



## Introduction

If you are reading this, someone close to you may have just died—please accept our condolences on your loss.

It is always difficult to deal with the death of a person close to you. As well as the emotional issues that arise, a number of practical matters have to be dealt with. We hope this leaflet will inform you about what happens following a death in hospital and help you deal with some of the questions or issues that come up.

## What happens next?

All deaths in hospital need to be confirmed by a doctor as soon as possible. If you are present at the time of death, the nursing staff will arrange for you to spend time after the death at the bedside of the person. This can be a difficult time for you but seeing the person dead can help you to begin to accept what has happened and to comfort each other. After this, the deceased person will be removed to the hospital mortuary. If you were unable to spend time at the bedside after death, you can arrange to visit the mortuary if you wish.

## Visiting the mortuary

You can arrange to visit the mortuary by contacting the Nursing Management Office via the hospital switchboard on 053-9153000.

## Removal & funeral arrangements

**You need to contact a funeral director (undertaker) as soon as possible.** The funeral director will be able to help you arrange the removal and funeral. The funeral director can also give you advice on choosing a coffin, embalming, burial, cremation, transport, newspaper notices and costs.

If you do not know a funeral director, see the Golden Pages or the Association of Funeral Directors of Ireland Website at <http://www.iafd.ie>

## Wexford General Hospital

### Chaplaincy Service

The Hospital Chaplain may be contacted via hospital switchboard on 053-9153000 or by asking nursing staff on the ward to contact the chaplain for you.

Chaplaincy hours in Wexford General Hospital are:

8am – 6pm Saturday through Thursday. Outside of these hours, an on-call service is accessible via hospital switchboard. You may prefer to contact a minister for religion already known to you.

### Post Mortem Examination

A post mortem is an examination of the body of a person who has died in order to establish the cause of death and/or examine the effects of treatment. The

treating doctor will explain the post mortem procedure and answer any questions you may have.

**Not all patients who die in hospital need a post mortem.**

There are two types of post mortem (PM):

#### 1. Coroner's Post Mortem

Certain deaths by law have to be reported to the coroner. The coroner may order a Post Mortem to establish the cause of a death which is unexpected or unexplained, Consent from the family is not needed. You **may** be asked to formally identify the deceased in the presence of a member of An Garda Síochána.

Following a Coroner's Post Mortem, **the death is registered by the Coroner.** This can take 6-12 months to complete. An **Interim** Death Certificate which may be acceptable to banks, insurance companies and other institutions can be provided by the Coroner's office on request.

#### 2. Hospital (Non-coroner's) Post Mortem

A Hospital Post Mortem usually occurs at the request of the treating doctor but requests may also come from the family. Consent must be obtained from the family.

It is a legal requirement in Ireland that each death is recorded and registered.

Following a **Hospital Post Mortem**, the death notification form **may** take 3-4 months to get sent out — **you** (the family) will need to register the death.

## How do I register the death and obtain a Death Certificate?

1. Within 3 weeks of the death, the Director of Nursing's Office will post out the Death Notification Form to the deceased person's next-of-kin.
2. The family need to complete Part 2 of this form & bring it to any Civil Registration Service for Births, Deaths & Marriages (see \* below).
3. The family will be asked to sign the death register in the presence of the Registrar.
4. **The Registrar will issue the Death Certificate.**

\*There is a Civil Registration Service for Births, Deaths & Marriages in Grogan's Road, Wexford  
Tel 053 91 85631 or  
053 91 85643 or 053 91 85606.  
and in the Health Centres in Enniscorthy, New Ross and Gorey.

### Death Certification Queries

The office of the Director of Nursing may be contacted via hospital switchboard on 053-9153144 if you have queries in relation to a death notification from.

### Coroner in Co. Wexford:

Dr. Sean M. Nixon, Gorey  
053 9421336

**Death ends a life, not a relationship**

## Sources of Information & Support

### Citizens Information Services

is a good source of information on issues related to death and bereavement including Social Welfare benefits, bereavement grants, & dealing with the person's estate.  
<http://www.citizensinformation.ie>  
Lo-Call 1890 777 121

### Irish Hospice Foundation,

Morrison Chambers, 32 Nassau St. Dublin 2  
01 6793188  
[www.hospice-foundation.ie](http://www.hospice-foundation.ie)

### Barnardos,

Christchurch Square, Christchurch, Dublin 8  
01 4530355  
[www.barnardos.ie](http://www.barnardos.ie)

### Wexford Bereavement Care Services,

St. Bridget's Centre  
053-9123086

## General Information on Grieving

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.

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## Wexford General Hospital



## Information for families following a death in hospital

This leaflet relates to sudden and expected death