

## **Death certification**

If the baby dies before they have been seen alive after discharge by their GP AND the GP has not seen the patient in the previous 14 days:

- GP sees patient after death to confirm death and rings neonatal Consultant on call
- Neonatal Consultant rings Coroner's office to explain the situation and for permission to issue death certificate
- Family collect death certificate from the hospital and take this to the Coroner's office.
- Coroner completes a coroner's death certificate without an inquest and issues a certificate which the family can take to the Registrar.

## **GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH POTENTIAL DONORS**

There are several options for donation, and a child may be suitable for different options. The retrieval team can offer the family to see the child after retrieval if the family wish this. If the child is subject to a Coroner's case, donation is still possible subject to consent from the Coroner

### **Solid organ donation**

In hours contact hospital Specialist Nurse in Organ Donation (SNOD)

Out of hours: On call transplant co-ordinator 24-hour pager 07659 146 757

Please leave your name, hospital, department and full phone number including dialling code

### **Donation after brain death (formerly heart-beating donation)**

- Contact SNOD when the decision is made to do brain stem testing to assess suitability.
- The SNOD need not meet the family initially but is then available to discuss brainstem test results and donation

### **Donation after cardiac death (formerly non-heart beating donation)**

- Once the decision is made to stop intensive treatment, refer to SNOD to assess suitability
- The child transfers to theatre for retrieval after 5 minutes of monitored asystole and certification of death

### **Tissue donation**

- Heart valves are potentially suitable from 32 weeks' gestation (preferably within 24 hours of death)
- Approach the family after death and obtain verbal consent
- Contact the National Tissue Service via 24-hour pager 0800-4320559 or 07659 180773  
All demographic details needed: Include a family member's name, telephone number and a time to call. They will organise recorded consent over the phone and retrieval

## TAKING A CHILD HOME AFTER DEATH

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A child cannot be taken home if a post mortem is planned or if a Coroner's case is outstanding</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The medical certificate of cause of death must be given to parents</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dignified transport on site in the hospital.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parents may take their child home in their own transport Judgment needs to be made about their level of distress, and their safety should be a priority Consider asking the funeral director or private ambulance</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parents should have contact numbers of support staff and/or funeral director before leaving the ward</li><li>• A funeral director should be identified and informed of the arrangements (the same or following day)</li><li>• Parents informed that the funeral director will contact them to arrange collection of the child – from home</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ward staff must attend the mortuary to log the death in the mortuary book: only patient details are needed</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff should telephone the relevant police force to inform them of arrangements Each police authority area en route should be contacted, eg Cleveland, N Yorkshire, Durham or Tyne &amp; Wear</li></ul>

### Receiving a child home after death

A copy of this page should be given to parents and the original kept in the medical notes

The parents of .....who died on.....  
Have requested to take their child home and will be making their own funeral arrangements

Parents: names and

signatures.....

Member of staff: name and  
signature.....

## **TO FACILITATE TRANSFER OF A CHILD TO ANOTHER COUNTRY**

If the parents wish their baby to be buried in their country of origin, they will need to inform the Registrar of this when they register the baby or child's death

Instead of the usual certificate of disposal, the Registrar will make a copy of the death certificate for the family to give to the funeral director. The funeral director will then apply to the Coroner for an out of England order, which takes one to two days. (If a post mortem suggests death was not by natural causes, an out of England order will not be issued until the legal process is complete).

The funeral director will also arrange all the travel and transport and supply the relevant airline with the following:

- A freedom from infection certificate (which he will obtain from the doctor who signed the death certificate)
- A zinc lined coffin which must be hermetically sealed (it can be opened once the destination is reached)
- A certificate to prove the body has been embalmed
- A consular seal from the relevant embassy (only required for some countries)

## **Useful contact numbers/resources**

### **Local Network Hospitals**

### **Telephone (Switchboard)**

Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle	0191 233 6161
James Cook University Hospital, Middlesbrough	01642 850 850
Sunderland Royal Hospital	0191 565 6256
University Hospital North Tees	01642 617 617
Wansbeck Hospital, Ashington	0844 811 8111
Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Gateshead	0191 482 0000
South Tyneside District Hospital	0191 404 1000
University Hospital, North Durham	0191 333 2333
Darlington Memorial Hospital	01325 380 100
Friarage Hospital, Northallerton	01609 779 911
Cumberland Infirmary, Carlisle	01228 523 444
West Cumberland Hospital, Whitehaven	01946 693 181

### **Regional Children's Hospices**

St Oswald's Children's Hospice, Newcastle	0191 285 0063
Butterwick Children's Hospice, Stockton	01642 607 742
Zoe's Place, Middlesbrough	01642 457 985
Martin House Hospice, Wetherby	01937 845 045

### **Support/Counselling Services/Resources & Helplines**

BLISS ("For babies born too small, too soon")	<a href="http://www.bliss.org.uk">www.bliss.org.uk</a>	0500 618 140
SANDS (Stillbirth & Neonatal Death Charity)	<a href="http://www.uk-sands.org">www.uk-sands.org</a>	020 7436 5881
Child Bereavement UK	<a href="http://www.childbereavement.org.uk">www.childbereavement.org.uk</a>	01494 568 900
Together for Short Lives	<a href="http://www.togetherforshortlives.org.uk">www.togetherforshortlives.org.uk</a>	0845108 2201
Saying Goodbye	<a href="http://www.sayinggoodbye.org">www.sayinggoodbye.org</a>	0845 293 8027

### **Adult Hospices offering bereavement support to siblings and families**

Teesside Hospice, Middlesbrough	01642 811 063
St Theresa's Hospice, Darlington	01325 254 321
Butterwick Hospice, Bishop Auckland	01388 603 003

### **Clinical guidance**

North East Paediatric Palliative Care Helpline	0191 246 9122
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