

Support Agencies

Bereavement Service

Offers relatives a single point of contact for reporting a death to the Department for Communities and helps them to access any other benefits they may be entitled to.
Freephone 0800 085 2463

Child Bereavement Service General

Advice and support to parents/carers of children and young people up to the age of 18 years who have been bereaved.

Tel: 028 9066 8333

[www.barnardos.org.uk/
childbereavementservice.html](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/childbereavementservice.html)

Email: cbsreferrals@barnardos.org.uk

Compassionate Friends

Support for bereaved parents and grandparents who have experienced the death of a child of any age.

Northern Ireland Helpline:

Freephone: 028 8778 8016

www.tcf.org.uk

Email: helpline@tcf.org.uk

Coroner's Service for Northern Ireland

Information about the work of the Coroner's Service, the inquest process and any questions you have in relation to the coroner's system.

Tel: 0300 200 7811

Email: coronersoffice@courtsni.gov.uk

Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM)

Information and support for people from ethnic minority groups.

Tel: 028 9023 8645

Email: info@nicem.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Support NI

A national charity that provides advice, information and support to anyone who has been bereaved, whenever or however the death occurred.

Telephone: 028 9043 4600

www.cruse.org.uk

Email: northern.ireland@cruse.org.uk

Lifeline helpline

Northern Ireland's free crisis response helpline service for people who are experiencing distress or despair.

Telephone: 0808 808 8000

Text Phone 18001 0808 808 8000 for deaf and hard of hearing users

www.lifelinehelpline.info

Sands National Helpline

Provides a safe, confidential place for anyone who has been affected by the death of a baby.

Telephone: 0808 164 3332

www.sands.org.uk

Email: helpline@sands.org.uk

Switchboard LGBT

Support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people who have been bereaved.

Tel: Helpline 0300 330 0630

Daily 10am-10pm

www.switchboard.lgbt

Email: chris@switchboard.lgbt

This information can also be found online at:
www.nias.hscni.net



What next?

Some practical advice and guidance to help you through the coming days in coping with your loss.



Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
Health and Social Care Trust



“We offer our deepest sympathies”

We would like to offer our condolences to you at this time. We recognise that the death of a loved one is upsetting for family and friends. There are many people and services here to help you, these include funeral directors, police, registrar’s office and bereavement organisations. This short guide will help to answer questions that you might have and offer practical advice on what the next steps are at this sad and distressing time.

Northern Ireland Ambulance Service

The attending ambulance clinician will confirm that death has occurred. However, a doctor (normally the patient’s GP) is legally required to issue a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD). We will attempt to make contact with the GP (or the out of hours GP service) to notify them that the person has died. If the death is sudden or unexpected we are required to contact the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI).

Sudden or unexpected death

In the event of a sudden or unexpected death, the GP may not be in a position to issue the MCCD as they might be unsure of the actual cause of death. In this case the Coroner will need to be notified. We will contact the PSNI who will act as agents of the Coroner. PSNI officers will attend all sudden or unexpected deaths that occur outside of hospital or medical setting. It will be the responsibility of the Coroner to investigate further and identify the cause of death, this may necessitate a post mortem. The PSNI will explain what happens next.

Deaths that need to be reported to the Coroner

In certain circumstances a death will be required to be reported to the Coroner. These include but are not limited to situations where:

- a doctor did not treat the person during their last

illness

- a doctor did not see or treat the person for their condition from which they died within 28 days of death
- the cause of death was sudden and unexpected, violent, unnatural such as an accident
- the cause of death is suicide
- the cause of death was an industrial disease of the lungs such as asbestosis
- the death occurred in any other circumstances that may require investigation.

Funeral directors

You will need to appoint a funeral director to make the necessary arrangements for the funeral. They will be invaluable in assisting you in the early stages of your bereavement. Once appointed, they will support you in making the necessary arrangements and will explain all options available to you and an estimate of costs. If you have concerns about the cost of a funeral, you may be entitled to support. Information on assistance with funeral expenses can be found on line at: www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/funeral-expenses-payments

A list of funeral directors can be found at:

- www.Yell.com
- National Association of Funeral Directors www.nafd.org.uk
- National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors www.saif.org.uk
- www.naturaldeathsociety.org.uk

Spiritual support

After the death of a loved one, many people get support and comfort from their faith / belief representative. If you would like a faith / belief representative to help you plan and prepare for the funeral service, contact them as soon as possible to discuss the arrangements. If you are unsure who to contact your funeral director can advise.

Registering a death

All deaths in Northern Ireland must be registered. This should **be within five days** of the date of death unless the death has been referred to the Coroner. A death may be registered in any district registration office in Northern Ireland.

The following people can act as qualified informants:

- Any relative of the deceased including a relative by marriage.
- Person present at death.
- Executor or administrator of the deceased’s estate
- Occupier of the premises in which the death occurred
- Person finding the body
- Person taking charge of the body e.g., the undertaker
- Person procuring the disposal of the body – the person employing the undertaker.

The Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD)

A MCCD will be issued when the GP or Coroner has identified the cause of death as is issued to the relatives of the deceased. However, due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the following temporary procedure has been put in place:

The MCCD is forwarded directly to the General Register Office in Belfast. Once this is received, it is checked and emailed to the Registrar of the district office in which the deceased lived.

The Registrar will then contact the deceased’s next of kin. These contact details are only obtained by the registrar once a funeral director has been appointed.

It would be helpful therefore if you could contact the Registrar directly with next of kin details.

The Registrar will contact the next of kin and the death will be registered over the phone