



Practical help and information following your bereavement

Midland Metropolitan University Hospital
Bereavement Services
Tel: 0121 507 3464

PATIENTS
PEOPLE
POPULATION

A decorative graphic consisting of a grid of colored dots in orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple, arranged in a pattern that tapers to the right.

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Introduction

We would like to express our sympathy for the sad loss of your loved one. Whether their death happened suddenly or was expected, it will be a shock to you.

When someone dies there are a number of practical things that will need to be done. The aim of this booklet is to give you important information and advice so that you know what needs to be done and can make informed choices without feeling overwhelmed.

Please be reassured that there is help available should you require it.

Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD)

When someone dies, a legal document called a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) needs to be completed. It is usually completed by a doctor who has been caring for your relative or friend.

Family and friends are advised to contact our Certificate office after 11.00am on the first working day after the death has occurred to discuss what happens next.

When you call, we will advise you on the role of the Medical Examiner and when the completed certificate is ready to be sent to the Registration Service.

During this initial call it would be very useful if you could tell us whether you will be having a cremation or a burial for your relative or friend so that our doctors can complete the correct paperwork.

You may get an answer machine message if the certificate office staff are already taking calls, please leave your name, telephone contact details and the name of the person who has died. The staff will return your call as soon as they are able to do so.

Tel: 0121 507 3464

Monday – Friday, 8.00am – 4.30pm

(Closed on bank holidays and weekends)

You will be invited to take any belongings or valuables home that remain at the bedside or in the clinical area where your relative or friend died. If any items have been recorded as being entered into our general office, please collect them from the office situated in the Welcome Centre on Level 5.

Medical Examiner Service

The Medical Examiner Service is a statutory system for independently reviewing all non-coronial deaths and approving the proposed cause of death to be documented on the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD).

This service consists of senior medical doctors and qualified medical examiner officers that are independent from the care your relative or friend received. They are trained in the legal and clinical elements on the death certification process.

The nominated next of kin will receive a telephone call from the medical examiner or medical examiner officer to discuss the provisional cause of death. There will also be an opportunity to ask any questions that you may have or to comment on the care your relative or friend received whilst in hospital. They may also ask you questions related to medical implantable devices.

Following this telephone conversation, the medical examiner team will liaise with the treating doctor and request completion of the certificate.

On completion, the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) will be sent electronically to the register office, therefore you will not be required to attend the hospital to collect this. Your contact details will be provided to the registrars for them to contact you with an appointment date and time to attend.

The nominated next of kin are required to register a death within 5 days from the date the Medical Examiner has approved the certificate and is sent to registration services (unless the death has been reported to the coroner).

If the death has been referred to the coroner, a coroner's officer will contact you and will advise what will happen next.

Tel: 0121 507 3473

Monday – Friday, 8.00am – 4.00pm

If the rapid release of your relative or friend from our care has been requested, an on call Medical Examiner is available between the hours of 9.00am – midday on weekends and bank holidays (excluding Christmas Day).

www.gov.uk/when-someone-dies

Registering the death

Once you have been informed of the completion of the medical certificate of cause of death, you will be able to register your relative/friend's death. The legal requirement is for the death to be registered within 5 days from the date the certificate was approved by the Medical Examiner and sent to the Registration Service (unless the death has been reported to the coroner).

The registration office will contact you to book an appointment time and date to attend. The registration will take place in the district Registrar's Office where the death has occurred, irrespective of where the person lived.

At the time you register the death you will receive:

- **Certificate for Burial or Cremation (Green form)**

This form will be emailed by the Registrars direct to a funeral director of your choice on the day of registration. This form gives permission for the body to be buried or for an application to be made for cremation.

If the deceased is to be buried or cremated outside of England or Wales, the Coroner will issue the necessary forms

- **Death Certificates**

A death certificate is a certified copy of the entry of death in the register. There is no charge to register a death, but you will need at least one certified copy of the death certificate. This can be obtained at the time of registration or anytime afterwards for a cost of £12:50 each. Card payments are preferred.

You may require a certified death certificate for:

- Banks/ Building Societies
- Private or Personal Pensions
- Life Insurance/ Insurance Claims
- Solicitors/ Probate
- Financial Contracts and Agreements
- Premium Bonds, National Savings, Shares

The registration appointment will take approximately 45 minutes

Please provide the following information for your relative/friend:

- Date and place of death and usual address
- Details of their wife or husband or civil partner
- Their full name and surname and maiden name if they ever married
- Date and place of birth
- Occupation and occupation of spouse or civil partner if appropriate

Sandwell Register Office
Highfields House
High Street
West Bromwich
B70 8RJ

Tel: 0121 368 1188

Opening Hours

Monday - Wednesday 9.00am - 4.30pm,
Thursday 10.00am - 4.30pm, Friday 9.00am - 4.00pm.

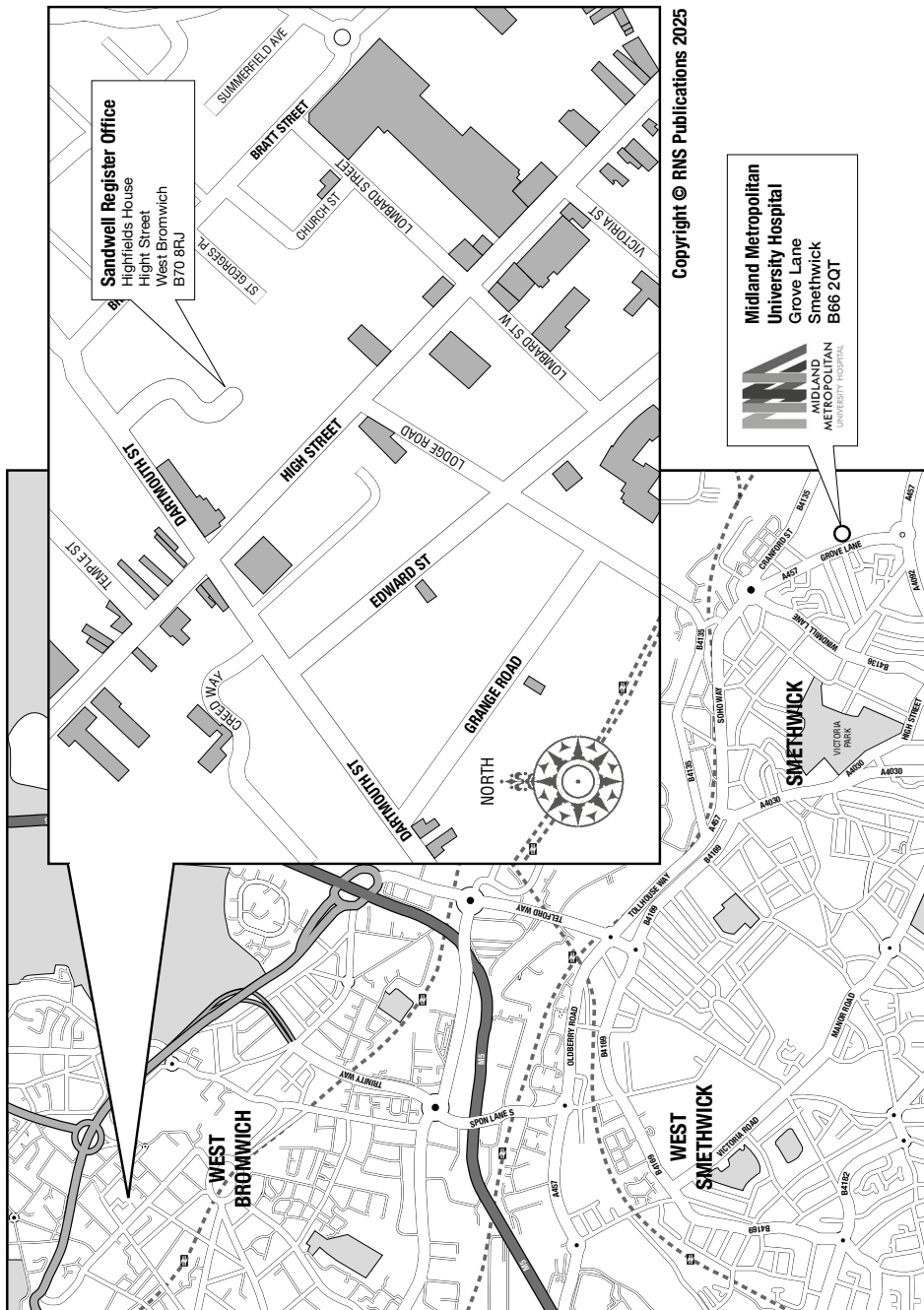
Please note you should have an appointment to register the death before attending.

Telephone enquiries can be made during the following times:

8.00am - 5.30pm Monday - Thursday

8.00am - 5.00pm Friday

Parking - There is limited parking available at Sandwell Register Office. However there are several 'pay and display' car parks adjacent to the building.



Sandwell Register Office
Highfields House
High Street
West Bromwich
B70 8RJ

Midland Metropolitan University Hospital
Grove Lane
Smethwick
B66 2QT

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Urgent registration of a death

An out of hours death registration and burial service is available for families who need to register a death so that an urgent burial can take place either at a weekend or a Bank Holiday.

The opening hours for the 'out of hours' service is 9.00am until 1.00pm on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays (excluding Christmas Day).

The out of hours death registration service is available by calling 07810 152159.

Tell Us Once

When someone dies, there can often be several Government Departments and agencies to notify.

The Tell Us Once Service can be accessed via the Registrar at your registration appointment or they will give you a unique reference number so you can access the service yourself online or by telephone

- By phone – **0800 085 7308**
- Online – by accessing **www.gov.uk/after-a-death**

Tell us once can notify the following departments after you have registered a death:

Council services

- Adult Social Care
- Blue Badge Parking Permit – if available please the bring blue badge with you
- Child Benefit
- Children’s Services
- Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit
- Collection of payments for Council Services
- Council Tax payments and benefits office
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Electoral Services
- Housing Benefit office
- Library Services

HM Passport Office

- Passport Cancellation

Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency

- Driving Licence Cancellation

Who do I need to tell?

You will probably want to let the family, friends and neighbours know of the death right away. There are several other people who may also need to know:

- Priest, Vicar, Minister or Faith Leader
- Family Doctor
- Department for Work and Pensions (pensions, benefits etc)
- Bank, Giro, Credit Cards, Building Society
- Social Services (home helps, home care)
- Schools, College or University attended
- Place of work (occupational pension)
- Executors of the Estate (Will)
- Solicitor
- Insurance Companies
- Library Service
- Inland Revenue
- Residential or Nursing Home
- Landlord, Housing Department
- Council Tax Office
- Electricity, Gas, Telephone, TV Licence or streaming services, Water Companies
- Post Office (redirect mail)
- Driving Licence Centre (D.V.L.A.)
- Careline
- Cancel any appointments
- Sandwell Joint Equipment Store
for the return of any equipment 0121 569 3670

Sample Letters

Here is an example of a letter that you may find useful when informing people about the death:

[Your Name]
[Your Address]
[Your Postal Code]
[Your Telephone Number]

Date:

[Name to whom you are writing]
[Department]
[Company]
[Road]
[City]
[Postal Code]

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to inform you of the death of [name of deceased and date of birth].

Please find enclosed with this letter the documentation/papers which need to be returned to you.

[Name of deceased] died at [hospital name or home address] on [date].

If you require any further information, please contact me at the above address.

Yours faithfully

[Your name]
Encs

Please note if you are writing to a Solicitor, Bank, Building Society, TV licensing or Insurance Company you will need to include a certified copy of the Death Certificate. Photocopies are not accepted for insurance or legal reasons. The registrar can provide multiple certified copies. You may need to include the relevant account and policy numbers if available.

Stopping Junk Mail to the recently deceased

If someone you know has died, the amount of unwanted marketing post being sent to them can be greatly reduced which helps to stop painful daily reminders.

By registering with this free service, www.stopmail.co.uk the names and addresses of the deceased are removed from mailing lists, stopping most advertising mail within as little as six weeks. If you cannot access the internet, you can call 0808 168 9607, where you will be asked for very simple information that will take only a few minutes to complete.

Alternatively, there is a leaflet within this information wallet that can be returned in the post.

This free of charge service provided by the Bereavement Support Network will not only actively reduce the unwanted marketing mail but also can help reduce the likelihood of identity theft following the death of someone close. The information is not used for any other purpose, and you only have to complete this once.

Additionally, to Stop Mail a comparable service can also be accessed from the Bereavement Register or Deceased Preference Service if you would prefer to use them.

Referral to the coroner

A death sometimes has to be referred to the coroner for legal reasons, our staff will advise you if this is to happen.

The coroner is appointed to investigate certain types of death which may include:

- If no precise cause of death can be established.
- It follows an operation, or if it is possible that it could be due to a complication of surgery or anaesthetic.
- It is not thought to be from natural causes.
- If it is due to an injury or a fall, however it happened, or if an accident or negligence is alleged.

When a death is reported to the coroner's office, the coroner will decide if a doctor can issue the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (from either the hospital or community/GP practice depending on the place of death) or whether there will be a post mortem.

You will be contacted by a coroner's liaison officer who will support you throughout the time of the coroner's involvement.

Coroner's post mortem /digital autopsy

The coroner may order a digital autopsy (full body scan) or a post mortem examination to determine the exact cause of death, but not all referrals result in an examination. The post mortem is usually performed within the hospital.

If the coroner orders a post mortem it becomes a legal obligation; therefore, permission from relatives/ friends is not needed, although you will be informed.

Once the results of the examination are known, if an inquest is not required, documentation will be issued directly to the Register office and the coroner's office will advise you to make an appointment to register the death.

Black Country Coroner Service

Jack Judge House, Halesowen Street, Oldbury, B69 2AJ

Tel: 0121 569 7200

Monday to Wednesday 8.00am - 4.00pm,

Thursday 9.00am - 4.00pm and Friday 8.00am - 3.30pm.

Hospital post mortem

Hospital post mortems are not needed by law but may be requested by doctors or the next of kin when they need more information regarding the death. This can help families/ friends and doctors understand the cause of death and may help others with a similar illness in the future.

The doctors have to ask your permission to perform a hospital post mortem and you will be asked to sign a consent form if you agree.

Care After Death

After your relative/friend has died they will be cared for by staff at the hospital just as respectfully as when they were alive.

Viewing Arrangements

When a death has occurred within the hospital, you can either see your relative/friend at the hospital or you may wish to wait until they are transferred to your chosen funeral directors.

We have a bereavement viewing room at the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital. If you wish to see your relative/friend, you can do so by an appointment only basis by contacting the mortuary team on **Tel: 0121 507 4259**

The mortuary staff will agree a time to view your relative/friend and give you directions to the bereavement viewing room which can be accessed from Level 0 in the multi-storey public car park at the front of the hospital (see map illustration).

On arrival at the hospital public car park entrance, please take a car park ticket and press the button at the barrier to inform our car park staff of your bereavement room viewing appointment. They will request your car registration plate number and guide you to our reserved named car park spaces – Blossom & Jasmine which are near to the bereavement viewing room entrance door.

On leaving you will receive a pre-paid car park exit ticket to insert at the exit barrier.

Viewings can be arranged from 9.30am - midday and 2.00pm - 3.30pm Monday to Friday.

Viewing your relative on a Saturday and Sunday:

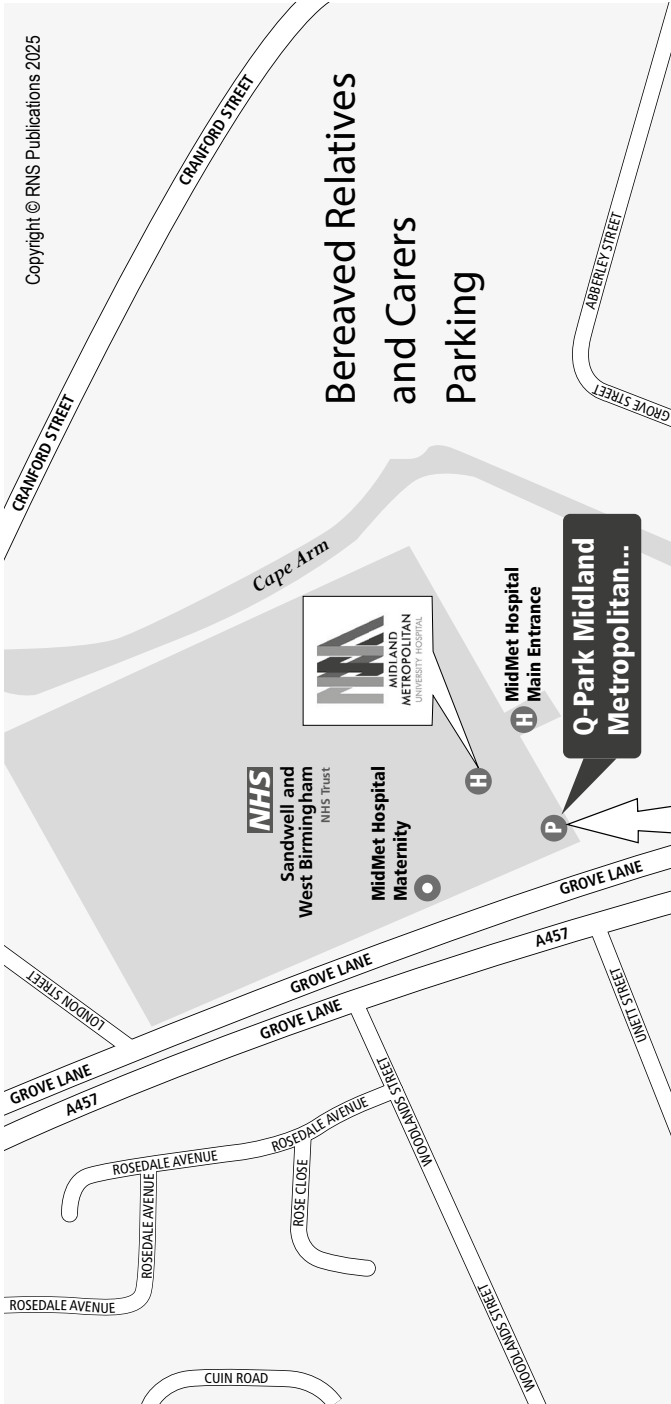
Viewing over the weekend is only possible under exceptional circumstances. There are limited appointments for viewing over a weekend; each family will be allocated one viewing appointment.

Please liaise with your whole family to arrange a viewing so that anyone who wants to view will be able to do so.


It is essential that close family/friends are able to use the limited weekend appointments, therefore extended family and friends are more than welcome to view between our Monday to Friday hours.

Viewings by appointment on a weekend will take place between 9.00am and 7.00pm.

You can arrange a viewing appointment at a weekend by calling 0121 553 1831, you will be put through to a duty hospital manager who will arrange your viewing if it is possible.




Bereaved Relatives and Carers Parking



Bereaved Relatives and Carers will need to access the public car park entrance as directed by the arrow. It can be accessed from the front of the building via Grove Lane, Smethwick, B66 2QT.

There are 2 reserved Priority Car Park spaces (Blossom & Jasmine) for use when visiting the Bereavement Viewing room, accessed directly from the car park.



Tissue donation

Tissue donation can dramatically improve the quality of life for some individuals who are desperately in need. Tissue donation is entirely voluntary and is dependent on the wishes of the nominated next of kin.

Tissues that can be donated include:

- Eye (corneal) transplantation can restore sight to people with problems caused by eye disease, injury or conditions present at birth
- Heart valves can save the lives of children born with heart defects, as well as adults with damaged heart valves
- Skin can treat people with serious burns or wounds
- Bones can help those undergoing orthopedic (bone) surgery who have had bone removed due to illness or injury
- Tendons can be used to help rebuild damaged joints and restore movement

Age and medical condition are not necessarily a barrier to donation.

Tissue donation is possible if your relative or friend has died within 24-48 hours. Our aim is to support the individual's wishes to be a tissue donor following death.

There are several ways that your loved one could have expressed a wish to donate in their lifetime. They could have joined the organ donor register which allows them to be very specific about what they would like to donate, or they may carry a donor card or have stated a desire to help others following their death.

Unfortunately, solid organs such as heart, lungs, liver and kidneys cannot be donated after someone has died.

There is a national number available 24 hours a day for advice:

Tissue Service: 0800 432 0559

**Further information may be obtained from the website:
www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/tissuedonation**

Contacting the funeral director

You can contact a funeral director whenever you are ready, they are available 24 hours a day including weekends. Your chosen funeral director can make all the necessary arrangements including any wishes or preferences the person who died had. They can also advise you on the procedures and documents you will need as well as the timing of the funeral service.

They will answer any questions you may have on burial or cremation.

Your own faith leader and the Hospital Chaplaincy Service (Tel: 0121 507 4916) may also be of great help during this difficult time.

Most funeral directors belong to the National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD) and/or the National Society of Allied and independent Funeral directors (SAIF). These associations have their own codes of practice that must be followed to ensure consistent levels of service and standards.

Funeral costs

Funerals are expensive although basic costs tend to be similar. However, the final cost can vary considerably. Do not be afraid to mention your budget or obtain estimates from several funeral directors or speak to your local council's bereavement services team who will share with you information about more affordable funeral options that may be available to you..

Financial help may be available if you receive certain benefits. For advice on claiming the Funeral Expenses Payment please contact the Bereavement Service helpline on Tel: 0800 151 2012 or download the form from:

www.gov.uk/bereavement-support-payment

Making your own funeral arrangements

You can also arrange a funeral without the help of a funeral director; information can be sourced from local cemeteries and the crematorium department of your local authority. Information can also be found from the Natural Death Centre www.naturaldeath.org.uk, helpline: 01962 712690

Out of England Funerals

If a person dies within the Black Country and you would like to move their body out of England, you will need to request the coroner to sign a completed Out of England form (Form 103). Your nominated funeral director will be able to explain the process.

There is no restriction on moving a body within England or Wales.

On a Saturday, Sunday or Bank Holiday it is only possible to obtain permission from the coroner to take a body out of the country if the death has been registered and a death certificate issued.

Sandwell out of hours registration opening hours:

9.00am until 1.00pm

Every weekend and Bank Holiday excluding Christmas Day

The coroner is available on weekends and Bank Holidays to respond to Out of England requests between 10.00am and 1.00pm, excluding Christmas Day.

Settling the estate

You will need to apply for a 'grant of probate' or a 'grant of letters of administration with will' to access your relative or friend's belongings, property or money. After this, you can contact their bank, post office or building society so that the accounts in the name of your relative or friend can be dealt with. The post office can give you advice about pension and allowance books.

Grant of probate

If your relative or friend has left a will, it will name 1 or more 'executors' who can apply for the 'grant of probate' before their belongings; property or money can be managed.

Grant of letters of administration with will

If the named executor does not want to act, someone else named in the will can apply (depending on a strict order of priority). This person is called 'the administrator'. They can apply for a 'grant of letters of administration with will'.

If your relative or friend did not leave a will, then a blood relative can also apply for a grant of 'letters of administration'. The person who applies is also called the administrator and is based on a strict next-of-kin order:

1. Widow/widower
2. Child
3. Parent
4. Brother/sister
5. Any other relative

How to apply

You need to apply to get probate. Before applying, you will need to check:

- That probate is needed
- That you are eligible to apply
- If there is Inheritance Tax to be paid

For further information please refer to the gov.uk websites:

For Probate:

www.gov.uk/applying-for-probate

or help and advice please contact the Courts and Tribunals Service Centre

Telephone: 0300 303 0648

Monday to Friday 9.00am to 1.00pm
Closed on Bank Holidays

For Tax Inheritance:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/contact/probate-and-inheritance-tax-enquiries

Telephone: 0300 123 1072

Monday to Friday, 09:00am to 5:00pm
Closed on Bank Holidays

Bereavement Care provided by our hospital

Both our bereavement care services team and multi faith chaplaincy department are able to provide you with practical advice and support during the early days of your bereavement.

Please see our accompanying booklet ~ Bereavement Support Directory to help signpost you to a wide variety of national bereavement charities, local and voluntary organisations, including support groups and groups within churches and faith communities.

Hospital Chaplaincy Team – **Tel: 0121 507 4981**

Bereavement Care Service – **Tel: 0121 507 3216**

Useful Contact Details

Age UK

Offers advice, information and services for older people, their families, friends and carers

Tel: 0800 678 1602

8.00am to 7.00pm 365days a year

www.ageuk.org.uk

Bereavement Advice Centre

Advises people on what they need to do after a death

Tel: 0800 634 9494

9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday, closed Bank Holidays

www.bereavementadvice.org

Bereavement Support Network

A national organisation that offers on all aspects of bereavement

Tel: 0808 168 9607

www.bereavementsupport.co.uk

Citizens Advice

National network of advice centres offering free confidential and independent advice

Tel: 0800 144 8848

9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday, closed Bank Holidays

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Department for Work and Pensions

Carries out eligibility checks on surviving relatives to see what benefits they are entitled to. They also review claims for bereavement benefits and funeral payments

Tel: 0800 731 0469

www.gov.uk/contact-pension-service

Your City & Metropolitan Hospitals Charity



Your donation to our Palliative and End of Life Care Services Charity will mean so much to our staff, patients and their families.

Donating to our charity will mean we can continue to support local people facing a terminal or life limiting illness and their families.

Some of the services that your donation will support are:

- Training events for our workforce
- Comfort care boxes
- Staff supervision sessions
- Activities within our Day Hospice, including complimentary therapies
- Equipment to use at home i.e. nebuliser machines
- Bereavement events

Thank you for considering to donate. Please see details below on how your kind donation can be made:

By contacting the Connected Palliative Care Team direct by telephone: 0121 507 2664 (option 2)

or

By post:

Connected Palliative Care Team
Sandwell Council House,
Freeth St,
Oldbury
B69 3DE

Please make cheques payable to: Palliative Care Trust Fund

