

Bereavement Support Service

Information for families and friends at Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH)

We would like to offer you, your family and friends our condolences at this time. We realise the days to come may be difficult for you. If someone dies of COVID-19 (coronavirus) or complications resulting from the virus, a number of things may be particularly hard for family and friends to deal with, but we want to offer our support to everyone affected by a death in the hospital, and provide practical information on the changes to usual services.

Changes to the Bereavement Service

The Bereavement team will continue to offer face-to-face appointments for relatives, however only one relative may attend due to the need to maintain social distancing. Due to the current situation around COVID-19, we understand that you may not wish to or may be unable to attend the hospital at this time. If this is the case we will provide support via telephone or email. We appreciate the anxiety and concern you are experiencing and will endeavour to help you through this difficult time.

Please telephone **01689 863584** at your convenience and our team of bereavement support officers will talk you through the process and services available.

We are experiencing an increase in calls, so if we cannot answer your call, please leave a message with your name, telephone number, and the name of the person who has died. Please be assured you will receive a call back at the earliest opportunity.

The Bereavement team will return any personal property that was not collected from the ward at the time your relative died, where it is safe to do so. Any items that are soiled with non-infectious body fluid will be returned in a waterproof plastic bag. You can choose to dispose of the bag in household waste or launder the items.

Alternatively, you can arrange for your Funeral Director to collect property from the bereavement office.

Viewings in the Chapel of Rest

We are now able to support you with viewing your loved one if you would like to do so. Please contact the Bereavement team who will arrange this for you. Alternatively please ask your Funeral Director who may offer the immediate family viewings before the funeral.

Registration and arranging a funeral

We are sending all completed death certificates electronically to the Bromley Registry Office. As of Monday 30 March 2020, all deaths will be registered by a telephone death registrations process.

To book an appointment, please go to the Bromley Council website:

www.bromley.gov.uk/Deathcertificateform or call **0300 303 8667**.

We would also recommend that you instruct a Funeral Director as soon as possible, and ideally before you book your telephone registration, as the Registrar will be able to issue the funeral document (Green Form) straight away. Otherwise, the Green Form can be sent to you. You can buy Death Certificates at £11 each.

As of the 24 March 2020 in the UK, funerals are allowed to go ahead but with limited numbers in attendance, abiding by social distancing rules. Your Funeral Director will advise on the number of people that can attend, as this varies depending on where the funeral is being held. This will be the case whether or not the person died of COVID-19 (coronavirus) pneumonia.

We anticipate that funeral services are likely to become delayed. We therefore recommend that you instruct a Funeral Director as early as possible so that we can help to process the funeral paperwork that they require. Please ask your Funeral Director to telephone our Mortuary on **01689 863586** as soon as you have instructed them.

Useful contacts

To talk to the Bereavement service at Princess Royal University Hospital, please call **01689 863586** or email kch-tr.kchbereavementservices@nhs.net

For further information and support, here are some useful organisations:

Cruse Bereavement Care – national bereavement care

www.cruse.org.uk/get-help/coronavirus-dealing-bereavement-and-grief

Cruse Free helpline: **0808 808 1677**

Age UK

Offers free advice and support to older people, including financial, health and wellbeing.

www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/coronavirus/arranging-a-funeral--coronavirus-advice

Sharing your information

We have teamed up with Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals in a partnership known as King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas'. To make sure everyone you meet always has the most up-to-date information about your health, we may share information about you between the hospitals.

Care provided by students

We provide clinical training where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. The PALS office is in the main hospital foyer at PRUH and they would be happy to advise you.

Tel: **01689 863252**

Email: **kch-tr.palspruh@nhs.net**

You can also contact us by using our online form at **www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals**

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 020 3299 1844.