



**Royal Surrey
County Hospital**
NHS Foundation Trust

When your child dies

Hascombe Ward

Patient information leaflet

We would like to express our deepest sympathy to you and your family. We hope this booklet will be helpful to you at this most difficult time.

Can I spend time with my child?

Before arrangements have been made with a funeral director, your child will remain at the hospital or Hospice:

Christopher's – Shooting Star Chase

- Old Portsmouth Road, Artington, Guildford, Surrey, GU31LP
- Telephone: 01483 230960

Please ask the nurses or the Relatives Officer to arrange some time with your child.

If you would like your child to be dressed in their clothes or have their toy, please bring these with you. Some parents like to have a photograph of their child after death. If you are unable to take this yourself, one of the nurses will do this for you. You can keep a lock of your child's hair, hand prints and foot prints. Please ask the nursing staff to help you.

What is the Hospital Chaplains role?

Our hospital chaplains are here to care for the spiritual needs of all families. You can have any faith or none. There is always a Chaplain on call.

Death often raises all sorts of questions. A chaplain can help you to work through these issues. The chaplain can lead prayers after death. These can be said at the bedside or in another place. Please don't hesitate to ask for a chaplain. We can contact other denominations and faith communities if you wish. You will find the chaplains telephone number below:

Chaplaincy: Please dial **71-0333** (a bleeper to ward extension)

How can my family cope best with such tragic circumstances?

If you have other children, explain to them what has happened. Try making them feel part of the grieving process as much as possible. This will help them in the long term. They may wish to say good bye to their brother/sister themselves. You may feel apprehensive about this, but it is important that you allow them to do so. Reality is often less frightening than a child's imagination. Sharing your feelings with them can also be beneficial since it allows you to grieve together.

You may still have questions when you look back to the time of your child's death. You may find it helpful to discuss any concerns at the hospital. Please do not hesitate to contact your Consultant's secretary or nursing staff to arrange this. You will always be welcome on Hascombe ward if you would like to come back to visit us.

Telephone Hascombe Ward on **01483 464071**.

How do I register my child's death?

The death should be registered within five working days if it has not been referred to the coroner. Registration takes place in the area of which the death occurred.

The call centre number for making an appointment with the Registrar is: **03002001002**

Or Visit: www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/birth-death-marriage-and-civil-partnerships

Prior appointments must be made with all Registrars

When you go to the Registrar's you will need to answer the following questions; -

1. The date and place of death.
2. The child's last usual address.
3. The child's first name and surname.
4. The child's date and place of birth.

And to register the death you will need the following: -

1. Certificate showing the cause of death.
2. The parent's full names, home address and occupations.
3. Your child's medical card and child benefit book if they are readily available.

What will I receive at the Registrars'?

At the registrars, you will receive the following: -

1. **Death Certificate.** This is a certified copy of the entry made into the register by the Registrar. You will probably require more than one. There is a small charge made by the registrar for providing this certificate.
2. **Green Form.** This needs to be given to your funeral director before the funeral can take place. For deaths where a coroner's post mortem has taken place, this form is not required.
3. **Registration Form (BD8).** This form relates to any benefits the child was in receipt of. Complete this form by answering the questions, sign and date it. Send it in the pre-addressed envelope the Registrar will give to you. You do not need to send a death certificate with this form.

How do I obtain the death certificate?

We will try to give relatives an appointment for the same day to collect this certificate. In some circumstances an appointment may have to be made for the following day.

Please contact the Relatives Officer after 10am on **01483 303361** (direct line) to make an appointment. You can then collect the certificate and any of your child's personal belongings. There is an answer phone and a message can be left.

Please do not come to the hospital without an appointment. Your paperwork may not be ready for you.

Appointments are usually made for the afternoon. Hospital appointments are made to coincide with the opening times of the Registrar.

The relative's office is closed at weekends and bank holidays. The Registrar of deaths and funeral directors are not able to process paperwork until the next working day.

If your child has died within 24 hours of admission, the case is referred to the HM Coroner. This could be as a result of an accident or the cause of death is unknown. A decision will then be made by the Coroner's Office. The Relatives Officer will advise you accordingly if this is the case.

If you have any concerns with respect to your child's treatment please inform the Relatives office. An appointment will be made for you. It may be possible for a doctor and Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) to be present. This is to enable you to discuss your concerns.

What is a Coroner's Case?

If your child died as a result of an unexpected death, it has to be referred to H M Coroner. The coroner may have to arrange a Coroner's post mortem examination. The Coroner's office will contact the next of kin as soon as possible. Normally this would happen the next working day, (excluding public holidays). He/she will explain the procedure and the investigations that may have to be made. If the death was due to natural causes, the Coroner will issue a notification to the Registrar. This is known as the Pink Form-100B, which gives the cause of death. The Coroner will advise you to make an appointment with the Registrar to register the death. The Coroner will also issue a certificate of cremation directly to your funeral director. This is if the body is to be cremated.

If there is to be an inquest, an interim certificate of Fact of Death can be issued. The Coroner will give you further information if this decision is made.

As a parent in order to take your deceased child's personal effects home, you will be asked to sign a receipt.

When does a Post Mortem happen?

If there is no doubt as to the cause of death, then a post mortem need not take place. Otherwise, the doctor may ask for a post mortem. This ensures all possible information about your child's illness is obtained. It establishes the precise cause of death. The doctor will explain what is involved. If you are in agreement, you sign a consent form.

Please ask a nurse if you would like more information about the post mortem.

How do I plan for my child's funeral?

If the death has to be reported to the Coroner, this may affect the funeral date. Provisional arrangements may still be made with the Funeral Director. For further advice, please contact the Coroner's office or the relative's office.

Most funerals are arranged by a funeral Director. You will need to decide which one to use. A list of Funeral Directors is available from the Relatives office or Coroner's office. Telephone more than one Funeral Director to choose the one most suitable for you.

The Relative's Officer may also be able to advise on help with funeral costs.

It is worthwhile making tentative arrangements, which you can confirm later. Funeral arrangements can be made before the death has been registered. If the death has been referred to the Coroner, ask the Coroner's Office regarding funeral arrangements. This can ascertain if there has to be a delay for any reason.

A local church minister may know Funeral Directors that specialise in arranging children's funerals. Costs can vary and you may find it useful to obtain several estimates.

It is not necessary to have a religious service. Plan the funeral you want to remember your child in a way which has special meaning to you.

How is my Family Doctor informed?

Your GP will be notified by the Relatives Officer within two days. You may wish to seek the help and support of your own GP.

Other resources that may be helpful for you

Child Bereavement UK

Supports families and educates professionals when a baby or child of any age dies or is dying. And when a child is facing bereavement.

- Phone: 08000 288840
- Website: Childbereavementuk.org

The Lullaby Trust

- Phone: 0808 8026868
- Email: support@lullabytrust.org.uk
- Website: www.lullabytrust.org.uk

Winston's Wish

National helpline for all those caring for a child or young person who has been bereaved.

- Phone: 0845 2030405
- Website: www.winstonswish.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Helpline

- Epsom, Ewell & Mole Valley Branch 0208 3937238
 - South West Surrey Branch 01483 418781
 - Surrey North Branch 01932571177
 - South East Surrey Branch 01737 772834
- Email: info@cruse.org.uk
 - Website: www.cruse.org.uk

Child Death Helpline

Helpline for anyone affected by the death of a child from pre-birth to the death of an adult child-whatever the circumstances. It is staffed by trained bereaved parent volunteers.

- Phone: 0800 282986 / 0808 8006019
- Website: www.childdeathhelpline.org.uk

The Compassionate Friends

Support & counselling for all bereaved persons.

- Helpline (1000-1600 / 1900-2200) 0345 1232304
- Email: helpline@tcf.org.uk
- Website: www.tcf.org.uk

Bereaved Parents Network

Offers comfort & hope to those who have lost a child of any child of any age in any circumstances. Through a telephone support network, events and regular email newsletter. There is also a weekend for bereaved adult siblings.

- Phone: 0292 0810800
- Email: mail@cff.org.uk
- Website: www.careforthefamily.org.uk

Brake – The Road Safety Charity

Dedicated to preventing the road deaths and injury. Cares for people bereaved or injured in car crashes. All their literature is free to families including the highly acclaimed “Someone has died in a car crash”. Written for children experiencing the death of a loved one.

- Phone: 0808 8000401 (1000–1600, Monday–Friday)
- Email: helpline@brake.org.uk
- Website: www.brake.org.uk

Grief Encounter Project

Aims to help and support each person with an individual approach. Offers flexible and accessible bereavement services. Professionally listens and understands, cares and responds to the needs of each service user. The helpline offers information, signposting and advice. Their counselling may be via a children's workshop or one to one counselling.

- Monday–Friday, 0900–1700
- Phone: 0208 3718455
- Email: contact@griefencounter.org.uk
- Website: www.griefencounter.org.uk

Childhood Bereavement Network

A national multi professional federation of organisations working with bereaved children and young people.

- Phone: 0207 843 6309
- Website: www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk

Contact details

If you have any worries that are not covered by this information leaflet, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Hascombe Children's Ward

Telephone: 01483 464071 (24 hours)

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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