



LOSING A LOVED ONE IN THESE EXCEPTIONAL TIMES

What happens next, and things you may need to think about, after someone dies

Losing a loved one can be a distressing and confusing time; even more so during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic with restrictions on travel and social distancing. First and foremost, be kind to yourself; there is no right or wrong way to feel or cope when someone you care about dies.

We hope that this guide will provide some practical steps about what needs to happen next and the support available to you.

After a death

If a Doctor or Nurse is present at the time of death, they will confirm that the person has died. If a medical professional is not there to verify the death, please call our duty Nurse Coordinator on the number below or alternatively your GP/out of hours service.

What happens next?

Contact your chosen funeral director. This is just an initial contact so that your loved one can be cared for and taken to the Chapel of Rest. Relatives and friends can also be informed and provide support.

Legally, you must register a death within five days of the event (including weekends and Bank Holidays). It is a criminal offence not to do so. Whenever possible, this needs to be done by a relative and ideally the person making the funeral arrangements (but not the funeral director). A Doctor will arrange the medical certificate for you.

Nursing Services: 07920 480392 or 01608 664850
www.shipstohomenursing.co.uk

How do I register a death within Warwickshire?

Deaths now need to be registered by a scheduled telephone appointment. When the Doctor's surgery has informed you they have completed and scanned the Medical Cause of Death Certificate to the registration service you will need to book an appointment online via

<https://internal.zipporah.co.uk/Registrars.Warwickshire.Live/DeathBookingProcess> or

or call **0300 555 0255**.

For general information please see <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/deathregistration>

Documents the registrar will provide

- A Certificate for Burial or Cremation (green form) – the registrar will send this directly to the funeral director so that the funeral can take place. In some circumstances, the coroner would issue this.
- A Certificate of Registration of Death (form BD8/344) will also either be provided via the funeral director or posted to you. This form is for social security purposes. Read the back of the form in your own time, complete it, and return to the Department of Work and Pensions in the envelope provided.

By registering the death, you will be able to use the free 'Tell Us Once' Service to notify government and local council departments and services and purchase additional death certificates (which may be required by banks, building societies, solicitors or for pension claims and some insurance claims). These additional certificates can be requested during your telephone appointment, paying by card. They can also be requested at a later date by ringing 01926 412557 and paying by card over the phone. See <https://www.gov.uk/after-a-death/organisations-you-need-to-contact-and-tell-us-once> for further details.

The registrar can give you information/leaflets about benefits and help with funeral expenses. Your local Citizens Advice Bureau will also be able to help with benefits etc.

Funeral Arrangements

With current guidance on social distancing, changes have been made to the way funerals are organised. Your chosen funeral director will be able to advise you, or find out more at: National Association of Funeral Directors www.nafd.org.uk/funeral-advice/ or National Bereavement Alliance www.nationalbereavementalliance.org.uk/covid-19

Support for you, your family and friends

Grief is a normal response to death. There is no right or wrong way to grieve, it affects everybody in different ways. A death in your family or circle of friends is always difficult and you may feel shocked, upset, tearful, angry, frightened, or distressed. You may find it difficult to concentrate and to realise what has happened. These feelings are particularly intense and confusing in the first few days and weeks of bereavement. The current pandemic has changed a lot of the usual things associated with death, such as arranging a funeral, paying tribute to the person who has died or meeting with family and friends. But there are some things you can do to support yourself while you are grieving:

- Avoid becoming emotionally isolated. Even if people cannot visit you, let them support and offer their condolences by telephone, emails, video calls or social media.
- Remember to allow yourself to feel and react in a way that feels right to you.
- Keeping to your usual routine i.e. mealtimes, getting up and going to bedtime.
- If you have a garden/outside space, try to get as much daylight and fresh-air as possible. When you're feeling sad, every-day news can be upsetting so try to limit looking at news and social media.

Supporting others who are grieving

- If there are children who are affected by grief, take things at their pace and level of understanding. Be as honest as possible with them.
- Keep in regular contact with those who are grieving, ask how they are doing, what might help, listen carefully. Share photos, memories or just offer help with shopping, meals or by leaving little gifts etc.
- Be available not just in the short term but in the months to come and on anniversaries or occasions of remembrance.
- Offer to help with technology, for example with setting up video calls, WhatsApp conversations or other ways of keeping in touch.

Where can I get help?

It is not unusual for people to need extra help to cope and this is particularly true if you're living alone and whilst you are social distancing. Shipston Home Nursing offers a bereavement support service to family members living locally. We realise that this is a very private and deeply personal time and we will always respect the families' wishes about the level of our involvement.

We do not have trained bereavement counsellors but have a close affiliation with the charity Cruse <https://www.cruse.org.uk/> **0808 808 1677** who have the necessary expertise to guide and help families through this difficult time.

Other local resources available to the families of our patients includes one of our sister charities, Campden Home Nursing

<https://www.campdenhomenursing.org/what-we-provide/bereavement-counselling/>

01386 840505 who provide both bereavement support and counselling.

Further online information can be found at the following websites:

The National Bereavement Service <https://www.thenbs.org/> **0800 0246 121**

Dying Matters <https://www.dyingmatters.org/>

Macmillan <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/supporting-someone/coping-with-bereavement>

Widowed and Young <https://www.widowedandyoung.org.uk/>

Marie Curie <https://community.mariecurie.org.uk/>

UK Care Guide <https://ukcareguide.co.uk/dealing-with-bereavement/>

Winston's Wish <https://www.winstonswish.org/supporting-you/supporting-a-bereaved-child/>