolnshire Hospice - Family Support Service

There are a number of bereavement support groups throughout Lincolnshire.

Please telephone 01522 511566 for further details. Website: www.stbarnabashospice.co.uk

The Samaritans

Supporting those who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

National Helpline: 116 123

Website: www.samaritans.org

The Society of Compassionate Friends

Supporting bereaved parents and their families.

Helpline: 0345 1232304

Website: www.tcf.org.uk

Lincolnshire Registration Service

Customer Service: 01522 782244

We are always looking at ways to improve our service and would be grateful if you would complete and return the feedback form on the next page.

Alternatively, if you have any suggestions for improvements to our service based on your experiences, or any feedback regarding the bereavement services, you can contact us by Email: bereavementservices@ulh.nhs.uk or by post addressed to: The Bereavement Service Manager at any of the hospital sites.

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.

If you require this information in another language, large print, audio (CD or tape) or braille, please email the Patient Information Team at patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk

We wish to thank the advertisers and sponsors, without whom this publication would not have been possible.

The hospital does not endorse any of the products or services they provide.

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Feedback welcome

We appreciate this is a difficult time for you right now, so you may wish to complete this at a later date, but your feedback is always welcome and helps us to provide the best service we can.

- On which ward was your relative/friend cared for prior to their death?
.....
- Was the support and information you received during your bereavement helpful? Yes / No
- What did we do well?
.....
.....

Pleaseremovethispagecarefully

- Is there anything we could improve on?

.....

- Was this booklet helpful? Yes / No

- Is there any other information you feel should be included?

.....

- Would you be willing to complete a more indepth questionnaire regarding your recent experiences surrounding end of life care?

Yes / No

If yes please provide your name and address below:

Name:

Address:

.....

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this.

Please send this form to:

Bereavement Services,
Lincoln County Hospital, Greetwell Road, Lincolnshire, LN2 5QY

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