

What to do when someone dies

If the death occurs at home

- If the death was expected and a doctor had recently seen the deceased, telephone the doctor who will visit to confirm that death has taken place and issue a medical certificate of death. If the death was unexpected then you should call the police.
- Contact a funeral director.
- Arrange to collect the certificate of death (usually from the surgery).
- Once you have the medical certificate, you can register the death. This must be done within five days. For details of how to register a death in the borough of Kingston Upon Thames please go to: www.kingston.gov.uk/deaths-1/register-death
- The body can be laid out in the home or collected by the funeral directors and taken to their chapel of rest if you prefer. Remember to take into account the wishes of the person who died if these are known.

Note for cremation

- Your funeral director will usually liaise directly with the surgery regarding the additional certification required.

If the death occurs in hospital

- The hospital staff will contact the next of kin to formally identify the person. The next of kin may also need to give permission for a hospital post-mortem examination if the cause of the death has to be confirmed; however, a coroner's post-mortem examination may be carried out without consent.
- The body will then be laid out and kept in the hospital mortuary while the next of kin arranges for the funeral directors, family or whoever is chosen to collect it. If you choose, funeral directors will take the body to their chapel of rest until the funeral takes place. In most situations, nurses lay out the body but it may be possible for you to help if you so wish.
- A doctor at the hospital will issue the medical certificate showing the cause of death.
- To obtain a death certificate following a death in Kingston Hospital contact the Bereavement Office: www.kingstonhospital.nhs.uk/department/bereavement-office

When the death is unexpected or suspicious

- If the death has occurred suddenly, or due to unexpected or violent circumstances, the doctor or police will notify the coroner who will investigate to establish the cause of death.
- The coroner may ask for a post-mortem to be performed. The coroner will hold an inquest in cases where death appeared unnatural, unexplained or due to violence or an accident.