

Bereavement Services

A practical guide

This booklet contains information about what needs to be done after someone dies and offers sources of help and support.

Introduction

This booklet contains details about what needs to be done after the death of your relative or friend. We hope it will help you cope with some of the practical aspects such as registration and funeral arrangements.

At the end of this booklet is a list of other organisations that can provide you with help and support.

In order to register the death at Wandsworth Register Office you will need to collect the official **Medical Certificate of Cause of Death** from Bereavement Services.

It is essential that you first make an appointment.

Bereavement Services

Monday to Friday 10.00 - 16.00 hours

Tel: 020 8725 3410/3411

Bereavement Services

Please do not forget to make an appointment, it will prevent any unnecessary waiting.

Bereavement Services will also:

- Give you any personal effects of the deceased, so please bring your identification with you
- Arrange a viewing if you wish

Do not be anxious as the staff at Bereavement Services will answer all your questions in relation to death registration. They can also tell you what you will require to organise the funeral.

Registration of Death

Deaths must be registered with five days in the district in which the death occurred. This is unless the Coroner is conducting an investigation as to the cause of death, in which case the Coroner's Office will advise you.

Deaths that occur in St. George's Hospital are registered with:

Wandsworth Register Office	
Wandsworth Town Hall	Tel: 020 8871 6120
Wandsworth High Street	Opening Hours:
London SW18 2PU	9.00 - 16.30 hours

The Registrar will need to have some information about the person who has died and it will be helpful to take the following with you:

- Date and place of death and usual address
- Full names and surname (and maiden name if the deceased was a woman who had married)
- Occupation (and if applicable, the name and occupation of the deceased's spouse or civil partner)
- Whether he or she was receiving a pension/allowance from public funds
- If the deceased was married, the date of birth of the surviving widow(er)

You will be asked to pay a small fee for a copy of the death certificate which as of December 2009 is £3.50 each. The Registrar will provide you with as many copies as you require and will also give you a **Certificate for Burial or Cremation** which your Funeral Director will need to carry out the funeral.

Post-Mortem

There are two types of post-mortems:

- Coroner's Post-Mortem
- Consent Post-Mortem

Coroner's Post-Mortem

Some cases will need to be reported to the Coroner who by law has the responsibility for investigating certain deaths.

After reviewing the situation the Coroner may:

1. Give permission for the hospital doctor to issue the **Medical Certificate of Cause of Death**
2. Decide to investigate the case further. (The Coroner's Officer will then notify the family about other procedures and when they can anticipate being able to register the death)

The Coroner's Office is located at:

48 Falcon Road
Battersea
London SW11 2LR
Tel: 020 7228 6044

If you have any queries regarding this please contact Bereavement Services.

Consent Post-Mortem

There are occasions when the doctor who has written the medical certificate may ask for your consent to carry out a post-mortem examination. This may assist in the treatment of other patients in the future.

This will not cause any delay to the funeral arrangements. You will be given every opportunity to discuss the circumstances before making your decision or signing the necessary forms.

A report of the post-mortem will be available within four to six weeks and a copy forwarded to your GP and the consultant in charge of the case. Should you wish to discuss the findings with the consultant, this can be arranged by Bereavement Services.

Tissue donation after death

The option of donating tissues such as corneas, heart valves, skin and bone is a choice for all families following the loss of a loved one. Tissues are life saving and can improve an individuals quality of life. Most people can donate some tissue for transplant. Age and medical conditions are not a barrier to donation.

Tissue donation is possible if your relative has died within the last 24 hours. Our aim is to support families who wish to donate tissues or support loved one's wishes to be a tissue donor following death. Individuals may have expressed a wish during their life time by signing the Organ Donor Register, carrying a donor card or have expressed a wish to help others following their death.

Families may be contacted and offered the option of donation following the death of a loved one. We provide on site support and information to all families who may wish to discuss the option of tissue donation. Please inform the bereavement office who will contact the on site coordinator to discuss the option of donating tissue.

Viewing Arrangements

Arrangements may be made for you to see a relative or friend in the Viewing Suite.

To make an appointment please contact:

- Bereavement Services - Tel: 020 8725 3410
- The Mortuary - Tel: 020 8725 5240

Viewing times are between 10.00 and 15.30 hours Monday - Friday when staff are available to support you during your visit. Alternatively, you may prefer to wait until you can do this at your chosen funeral director's premises.

Arranging a Funeral

Planning the funeral is an important part of saying goodbye to the person who has died. Making arrangements for a special ceremony will help you to do something positive, and this may be a comfort to you.

It is important to choose a Funeral Director with whom you feel comfortable. You may wish to ask questions about their arrangements, for example:

- Whether a viewing can be arranged at the funeral parlour
- What costs are involved

You may be able to make provisional plans with your chosen Funeral Director before registration of the death. Final arrangements cannot be made until the death has been registered.

Bereavement Services are not able to recommend any particular funeral service but they can give you a list of Funeral Directors in this area.

Outstanding Hospital Appointments

Appointments are automatically cancelled once the details have been entered on the hospital database. This is done shortly after the death of a patient.

Financial Benefits

You may be entitled to financial assistance with the funeral if you are in receipt of certain benefits. A member of the Bereavement Services staff or your chosen Funeral Director will be able to advise you on this matter.

More information can be obtained from the website
www.adviceguide.org.uk

Ministers of Religion

In making the arrangements you may want to seek the advice of a minister of religion. This should be your local minister, but if you are having difficulties please contact one of the Hospital Chaplains on 020 8725 3285.

Grieving

By its very nature a death is distressing and everyone deals with it in his/her own unique way. The emotional and physical reactions that follow are usually intense; they can confuse, frighten and shock. You may even experience reactions that are unfamiliar and seemingly out of character. Try to talk about what has happened with someone you trust. If you feel that you want further advice then contact your GP who may refer you to a counsellor if they think it will help. Alternatively, there is a list of organisations at the end of this booklet that offer bereavement support.

Complaints Procedure

If you wish to discuss any issues or concerns relating to the overall care of the person who has died, it may be helpful, in the first instance, to raise this with the staff at Bereavement Services. Alternatively with the Patient Advice and Liaison Service who can be contacted on 020 8725 2453.

However, if you have more serious concerns or issues to which you wish to receive a formal response, please write, outlining your concerns, to:

Complaints & Improvements Manager
Room 70, Floor 1
Grosvenor Wing
St. George's Hospital
Blackshaw Road
London SW17 0QT

Your letter will then be treated as a formal complaint and handled under the NHS Complaints procedure.

Transport

By car

There are drop off / collection points outside most wings. There is a car park with the entrance on Blackshaw Road. The charges are paid on exit and are currently (at time of printing):

- £2 for the first hour with half-hourly rates after that
- £12 over 4 hours
- £20 over 6 hours (daily rate)

Blue badge holders may park free in:

- Any of the reserved disabled spaces available near the entrances of the hospital wings
- Any white-painted bay on the hospital perimeter road
- The car park (the badge holder must take the ticket and blue badge to the security desk on Grosvenor Wing before they leave the hospital).

By bus

Bus routes 493 and G1 enter the grounds of St George's Hospital. Several other bus routes serve roads within a short walk of the hospital:

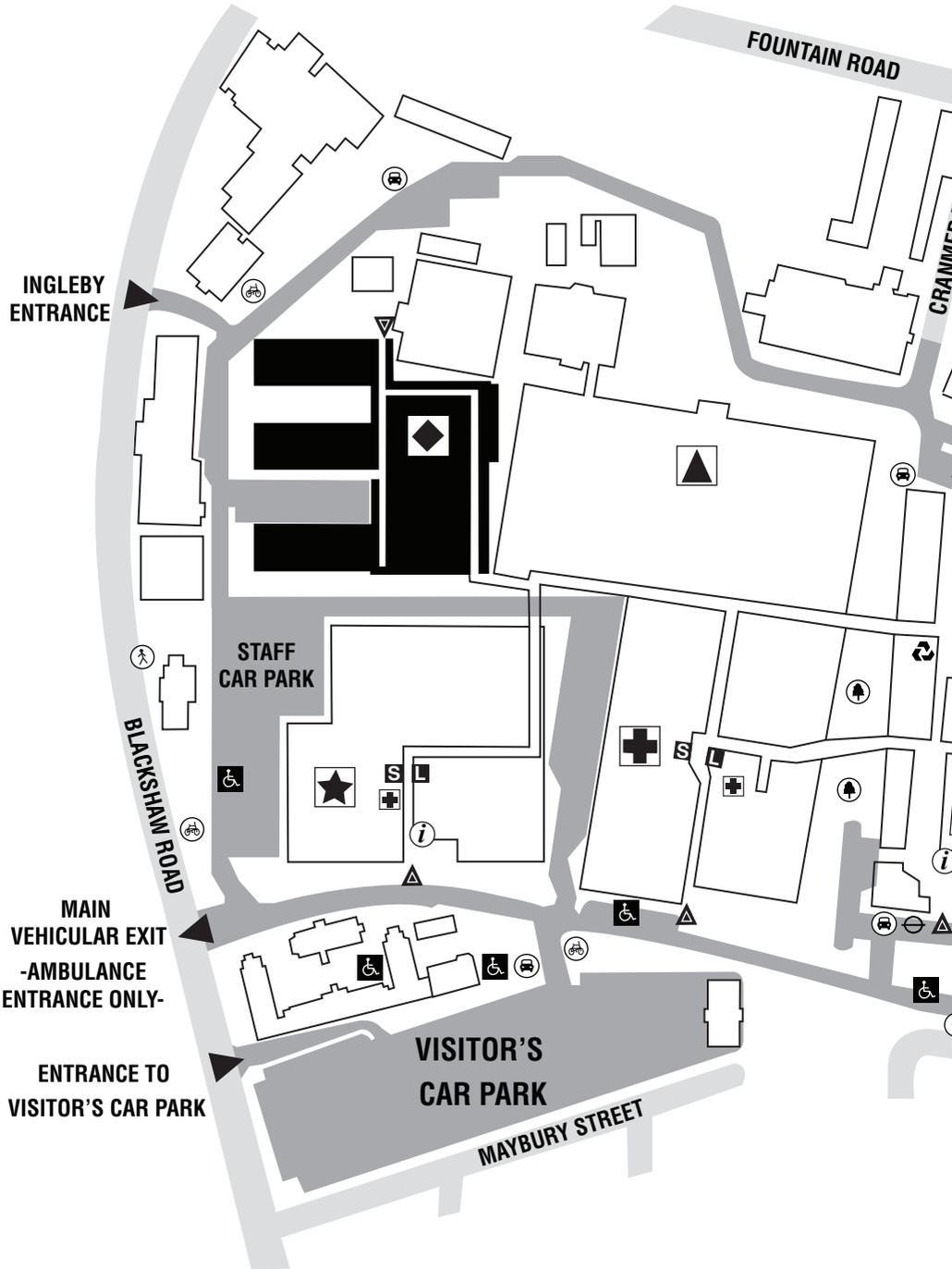
- Routes 44, 77, 270 and N44 stop on Garratt Lane
- Routes 57, 131, 219 and N155 stop on Tooting High Street
- Routes 155, 264 and 280 stop on Blackshaw Road

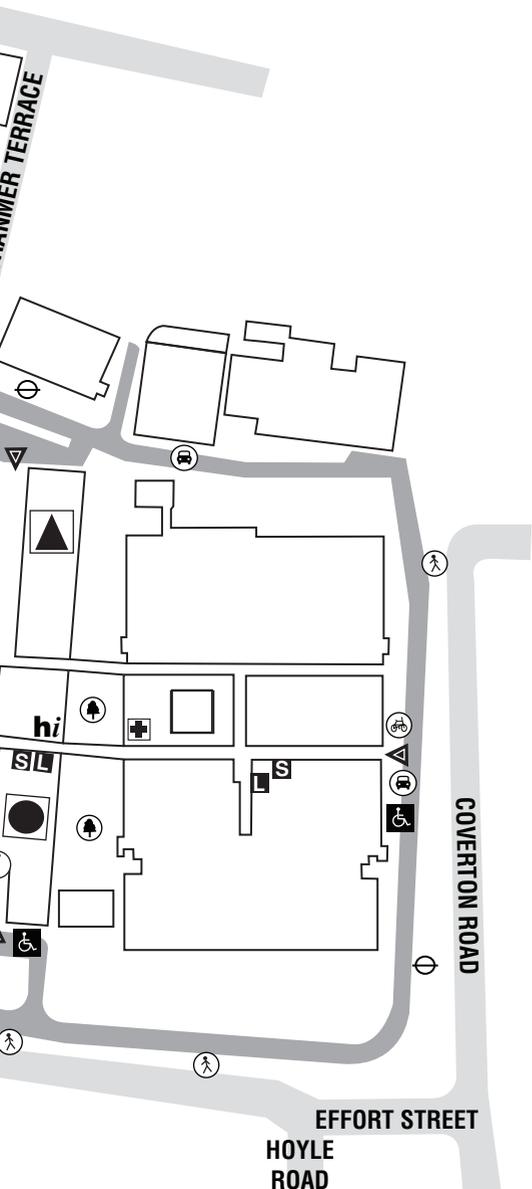
Low-floor, wheelchair accessible buses run on all routes.

By tube

Tooting Broadway underground station on the Northern Line is ten minutes' walk from the main pedestrian entrance on Effort Street.

Location of Bereavement Services






**TOOTING BROADWAY FOR:
LONDON UNDERGROUND-
NORTHERN LINE.**


-  **ATKINSON MORLEY WING**
-  **GROSEVONOR WING**
-  **KNIGHTSBRIDGE WING**
-  **LANESBOROUGH WING**
-  **MEDICAL SCHOOL**
-  **ST JAMES WING**

-  **STAIRS**
-  **LIFTS**
-  **ENTRANCE TO WING**
-  **PHARMACY**
-  **INFORMATION**
-  **HEALTH INFORMATION**
-  **NATWEST BANK / ATM**

-  **DISABLED PARKING**
-  **DROP-OFF POINT**
-  **CYCLE SHELTER**
-  **PEDESTRIAN ACCESS**
-  **BUS STOP**
-  **GARDEN**
-  **PERIMETER ROAD**

Help from Other Groups and Organisations

Age Concern

Tel: 0800 00 99 66

Web: www.ageconcern.org.uk

Cancer Bacup

(Information and support about cancer)

Tel: 08088 001 234

Web: www.cancerbacup.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care

126 Sheen Road

Richmond

Surrey

TW9 1UR

Tel: 020 8940 4818

Web: www.bereavement.org.uk

Gay Bereavement Project

Unitarian Rooms

Hoop Lane

NW11 8BS

Tel; 020 7403 5969

Web: via Cancer Bacup (see above)

Samaritans

(24 hour telephone service offering compassionate and confidential support)

Tel: 08457 90 90 90

The Royal British Legion

(for ex-service personnel)

48 Pall Mall

London

SW1

Tel: 020 7973 7200

Web: www.britishlegion.org.uk

Wandsworth Bereavement Service

(a psychotherapeutic counselling service)

192 Lavendar Hill

Battersea

London

SW11 5TQ

Web:

www.wandsworthbereavement.org.uk