

# Bereavement guidance following changes in practice

## Covid-19

Please note that since the publishing of our bereavement booklets, many temporary and practical changes have been introduced due to COVID-19.

This covering sheet has been designed to help you through this difficult and distressing time after the death of a loved one. It aims, alongside the bereavement booklet, to give you current practical help and guidance with some of the arrangements you will need to make due to your recent bereavement during the COVID-19 pandemic. The rest of the booklet contains additional information and support.

- It is important that following a death of a loved one you continue to contact our Bereavement Office on the site in which the patient died the next working day after 10am. We will be able to give you the initial steps and further information on when the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death is likely to be completed. Please note these are not always issued on the same day as you call.
  - Bereavement Services Conquest/Irvine Unit - 0300 131 4892
  - Bereavement Service Eastbourne DGH – 0300 131 4785
- COVID-19 patient's deaths are not reportable to the Coroner and so a Doctor should be able to issue the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD).
- Where there is a requirement for the death to be referred to the Coroner, the Bereavement Service will at all times try to ensure you are kept up to date with the referral.
- Where the MCCD is issued by the attending Doctor, once this has been checked it will be scanned directly to the Registrar's Office by Bereavement Services. Bereavement Services will then contact you to let you know this has been completed and you will be able to book your Registrar's Appointment. Please note it is best practice to contact the Registrars the next working day to book your appointment.

Telephone number: 0345 608 0198

Website: [www.eastsussex.gov.uk/community/registration/deaths/register](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/community/registration/deaths/register)

After this, the MCCD will be released to you. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bereavement Office and the Registrar's are not seeing relatives face to face. This will be sent electronically and the registration will take place over the phone.

- Death Certificates are £11 each and they can be purchased during the registration process, these will be posted to the address provided by the Registrant.
- The Registrar will also scan the Green Form to your designated funeral director and so contact with them is recommended prior to registration.

## Medical Examiner

The Government has implemented a new system in the United Kingdom called the Medical Examiner. This new process will ensure your loved one's death will be reviewed by an independent Doctor who was not involved in their care.

Whilst we anticipate there will be a minimal delay in the completion of the 'Medical Certificate of Cause of Death' (MCCD), our team will keep you updated throughout the process.

The new process will involve a phone call to you from either our Medical Examiner's Officer or Medical Examiner to discuss any concerns you may have and explain the certificated cause of death of your loved one.

This sheet has been donated by RNS Publications, who understand it is distressing to deal with a bereavement.

Unsolicited mail can be insensitive and destructive during a grieving process, to reduce this, please visit [stopmail.co.uk](http://stopmail.co.uk) which has been provided to support you.