

Guidance and support after someone dies



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I think if I had been given a booklet like this when my wife died I would have understood how the services worked together.

I would have known the order of things especially from the bereavement service.

It is good to know that there is support for you and how to access it.

Frank

In times of a national pandemic, such as COVID19, some of the groups run by Saint Francis Hospice may be subject to change or cancellation. Please check that our services are running as advertised.

Guidance and support after someone dies

When someone dies, not only is it a sad and difficult time but there are many things that have to be done. This booklet is divided into sections and designed to guide and support you through the various tasks you will have to undertake in the coming days and weeks.

At Saint Francis Hospice, we are here to support you for as long as you need us. Please share this information with family and friends.

Our **Family Support Service** is here for relatives, friends of our patients and service users, and there are support services for bereaved children. They offer a number of helpful groups as well as one-to-one counselling and emotional support.

Call 01708 753319

OrangeLine is a dedicated phone line run by specialist staff and volunteers who can help you with a number of practical issues covered in this leaflet, as well as provide a friendly ear when times are hard.

Call 01708 758649

Useful websites

www.gov.uk/after-a-death

www.goodfuneralguide.co.uk

www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

www.organdonation.nhs.uk

www.gov.uk/wills-probate-inheritance

www.sfh.org.uk



There are three things you need to do within the first few days after someone dies.

- 1. Obtain the medical certificate of cause of death
- 2. Register the death (in the borough where the person died)
- **3.** Start to arrange the funeral (see Section Two of this booklet).

1. Obtain the medical certificate of cause of death

You will need this document to register the death. The certificate will show the cause of death and will be signed by a doctor.

When someone dies at the hospice, a Doctor will issue the medical certificate of cause of death and the Hospice will arrange to send it to the Registrar who will then directly contact you to make a telephone appointment. The deceased will usually be able to stay for a short time at the Hospice until the funeral is arranged, or the funeral director will take them to their chapel of rest. We have a viewing room available. Please ask staff members at the Hospice for more information.

When someone dies at home, or in a care home, the GP needs to be contacted immediately, even if out of hours (please contact your own GP surgery for details of how to contact a GP out of hours). The GP will issue the medical certificate of cause of death and send it to the relevant Register Office (Please see pages 8 and 9 for local Register Office contact details and processes).

Under certain circumstances, a doctor reports a death to the local coroner. If this does happen you can find out more at

www.gov.uk/after-a-death

2. Register the death

Who can register the death:

- A relative
- Someone who was present at the death
- An administrator from the hospice/hospital
- The person making the arrangements with the funeral director

The medical certificate of cause of death will already have been sent to the Register Officer from the GP, Hospital or Hospice. In Havering the Registrar will contact you directly. In Barking and Dagenham and Essex you will need to book an appointment on the website (please see pages 8 and 9 for web addresses). The Registrar will then scan the green certificate for burial or cremation to the crematorium or cemetery and a copy to your nominated funeral director.

If a funeral needs to be organised urgently for reasons of faith, it is sometimes possible to obtain the necessary paperwork from the Registrar prior to the full registration of the death. Contact the Registrar where the person died, see page 8-9 for contact details.

You will normally need to **make an appointment** at a register office and you can expect appointments to take 30 minutes. Please see pages 8-9 for local register office contact details.

You will need to take the deceased person's documents, if available, to your appointment with the Registrar:

- birth certificate
- council tax bill
- driving licence
- partnership certificate
- NHS medical card
- passport
- proof of address (i.e. utility bill).

Don't worry if you can't find all these documents - you'll still be able to register the death without them.

You will need to tell the registrar:

- the person's full name at the time of death
- 🐤 any names previously used, e.g. maiden name
- the person's date and place of birth
- their last address
- their occupation
- the full name, date of birth and occupation of a surviving or deceased spouse or civil partner
- b whether they were getting a state pension or any other benefits.

At the appointment you will receive a Certificate for Burial or Cremation and a Certificate of Registration of Death. You can buy extra death certificates at the appointment. Often banks, insurance companies, utility companies and other institutions will need **original** death certificates to close down accounts and will not accept photocopies.

Tell Us Once service

Most register offices have access to the Tell Us Once service which can be used to report the death to most government and local government organisations. For more information visit

www.gov.uk/after-a-death

Organ donation

If the deceased registered as an organ donor, they should have told someone close to them. More information can be found at

www.organdonation.nhs.uk/about-donation

Tissue donation

Most people can be considered for tissue donation or may already be on the organ donation register. You can donate tissue, such as skin, bone, tendons, eyes, heart valves and arteries after your death. The tissues donated by one person may help 50 people to have a better quality of life. More information can be found by calling the **Tissue Donor Line** on 0300 123 2323 or by visiting **www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/how-you-can-help/donate.**

Registering a death

The GP, Hospital or Hospice will send the medical certificate of cause of death to the Register Office. Please use this table to find the Register Office contact information for the relevant borough. **All deaths should be registered, within 5 days, in the borough where the death occurred.**

	Website
Havering	www.havering.gov.uk
Barking and Dagenham	www.lbbd.gov.uk
Brentwood	www.essex.gov.uk
Redbridge	www.redbridge.gov.uk
West Essex	www.essex.gov.uk

OrangeLine can help you with the process of registering the death of a loved one. You can call them or ask to see them at the Hospice.

Call 01708 758649

How to book an appointment	Address
The Register Office will contact you directly to make an appointment 01708 433481 cemeteries@havering.gov.uk	South Essex Crematorium Ockendon Road Upminster RM14 2UY
Book online using the website 020 8270 4744 register.office@lbbd.gov.uk	Woodlands House Rainham Road North Dagenham RM10 7ER
Book online using the website 0345 603 7632 registration@essex.gov.uk	Brentwood Library New Road Brentwood CM14 4BP
Book online using the website 020 8708 7123	Town Hall 128 - 142 High Road Ilford IG1 1DD
Book online using the website 0345 603 7632 registration@essex.gov.uk	Epping Library St John's Road Epping Essex CM16 5DN



Did you know?

- The only legal requirements in England and Wales are that the death is certified and registered and the deceased is either buried or cremated
- You do not need to have a funeral ceremony
- You do not need a religious minister
- You do not have to use a funeral director



Funeral arrangements

We hope the information here will help you as you make choices and arrangements.

Most people use a funeral director to arrange the funeral, but you can arrange a funeral yourself.

What type of funeral would you like to organise?

Funerals can be religious, non-religious or anything in between. Your loved one may have already expressed their wishes for their funeral. If not, you can decide what you would like to include in the funeral service, and many families often choose music, poetry, hymns and readings. You may like the idea of having someone talk about your loved one – you could do this yourself and/or ask friends or relatives to do so.

If you have your own faith leader, this person would be the natural choice to lead the funeral – and to help you with planning. Funeral directors will have a good range of contacts if you are unsure who to ask.

Planning a funeral with a funeral director

How to choose a funeral director

Unless you have a particular funeral director that you know well or your loved one wished to use, it is advisable to call or visit a few and ask for written, itemised quotes. There may be additional factors that influence your choice, such as their location and word of mouth recommendations.

We strongly recommend that you choose a funeral director who is a member of one of the following:

- National Association of Funeral Directors (www.nafd.org.uk)
- Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors (www.saif.org.uk)

These organisations have codes of practice - they must give you a price list when asked.

The websites above may also be useful in helping you to find a funeral director to approach.

Humanist UK can also help with information on non-religious funerals.

For more information

visit: www.humanism.org.uk/ceremonies/non-religious-funerals



What will a funeral director do?

Your chosen funeral director should support you throughout the process of organising the funeral. This could include: providing a coffin, transferring the deceased from the place of death to their premises, care for the deceased in preparation for transportation to the funeral (usually a hearse), and arranging the burial or cremation as appropriate.

When can you visit a funeral director?

You can contact and make arrangements with a funeral director before the death is registered, but they will need to see some of the paperwork you received from the registrar before the funeral can take place (please see page 6 for information on seeing a registrar).

Planning a funeral without a funeral director

If a funeral director is not involved, you will need to liaise directly with the cemetery or crematorium where the funeral is to take place.

Funerals can be held in a place of worship, a crematorium chapel, or at home. More information can be found at **www.goodfuneralguide**. co.uk and **www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk**. Natural burial grounds are an increasingly popular choice and are usually ecologically friendly. The body or ashes are buried in a woodland setting. Information and advice can be found at **www.naturaldeath.org.uk**

Our Chaplains from the **Family Support team** can offer you help and advice so that you can plan the most appropriate funeral for your loved one. You can call them or ask to see them at the Hospice.

Call 01708 753319

Funeral donations

Many people like to ask for donations instead of flowers at funerals. If you would like donations to be made to Saint Francis Hospice, we can help by providing a personalised funeral collection box and donation envelopes. Please contact us if you would like some on 01708 723593 or visit www. sfh.org.uk/funeral-donations. Personalised online tribute funds can be set up at www.sfh.org.uk/tribute-funds.





Paying for a funeral

Costs may vary considerably from one funeral director to another. It is worth discussing with family and/or friends what is important and how the costs will be met before arrangements are made.

The person who signs the contract with the funeral director is responsible for paying for the funeral. It does not need to be the same person who registers the death.

Some funeral directors will ask for a deposit to cover some initial costs. These are the costs the funeral director will pay to others, for example, the crematorium fee, newspaper announcements or flowers. You can ask your funeral director for a written quote detailing all these fees.

Our **Family Support Team** are on hand to speak to you about the different ways they can support you and your family at this time.

Call 01708 753319

Funeral plans

It is worth checking whether a pre-paid funeral plan exists as some people prefer to make their own plans before they die.

Paying for the funeral from the estate

If there are funds from the deceased's estate (including life assurance payments), it is expected that this will be used to pay for the funeral. Most banks usually agree to release money for the funeral as quickly as possible. The bank will let you know which documents you need to provide, but it is normal for them to ask for the death certificate and the invoice from a funeral director.

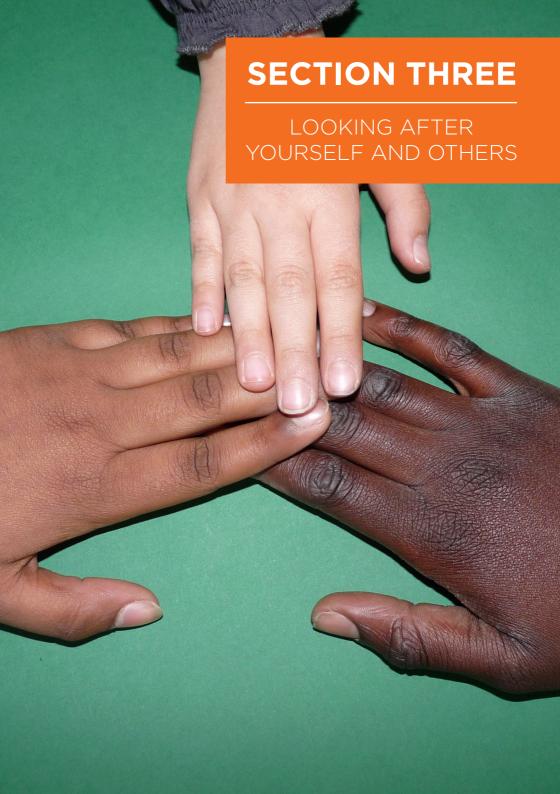
Help with funeral payment

If you are on a low income and you need help to pay for the funeral you are arranging, you could be eligible to receive a Funeral Payment from the state. You will be expected to pay the money back if you receive money from the deceased's estate at a later date. You can read more about this – including whether you are eligible at:

www.gov.uk/funeral-payments

Other information

If you need further information on dealing with the deceased's estate or affairs please visit **www.gov.uk/wills-probate-inheritance**



Grieving

The death of a family member or friend can be devastating and can bring about stronger emotions than we have previously experienced.

For some people, grieving starts at the time of death. For others, it can start at the time of diagnosis.

Grieving is part of bereavement, and it is unique and personal to you. It can be a stressful time, which you will cope with in your own way, and with the support of others.

Here are some of the feelings and thoughts you may have encountered already or may encounter:

- Numbness and difficulty accepting the person has died
- Thinking you have seen or heard the person, or searching for them
- Difficulty in sleeping or eating
- Feeling physically low and worrying about your health
- Sadness, guilt, anger, anxiety
- Loneliness
- Feelings of relief
- Depression
- Finding everyday situations and relationships difficult to cope with
- Disappointment about the plans and dreams that will never be fulfilled
- Difficulty in remembering their voice.

It's really important to look after yourself after the death of a loved one

- Make time to sleep, rest, as well as spending time with your family and friends
- If you are able to, it is advised to put off making major decisions, such as moving home, for at least a year
- Drive carefully and be extra careful at home
- Be gentle with yourself
- It can be helpful to express your feelings and talk about what has happened in order to acknowledge your loved one's life before their death and your relationship with them.

How Saint Francis Hospice can support you

Saint Francis Hospice will contact you by letter with information about all our Bereavement Services for both adults and children.

Family support services work holistically across all the core Hospice services to provide advice, guidance, emotional support and counselling to bereaved relatives, friends and carers. The Family Support Team is a multi-professional team consisting of social workers, counsellors, chaplains, art therapists and our volunteer bereavement counsellors. The team can be contacted on **01708 753319**.

One to one counselling

We offer individual support, and this provides an opportunity to talk confidentially on a one to one basis, to explore feelings, develop coping strategies and support in adapting to changing circumstances. This can take place at the Hospice counselling room or in your home or at school for children. The team are experienced in listening, and support you in expressing your feelings and in making sense and meaning of your loss.

Support groups

We run a number of support groups at Saint Francis Hospice. These include:

Bereavement Support Group - If you have been recently bereaved and your loved one was under Saint Francis Hospice care, you are welcome to join the group. This group provides an opportunity to share your grief with others and build a support network outside of the Hospice. The group meets at the Hospice on the fourth Wednesday of every month, in the evening. Please call and let the team know that you would like to attend and they will be able to communicate to you the timings and the name of the facilitator from the team. We expect you to access this for a limited period and we are able to signpost you to other social groups that the Hospice runs in the community.

Help Overcome Probems Effectively (HOPE) - We run regular HOPE programmes for those who are ready to explore the next stage of bereavement support. HOPE is a unique support group which over a six-week period will offer a combination of education and interaction in a safe and friendly environment. You will explore the grief process and work through its many emotions to help you cope with the adjustments to life in the future.

Walk On - On the first Wednesday of every month our Walk On Group meets at 9.45am on The Green at Havering-atte-Bower. Our walk will start at 10am. Join the Saint Francis Hospice walking group for service users, friends and family of service users and those bereaved of a loved one under the care of Saint Francis Hospice. Dogs are welcome! The Group walks for one hour through the picturesque surrounding area and countryside. It is an opportunity to talk to others who have experienced, or are experiencing, hospice care. Please wear appropriate footwear and bring a bottle of water. "Walk On" offers a chance to walk and talk with like-minded people, or just enjoy the company of others. The benefits include companionship, connecting to the environment and the sense of wellbeing which comes with exercise.

Friendly Faces - A social group providing a safe and friendly environment for people who have been bereaved to meet and socialise together. The groups are run by our OrangeLine team and meet every Wednesday morning in local cafes. For further information, please contact OrangeLine on **01708 758649** or email **orangeline@sfh.org.uk**

You can view the full list of our groups, including our walking group and social groups on our website www.sfh.org.uk/family-support





OrangeLine is fully funded by the National Lottery.



Grief in children and young people

Children and young people react and cope in various ways according to their age and their level of understanding around the meaning of death.

They may have false beliefs about being responsible for the death, or they could seem unaffected by the death, whilst showing distress at other times.

Adults often attempt to shield children from the pain of bereavement, telling them little or nothing about what has happened. Equally, children and young people may possibly say very little so as not to add to the burden of adults around them. Children know and understand far more than we imagine. We encourage adults to share their grief, whilst encouraging children to talk about their thoughts and feelings, and reassuring them about their health, security and safety, as well as that of others.

It is important that children and young people feel part of the changes that are happening within the family. Keeping children in mind when making funeral arrangements can help them feel included. Children may also like to attend the funeral, to say goodbye and to see what happens to their relative.







How Saint Francis Hospice can help children and young people

We at Saint Francis Hospice are funded by Children in Need to provide the service to young children. The grant given helps to provide support to young people as they come to terms with the effects of losing a parent or loved one.

Our child and family therapists can help you talk together as a family about what you are facing, so you gain support from each other, and assist you in making important decisions. They also support parents in delivering difficult news and preparing children and adults both practically and emotionally for the death. This is done by working creatively through artwork, journaling, expression, communication and play, either as a family group or individually.

We can help you to talk with the children and teenagers in your family about what is happening and how they are feeling and coping, giving guidance on strategies and coping techniques. We can assist in creating lasting memories, such as journals, letters, cards and memory boxes.

We support children of any age, and will act as an advocate for the child when working with external agencies such as schools. We hold regular bereavement support days for young people and their primary care giver following the bereavement.

Our **Family Support Team** are on hand to speak to you about all the different ways they can help you and your loved ones. Their services are provided free of charge and you can choose to take them up at any time. Contact them for more information.

Call 01708 753319

Due to the pandemic and ensuring safety of all, some of the services have to be adapted. There may be less onsite services, so please speak to a member of the Family Support team to find out more details.



Remembrance

There are many ways you can remember the life of someone important to you with Saint Francis Hospice. We have included a few in this section.

Visit the Hospice Chapel-Quiet Space and Book of Remembrance

This quiet space at the Hospice, for people of all faiths and of no faith, is open for you to visit at any time and offers you a space to remember alone, or with family and friends.

The Book of Remembrance is kept in the Chapel-Quiet Space. You can request the name of your loved one to be entered. The book is always kept on display and will be left open at the day's date. If you would like to view a specific date, please contact reception on **01708 753319** and they will be happy to ensure the book is ready for you when you visit.

In times of a national pandemic, such as Covid 19, the Hospice Chapel-Quiet space may be closed to visitors.

Attend a Service of Remembrance

We will invite you and your family to attend one of our Remembrance Services. The services are held approximately every three months. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, these have taken place virtually. Each service is filled with prayers, music and uplifting readings. They are for all those who have experienced bereavement and are suitable for people of all backgrounds. Please call **01708 753319** ext **2290** or ext **2288** for further information.

Take part in Light up a Life

We hold Light up a Life remembrance services every December as we have found they are a real help to relatives and friends at a very difficult time of year. It also enables you to support the work of the Hospice at Christmas by making a donation. Please contact us on **01708 753319** ext **2301** or ext **2322** if you would like to receive information about attending a service or making a dedication in memory of your loved one.

Keyring Keepsakes

We are now able to offer families the option of having a sentimental keepsake from their loved one. The keyrings can help and support families through their grieving and we hope families find comfort and support in taking their loved one's fingerprint away with them.

Donating to Saint Francis Hospice in memory of someone special

We find that many people choose to honour the memory of someone special by raising funds in their name. By doing so, you will be enabling others to benefit from our care and support in the future.

As a registered charity, we are reliant on the support of our community to keep our services going. We need to raise over £7.8m every year to fund our work, and every donation, no matter the size, makes a big difference to us.

There are lots of ways to support the Hospice in someone's memory. Below we have listed some ideas, but you are welcome to call the Fundraising team on **01708 753319** ext **2301** or ext **2322** to find out more.

Funeral donations

You may wish to ask family and friends attending your loved one's funeral to donate to Saint Francis Hospice instead of buying flowers. We can help by providing a personalised funeral collection box and donation envelopes. Please call **01708 753319** or visit **www.sfh.org.uk/funeral-donations**

Memory Tree (pictured on page 22)

Our Memory Tree is a beautiful handmade sculpture situated in a prime location in our Hospice for all to see, and it offers a unique and meaningful way to pay tribute to the memory of those you hold dear. A solid copper, brass or aluminium leaf can be engraved with the name of your loved one and will remain on the tree for as long as you wish. Please visit **www.sfh.org.uk/memory-tree** for more information on dedicating a leaf.



Memory Meadow and Night Sky

Depending on the season, our online site illustrates the view from Saint Francis Hospice over the hills towards London. In spring and summer, you can choose from four flowers to plant in The Memory Meadow. In autumn and winter, you can dedicate a star in the Night Sky. You can write a special message to the person you love and add their photo. All dedications can be shared on Facebook and Twitter, too.

To find out more please visit sfh.org.uk or call **01708 753319** ext **2301** or ext **2322**.



Online Tribute Funds

You can set up a Tribute Fund online to remember a loved one and raise money for Saint Francis Hospice in their memory. It is a central place where you can track how much money you are raising, share photographs, thoughts and light candles for your loved one. It is an opportunity to remember your beloved in a meaningful way. The page remains open forever and to commemorate special occasions such as birthdays, anniversaries and Christmas. www.sfh.muchloved.org



Challenge yourself

Many people find taking up a challenge such as a run or biking event has a really positive benefit on mind, body and emotions. We organise our own events that will challenge you both mentally and physically and we pride ourselves on having something for everybody.

From our Cuppa for Care and everything in between, we would love you to get involved and raise as much money as possible to help us continue to deliver care to people in our local communities when they need it the most.





Visit our website to find out what your next challenge could be **www.sfh.org.uk/support-us** or call us on **01708 753319**.

Or do it your own way

There are all sorts of ways you can support the hospice. From bake sales to marathons, take a look at the inspiring (and simple!) ways you can support us.

Visit www.sfh.org.uk/ways-to-fundraise for a little inspiration and if you can't find what you're looking for, or have any questions at all, please call our Fundraising team on 01708 753319 ext 2301 or ext 2322.

One off donations

Donations can be sent directly to Saint Francis Hospice, The Hall, Havering-atte-Bower, Romford, RM4 1QH. Alternatively, you can make an online donation on the Hospice website: www.sfh.org.uk/donate

Please remember to include your contact details so that we can let you know we have received your donation safely and, if the donation is in memory of someone, please also include their name.

Will you Sponsor a Nurse?

Support the nurse who brings the kindness and care of the hospice to all local people who need it.

We rely on the regular donations of our supporters to ensure our nurses are funded and without this support we would not be able to provide our end of life services to the local community now and into the future.



A donation of £5 a month for one year could pay for an hour of nursing care in a patient's home. Visit **www.sfh.org.uk/nurse**

How do I get started?

Call our fundraising team on **01708 723593** or visit our website for more information **www.sfh.org.uk/support-us**

Other ways to support Saint Francis Hospice

Join our team of volunteers

We are supported by around 900 volunteers who give their time, skills and energy to the Hospice. There are various roles throughout the organisation; some offering a regular commitment, with others offering flexibility if a person's time is limited. For those who would prefer something off-site, we have our retail outlets and fundraising events. Our volunteers work within teams to provide assistance and support to our staff, and also to help raise essential funds. If you are interested in volunteering, you can visit our website to find out more: www.sfh.org.uk; email the Volunteer Services Hub at: volunteering@sfh.org.uk or telephone: 01708 758614.

Donate to our shops

Our retail arm generates over £2m income a year through sales of donated goods. From clothing, electrical goods to pre-loved china and furniture. If you would like to donate to any of our outlets please visit our website for a full list of shops, www.sfh.org.uk/retail.

About Saint Francis Hospice

Saint Francis Hospice provides care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to local people affected by life-limiting illnesses. As a registered charity, we rely on the financial support of our community to keep providing world class care free of charge to individuals and their families. Every year, we provide treatment, care and support to more than 4,000 local people affected by a life-limiting illness.

Confidentiality

At Saint Francis Hospice we are committed to upholding your rights to confidentiality and protecting your privacy. We will treat your information with respect. Keep it secure and comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 including GDPR. Our privacy notice is available on request or by visiting our website **www.sfh.org.uk**

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Tel: 01708 753319 Email: mail@sfh.org.uk Visit: www.sfh.org.uk

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