

Grimethorpe Surgery

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PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Help for you following your bereavement



Caring for Patients *** Caring for Loved Ones

Memories are the loveliest thing,

They last from day to day,

They can't get lost;

They don't wear out,

And can't be given away.

(Anonymous)

Dear relative, carer or friend.

Doctors and staff of Grimethorpe Surgery would like to express their sympathy to you and your family at this difficult time.

The first week of bereavement can be a time of grief and sorrow but it is also a period in which a number of matters must be dealt with.

We hope this booklet will provide you with some useful help during the early stages of your bereavement.

Please remember we (and your own GP if you are not registered with our practice) are happy to help and support you where we can. Don't hesitate to let us know if there is anything we can do to make your journey easier.

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What to do first - Collecting the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD)

Providing there is no Coroner's investigation, the GP will provide you with a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD). This is not the official Death Certificate as you will obtain this when you register the death with the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages in Barnsley.

Please contact **Grimethorpe Surgery after 10.00 am** on

01226 716809. The receptionists will be able to find out when the certificate will be ready for collection. After weekends and Bank Holidays, the doctors are often very busy and there may be a delay.

**** During Covid, there is no need to collect the certificate as this will be emailed to the Registrar, instead. We need to have contact details (phone number and email address) for the next of kin when we do.****

The surgery opening hours are 8 am till 6 pm on working days.

Coroner's Post Mortem

Occasionally, deaths have to be reported to the Coroner who decides if there should be a post mortem. If this is the case, there may be a delay before you can proceed, but the Coroner's officers will advise you when you can register the death with the Registrar in Barnsley.

You can contact the coroner by email at

barnsleycoroners@sheffield.gov.uk or call **0114 2738721**.

Registering the death

You should register a death **within five days** of when it occurred. This period can be extended by the registrar under certain circumstances, or if the Coroner is involved.

The registration should take place in the district where the person died.

In Barnsley you can book an appointment to see a registrar at:

- The Register Office in the Town Hall
- Royston Library
- Wombwell Library

You can only register a death if you have the medical cause of death certificate from a doctor.

If the death has been reported to the Coroner, the Register Office will contact you to arrange an appointment when they receive the paperwork from the Coroner. The timescales for this can vary, so please be patient.

If you can't visit one of our Barnsley offices you can arrange to register the death at any other register office in England and Wales. You will need to provide the same information and you'll be asked to sign a declaration. The registrar will send us the declaration for our records in Barnsley.

Who can register a death

Usually a relative of the person who has died registers the death, but others can also do this.

This can be:

- someone present at the death
- a person arranging the funeral (not the undertaker)
- an official from the hospital, or the manager of where the death took place (for example a care home)

You can book an appointment to register a death online [HERE](#). You'll have the option of ordering and paying for copies of the Death Certificate in advance when you book online. See [the registration charges page](#) for certificate costs. You'll have 30 minutes to fill in and submit the online form to book your appointment.

You can also contact the office on **01226 773555**

The information you'll need to bring with you

Please bring the medical certificate showing the cause of death (signed by a doctor) with you.

If available, it would help if you can also bring the person's:

- birth certificate
- marriage or civil partnership certificate
- medical card or a document with the person's NHS number on it

You'll need to tell the registrar:

- the date and place of death
- the person's full name and surname
- any names previously used (such as a maiden name)
- the person's date and place of birth
- their last address
- their occupation
- the full name, date of birth and occupation of a surviving or late spouse or civil partner
- You should also take documents to show your name and address (eg a utility bill).

It usually takes about 30 minutes for the Registrar to complete the paperwork.

Please make sure you arrive for your appointment on time - if you're more than 5 minutes late they won't be able to see you and you'll need to book a new appointment slot.

Documents you'll get from the registrar

The registrar will give you:

- a certificate for burial or cremation known as the 'green form'. You'll need this to arrange a funeral (if a death has been referred to the Coroner for a post mortem, they'll issue you with the green form)
- a certificate of registration of death, called a form BD8

If you're sorting out the person's financial affairs, you'll need to ask the registrar for a certified copy of the Death Certificate. You'll usually need one to deal with any:

- insurance companies
- banks and building societies
- private and company pensions

See [the registration charges page](#) for certificate costs. You can order and pay for copies of the Death Certificate online when you book your appointment.

If you haven't ordered certificates online you can pay by debit or credit card at your appointment. **Please note, payments in cash are not accepted.**

Tell us Once

You can use the ['Tell us Once'](#) service when you register a death in Barnsley. This makes it easier for you to tell the council and government departments that someone has died.

They'll give you more information about Tell us Once and how you can use it when you register a death.

Arranging the Funeral

Following a death it is important that you contact a Funeral

Director as soon as you are able so they can start making preliminary arrangements for you. You can do this even before the MCCD has been issued. Funeral Directors are a valuable source of information for you and most Funeral Directors are available seven days a week. They can advise you on registering the death and other issues. Costs of funerals do vary and you may wish to ask for a brochure and price list or compare the costs before making a decision. A funeral can take place in the Funeral Director's own Chapel. If you wish, the Funeral Director can organise the cremation without your attendance and this can reduce costs considerably.

You may wish to organise things by yourself but please consider asking for help from relatives or a close and

trusted friend. They will want to help and support you in any way they can.

If you receive State Benefits you can apply for help in paying for funeral costs. You can obtain **form SF200** (Funeral Payment from the Social Fund) from your local Department of Work and Pensions Office or Job Centre Plus. Please check what costs the Social Fund will cover.

Burial or Cremation

Most Churches have set fees for burial. Your Funeral Director can advise you about this. Costs may be higher for someone who lived outside the Parish. Most non-denominational cemeteries are owned by either local authorities or private companies, so fees may vary. No-one can be cremated until the cause of death is known. There are certain forms you need to sign. Ashes can be scattered in the crematorium's garden of remembrance or in a favourite place, with permission. Ashes may be buried in a relative's grave.

If you decide on a cremation, the doctor is required to complete further paperwork and to contact the relatives regarding the death. A second doctor will also need to do the same. You may, therefore, be contacted by a doctor who has not been involved in the care of your loved one.

Grief in Children and Adolescents

Generally children do not understand the meaning of death until they are three or four years old. However, they feel the sense of loss of a close relative or friend in much the

same way as adults. Even in infancy, it is clear that children grieve and feel great distress. Children experience the passage of time differently to adults and can appear to overcome grief more quickly. However, children in their early school years may need reassuring that they are not responsible for the death of a close relative as they often blame themselves for one reason or another.

It is important that the grief of a young person is not overlooked as they will often not want to burden parents by talking about their feelings. It can be helpful to include them in the arrangements.

After the funeral

Although settling the estate of the one who has died can be confusing and distressing, obtaining probate for the estate through the Probate Registry can be quite simple, though a little time consuming. This can reduce costs considerably for the Executor. (Probate is the court's authority to administer a deceased person's estate). If you are the Executor, it is your responsibility to see that the person's wishes, as you understand them, are carried out. This will include payment of funeral expenses, debts and taxes, as well as the disposal of their possessions and assets.

If it seems likely to be complex it may be worth using solicitors and accountants to sort it all out. Fees will be charged for those services and they will come out of the estate. You will need to make it clear precisely what work they need to do for you.

Whilst this is going on, access to monies in the estate can be difficult but banks and building societies may write a cheque out of the estate to cover funeral expenses even before probate is granted.

For those who have been close relatives or friends the process of adjustment to their loss may take a while. Try to avoid making hasty decisions during this time, especially if you are living alone.

Remembering

Everyone will have their own way to remember the person who has died. Talk about them and mention their name often and put the emphasis on the good things that happened when they were alive. Members of the family or close friends may appreciate a photograph or small object as a reminder. Most important of all will be your own memories.

Who needs to be told about the death

Suggested contacts	Details
Priest, Vicar or Minister of other Faiths	
Department of Work and Pensions	
Banks, Building Societies, Insurance	
Social Services re Home Care	
Work place for occupational pension	
Executors of the estate (Will)	
Solicitor	
Inland Revenue and Council Tax offices	
Residential or Nursing Home	
Landlord or Housing Department	
Electricity	
Gas	
Water	
Telephone	
Post Office to redirect mail	
Stop Mail (stop unwanted mail-leaflet in Bereavement Office)	
DVLA Swansea (driving licence)	
Outstanding appointments	
Schools, College, University attended	

Suggested contact numbers for support and advice

Benefit Enquiry Line	0800 882200
Bereavement Advice Centre Tax, Benefits and Probate	0800 6349494
Carers UK Advice and support for carers	0808 8087777
Veterans UK	0800 1692277
Probate Registry - Leeds	0113 3896133
Pension Help Line	0845 6060265
Cruse Bereavement Care (for adults and children)	0300 3305466
www.cruse.org.uk	0808 8081677
Children and Families in Grief.	0800 393917
Email: info@childrenandfamiliesingrief.co.uk	
Age UK	01803 555181
Samaritans	116 123
Barnsley Hospice	01226 244244
Marie Curie	0800 0902309
Child Bereavement UK	0800 0288840
SANDS (Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Charity)	0808 1643332
Gingerbread	0808 8020925
Grimethorpe Surgery	01226 716809
Improving Access to Psychological therapies (IAPT)	01226 644900
Barnsley Bereavement Services	01226 200565

