



## Bereavement services at The Christie

A practical guide for relatives and friends



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### The numbers are:

**Bereavement services: 0161 446 3898**  
(for all family contact)

**Out of hours via Christie switchboard: 0161 446 3000**  
(after 4:30pm and before 8:30am)

## The Christie website

For more information about The Christie and our services, please visit [www.christie.nhs.uk](http://www.christie.nhs.uk) or visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham, Salford or Macclesfield.



The loss of a relative or friend can be a difficult and confusing time with lots of details to sort out. We would like to offer our condolences to you at this time and reassure you that help is available if you need it.

This booklet has been provided to offer you help and guidance about what to do next.

## Practical information

The Christie will send the medical certificate of cause of death (MCCD) to the registrar's office electronically so there will be no need for you to attend the bereavement suite in person to collect it.

**Please telephone the bereavement suite staff after 11am the next working day. The staff will guide you through the process and answer any questions you might have. Please note the medical certificate may take a few days to process but in most cases is normally available the next working day.**

Contact numbers: **0161 446 3898** or **0161 446 3350**.

The contact hours at The Christie bereavement suite are Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm. It is closed weekends and bank holidays.

Please note that the MCCD must be completed by a doctor who has been directly involved in the care of the deceased. There may be a delay in the completion depending on the availability of the doctor.

## Viewing arrangements

You are welcome to view your relative/friend in the chapel of rest in the bereavement suite **strictly by appointment only**. Please contact the bereavement suite on **0161 446 3898** between the times of 9:00am to 3:30pm Monday to Friday.

## When can I start to arrange the funeral?

Following the death of your relative or friend you may contact a funeral director of your choice to discuss the arrangements for their funeral.

You do not have to wait for the certificate to be ready before you start making arrangements.

If you do need to arrange a funeral quickly, perhaps for religious or cultural reasons, the bereavement services staff will help as much as possible.

If you think you may have problems with the cost of the funeral and you are receiving certain state benefits, then you may be able to get a funeral payment to help you with some of the funeral costs. Contact the Department for Work and Pensions on **0800 731 0469**. Ask the funeral director to explain what costs are not covered by funeral payments so you know the costs that you and your family may have to pay yourselves. Further information may be obtained from the benefits adviser at the Maggie's centre on **0161 641 4848** or the funeral director.

## The Coroner's involvement

There are many reasons why a death may be referred to the Coroner and an MCCD not issued immediately.

The Coroner will look at the circumstances of the death and decide what happens next. Not all referrals result in an examination. It does not necessarily mean that there are suspicious circumstances involved in the death of your loved one but occasionally the Coroner may order a post mortem to identify the exact cause of death.

If a post mortem is requested by the Coroner this becomes a legal matter and must be complied with. The Coroner's Officer will inform you if a post mortem is necessary.

The post mortem will sometimes be carried out at The Christie. The Coroner's Officer will contact you when the relevant paperwork is available and advise you of what to do next.

HM Coroners Office – Manchester City Area, PO Box 532  
Manchester Town Hall, Albert Square, Manchester M60 2LA  
Tel: **0161 219 2222**.

## The medical examiner at The Christie

Medical examiners are senior doctors who have been appointed to review the circumstances when a person has died. They are independent from the Trust and the team who treated the patient. They advise on the cause of death and also have a duty to check that there are no concerns over the quality of care.

They do not replace the coroners who must still review any death where there is concern that the death was unnatural.

### How does the system work?

After a person has died, medical examiners and their staff (called medical examiner officers) will review the medical records, discuss the causes of death with the doctor completing the official MCCD form and speak to a member of the person's family or carer.

The discussion between the medical examiner (or their officer) and the family may take the form of a telephone call or a meeting in person if you prefer.

This is an opportunity for you to have an open and honest conversation with someone who was not involved in providing care to the person who died. You can ask questions about their care that may be worrying you or of concern. It could be as simple as helping you to understand more about the treatment they received and causes of death or to understand the medical language used, or there may be something about the care which did not feel right or ideal.

If it is too difficult for you to speak to the medical examiner, you can ask them to contact someone else, who can be the first point of contact.

If there are issues with care that need further investigation, the medical examiner will refer these to someone who will investigate.

For further information about the medical examiner process telephone: **0161 446 3643** or **0161 446 3350** Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm

## Learning from deaths process at The Christie

All NHS trusts routinely carry out a review of the case notes of a proportion of patients who die in their care. This helps NHS trusts to learn and to improve the care they provide.

At The Christie, these reviews involve a doctor and nurse, who were not directly involved in a patient's care, looking carefully through the medical and nursing records from the last admission to the hospital. They will look at each aspect of care provided during a patient's most recent stay at The Christie.

The process allows us to identify where care has been of the expected standard and helps us to improve care for future patients. We report this information to our Patient Safety Committee and Board of Directors. We also share findings from case note reviews with the coroner if there should be an inquest at a later date.

Case note reviews are not carried out for all patients after death. We carry out case note reviews if a death was sudden, unexpected, or potentially avoidable. We also review cases where a death might have been related to certain illnesses, so that we can continue to improve how we manage these conditions.



We will always carry out a case note review when a concern is raised with us about the care we provided to a patient.

Occasionally, there can be serious unexpected findings following a case note review that might have affected the care a patient received. In these circumstances, we will contact you to discuss this, and any further investigations that might be needed.

It is possible you have some concerns about the care we provided but you did not feel ready to discuss this with the bereavement team when you collected the medical certification of death. If you would like to tell us about a concern, or have any questions about this process, please contact our Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS) officer on tel: **0161 446 8217** or email: [pals@christie.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@christie.nhs.uk)

## How a death is registered

The death is usually registered within 5 working days at the local register office in the district where the death occurred. For deaths at The Christie this is the Manchester Registration Service. The MCCD is sent electronically to the registrar's office by the bereavement team. The team will then explain how to book a registration appointment at the Manchester Registrars.

Manchester Registration Service  
Heron House  
47 Lloyd Street  
Manchester M2 5LE  
Tel: **0161 234 5005**

If you are unable to get to the local register office, you can go to a registrar in a more convenient place in England or Wales but they will not register the death. The details will be passed on to the registrar in the area in which your relative



died and the certificates will be sent to you by post a few days later. This may cause delays in organising the funeral.

### Who may go and register a death?

Regulations state that only certain people can go and register a death with the registrar. They are:

- A relative of the deceased who was present at the time of death.
- A relative of the deceased in attendance during the last illness.
- A person present at time of death.
- A relative of the deceased residing in the same local district.
- The person arranging the funeral (not the funeral director).

The person who is to register must take the MCCD and be able to provide the following information to the registrar:

- The person's full name (at the time of their death).
- Any other names that the person used (e.g. a birth or married name).
- Their date and place of birth, including the town and county if they were born in the UK, or just the country if they were born abroad.
- Their last address.
- Their occupation or last occupation if now retired
- The full name of their husband, wife or civil partner, if they have died.
- Details of any state pension or other state benefit they were receiving.

The registrar will give you:

- A green certificate for burial or cremation which should be handed to your funeral director.
- A certificate of Registration of Death. This is for social security purposes only and is known as BD8 form.

You will be able to buy a certified copy of an entry certificate (death certificate). This will be needed for any pension claims, probate, insurance policies, and financial matters. You may need to buy more than one copy.

## People to inform

There are various people, companies and other interested parties who need to be informed of the death and others who ought to be informed:

- Any hospitals the person was attending.
- Bank, building society, insurance company etc.
- Social services (if they are providing any services).
- Inland Revenue and benefits offices.
- Local gas/ electric/telephone/TV Licence/water companies.
- Local council for Council Tax.
- Motor insurance – check with your insurance company if you have a joint policy.

If the deceased was receiving Housing Benefit or living in council property, the local housing department should be informed. The landlord needs to be notified if the deceased lived in rented accommodation.

## Things that may need returning

- The deceased's passport, driving licence, car registration documents, blue badge, membership cards and National Insurance papers should be returned to relevant offices.
- Any NHS equipment being used will need to be returned to either the hospital or health centre from where it came.

## Organisations that offer help and advice

You may find help and support from some of the following national and local organisations.

### Your local GP

#### **Cruse Bereavement Care**

Ground floor, Oakland House, Talbot Road, Old Trafford  
M16 0PQ  
**0808 808 1677**

#### **Care Concern Bereavement & Loss Counselling Service**

85 Middleton Road, Manchester M8 4JY  
**07598 685 745**

#### **Stockport Christian Counselling Service**

The Town House, Hope Terrace, Thomson Street, Stockport  
SK3 9DU  
**0161 428 7388**

#### **Beechwood Cancer Care Centre**

Chelford Grove, Stockport SK3 8LS  
**0161 476 0384**

#### **Cruse North Wales**

St David's Priory, Richmond Hill, Holyhead LL65 2HH  
**0808 808 1677**

### **Macmillan Cancer Support**

89 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7UQ

Freephone: **0808 808 0000**

[www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

### **Maggie's Centre Manchester**

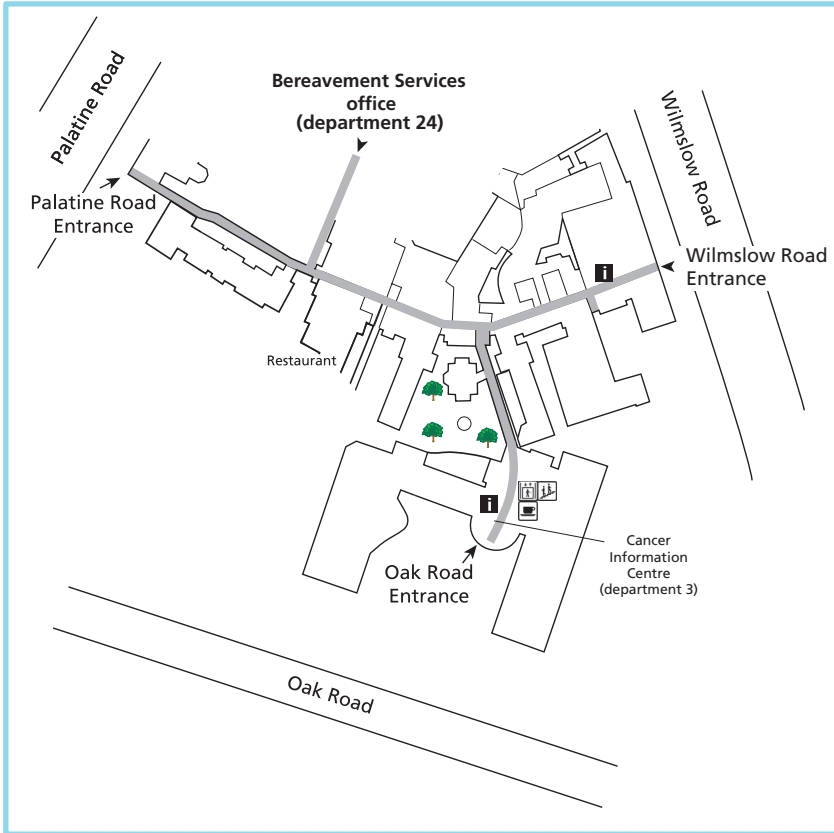
15 Kinnaird Road, Withington, Manchester M20 4QL

**0161 641 4848**

### **Maggie's Centre Oldham**

The Royal Oldham Hospital, Rochdale Road, Oldham OL2 2JH

**0161 989 0550**



If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

We try to ensure that all our information given to patients is accurate, balanced and based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence.

If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact [the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net](mailto:the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net)







Contact The Christie Hotline for  
urgent support and specialist advice

**The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658**

Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

### Visit the Cancer Information Centre

The Christie at Withington **0161 446 8100**

The Christie at Oldham **0161 918 7745**

The Christie at Salford **0161 918 7804**

The Christie at Macclesfield **0161 956 1704**

Open Monday to Friday, 10am – 4pm.

Opening times can vary, please ring to check  
before making a special journey.

### The Christie NHS Foundation Trust

Wilmslow Road

Manchester M20 4BX

**0161 446 3000**

**[www.christie.nhs.uk](http://www.christie.nhs.uk)**



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