Beaumont Hospital

What happens next when someone you care about dies.

Introduction

The death of someone close is a sad and difficult time for family and friends. You may find it difficult to cope and not know who to turn to, or what to do. The staff at Beaumont Hospital sympathise with you on your bereavement. We will try to support you and provide practical information to guide you. This information leaflet is intended to help you in the initial stages of your loss, and guide you as to what should happen next.

Immediately after someone dies in hospital

You may be asked to leave the bedside for a short while to allow a doctor to formally confirm that the person has died. Staff will try to provide a private space for you, if one is available, and will offer refreshments. This is a good time to contact other family members and friends.

Staff will be available to provide support and answer questions which you may have. They will talk to you about any religious or cultural beliefs that should be observed while caring for the deceased person.

Please feel welcome to stay with the deceased person on the ward, if this is something you wish to do. Staff will advise you when it is time to transfer the deceased person to the mortuary.

Mortuary Services

The deceased person will be transferred to the hospital mortuary, and will be cared for by the mortuary staff until they are released to the undertaker or funeral director chosen by the family.

Family members may wish to visit the deceased while they are in the mortuary. If you wish to arrange a visit, please ring the mortuary team to arrange a suitable time. An appointment is necessary, to ensure that

you have privacy during your visit and that mortuary staff are available to support you.

The Mortuary is open (by appointment only) at the following times -

Monday to Friday	11am to 5pm
Saturday and public holidays	10:30am to 12:30pm
Sunday	Closed

Funeral Arrangements

We advise that you appoint an undertaker or funeral director as soon as possible. They will liaise with the mortuary staff and provide assistance with making funeral arrangements.

Post Mortem Examination

A post mortem is a medical internal and external examination of the body of a person who has died, in order to establish the cause of death. There are two types of post mortem examination, a coroner directed post mortem and a consented post mortem.

➢ Coroner directed post mortem

A coroner's post mortem is carried out on the instructions of a coroner. A coroner is an independent official who is legally responsible for the investigation of certain deaths. The hospital is obliged to report certain deaths to the Coroner, who may order a post mortem examination and/or an inquest. Hospital staff will inform you if the death of your family member has been reported to the Coroner. They will discuss the process with you, and give you a copy of the Beaumont Hospital 'Information leaflet about coroner's post mortem examinations'. If the Coroner orders a post mortem examination, the Coroner's office will make arrangements to transfer the deceased person to Dublin District Mortuary, where the examination will take place.

➢ **Consented Post Mortem**

When a coroner's post mortem examination is not required, the doctor who was treating the deceased may ask for consent to carry out a consented post mortem. This type of post mortem examination may provide further information regarding the illness or effects of treatment. This type of post mortem can only be carried out with the consent of next of kin/ family members.

Death Certificates

If a coroner's post-mortem examination is not required, the hospital will contact the documented next of kin or designated contact person to verify the deceased person's details. A 'death notification form' will then be issued to the documented next of kin or designated contact person. This form should be used to register the death in a civil registration office. There is no charge for registering a death, but you will have to pay a fee for a copy of the death certificate. Contact details for HSE civil registration offices are available from www.civilregistrationservice.ie.

If the Coroner orders a post mortem examination, the hospital does not issue death notification form. A death certificate can only be issued by the Civil Registration Service when the Coroner has issued a 'coroner's certificate' of cause of death. The Coroner will issue this certificate after the post mortem report is finalised, or after an inquest is held. The death certificate can then be obtained by contacting the Civil Registrations Service. If you have any questions about this, please contact the Coroner's office.

As it may take some time for the final death certificate to be issued, you may wish to apply for an interim death certificate from the Dublin District Coroner's office. This is helpful when dealing with social welfare, the post office and other financial institutions.

Grief

There is no 'right' way to grieve the loss of someone close to you. Following a death, family members may feel and cope differently depending on the relationship they had with the deceased. It is important to allow yourself to grieve in your own way. It is usually helpful to talk about the person who has died, and about how you are feeling. Children and young people grieve too but will express their feelings differently to adults.

Support available from Beaumont Hospital

We aim to provide a high standard of end of life care for our patients and their families. Please feel free to contact us if you need additional support.

➢ Mortuary

The mortuary staff are available to respond to any queries relating to the care of the deceased while in Beaumont Hospital.

➢ Social Work Department

Most people will find their own way through their experience of grief with the support of family and friends. Others may find it helpful some may find it helpful to attend a bereavement support group or meet with a social worker or counsellor. The social work department are available to talk to you about a range of bereavement services and guide you to a bereavement service in your area.

➢ Chaplaincy Service

The chaplaincy service is available on a 24 hour, 7 days a week basis to offer comfort, emotional and spiritual support. Chaplains of various denominations and faiths can be contacted on request. Chaplains support people of all faiths and none.

➤ **Death Certificates Office**

Staff in the death certificates office are available to help you with any queries in relation to obtaining a death certificate for the person who has died.

➤ **Patient Advocacy and Liaison Service (PALS).**

The Patient Advisory Liaison Service (PALS) department in Beaumont Hospital is available to offer help, support and advice for patients, families and carers. We can help you in many ways including:

I.   Help to resolve difficulties that may arise in relation to Hospital services or care.

II. Listen and respond to your questions, concerns or compliments.

III. Assist you in navigating services and information within the hospital.

IV. Co-ordinate and manage the review into complaints and provide a response.

V.   Ensure that key learning and recommendations are identified as a result of your feedback.

Beaumont Hospital values all feedback received from service users and endeavours to make improvements based on feedback provided.

Useful Contact Information

Beaumont Hospital Mortuary	01-8528180
Social Work Department medicalsocialwork@beaumont.ie	01- 8093290
Chaplaincy Department chaplaincy@beaumont.ie	01-8093229
Patient Advisory Liaison Service pals@beaumont.ie	01- 8093234
Death Certificates Office deathcerts@beaumont.ie	01-8092182
Dublin District Coroner dublincoroner@justice.ie	01-8746684
Dublin District Mortuary Email DDM@justice.ie	01-8592840
Civil Registrations Service 8-11 Lombard Street East, Dublin 2 www.civilregistrationservice.ie certificates@hse.ie	01-8638200

Other Sources of information and Support

➢ **The Citizens information Board**

The Citizens Information Board provide detailed information on dealing with practical matters following a death. This information can be found on

I. The Citizen Information website https://www.citizensinformation.ie/

II. In your local Citizen Information Centre or

III. By phoning the Citizen Information Helpline 0818074000

➢ **Health Service Executive (HSE)**

The HSE has published a book called [Bereavement: When someone close dies](). It provides useful practical and emotional support for people who are bereaved and for those supporting them. The book can be found on the HSE Website https://www.hse.ie/

➢ **The Irish Childhood Bereavement Network**

The Irish Childhood Bereavement Network provide a range of resources that you may find useful when supporting children and young people. These can be found on their website childhoodbereavement.ie

➢ **The Irish Hospice Foundation**

The Irish Hospice foundation have a range of bereavement support leaflets on their Bereavement & Loss website bereaved.ie. Hard copies are also available by phoning the Irish Hospice Foundation on 01 6793188.

Irish Hospice Foundation also run a bereavement support line – details below.