When someone has died during the Coronavirus outbreak
An easy read guide for adults
Contents

3 Introduction

4 What happens after someone has died and what you need to do

14 Your feelings and how to cope

25 How to carry on with your life

35 For more information
Introduction

Hertfordshire County Council and the NHS have written this information together.

This information is a guide for adults when someone has died.

If someone you love has died during the Coronavirus outbreak, this information will help to explain:

- what happens after someone has died and what you need to do
- your feelings and how to cope
- how to carry on with your life.

Coronavirus is a new illness that affects your lungs and breathing.

Outbreak means it is spreading around the world.
What happens after someone has died and what you need to do

Coronavirus COVID-19

Coronavirus is a new illness that is spreading very quickly.

Some people will be OK if they catch it, but some people will be seriously ill.

Unfortunately, some people die from Coronavirus.

If someone you love has died from Coronavirus, it will seem sudden.

You probably haven’t had enough time to prepare or say goodbye properly.
Doing things differently

We have all had to do things differently to help stop the spread of Coronavirus.

This includes doing things differently in hospital where:

- staff have had to wear special protective clothing called PPE
- patients haven’t been allowed to have visitors.

If someone you love has died in hospital, it may be more difficult because:

- you weren’t allowed to be with them
- you were told over the phone that they had died, instead of face-to-face
you were not allowed to see them after they died.

Changes to services
Coronavirus will also affect the services you use after someone has died.

Bereavement services
Hospitals have specially trained staff that help you after someone has died.

They are called ‘bereavement services’.

They may arrange to speak to you over the phone or by video call, instead of face-to-face.
There are other bereavement services that can help you too:

**Sue Ryder Charity**
Website: [www.sueryder.org](http://www.sueryder.org)

**Bereavement Advice Centre**
Website: [www.bereavementadvice.org](http://www.bereavementadvice.org)
Phone: 0800 634 9494

**Cruse Bereavement Care**
Website: [www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)

There are bereavement services that can support you after suicide, if your loved one has taken their own life:

**Support after suicide**
Website: [www.supportaftersuicide.org.uk](http://www.supportaftersuicide.org.uk)
Funerals

There will usually be an event after someone has died, to mark the end of their life. Like a funeral.

This might be a religious service or a gathering of friends and family.

You can still have a funeral, but it will be difficult to plan an event that other people can come to at the moment, because of Coronavirus.

You could think about doing something online for people to share memories of your loved one.
You can find some other ideas here:

**Quakers**

Link: [www.quakersocialaction.org.uk/we-can-help/helping-funerals/down-earth](http://www.quakersocialaction.org.uk/we-can-help/helping-funerals/down-earth)

**Sudden**

Link: [www.suddendeath.org/covid-19-bereavement](http://www.suddendeath.org/covid-19-bereavement)

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**Registering the death**

Registering the death means letting the council know that someone has died.

The council makes an official record of the death.

The part of the council that does this is called the ‘registration service’.
At the moment, you need to speak to them on the phone instead of going into their office.

Phone: 0300 123 4045

They will explain how to use a service called ‘Tell us once’.

**Tell us once** is a Government service that passes on information about someone’s death to all the other Government services that your loved one had contact with.

For example, any departments that paid them benefits, or the DVLA about their driving licence.

You can find out more on the Government website: [www.gov.uk/after-a-death/organisations-you-need-to-contact-and-tell-us-once](http://www.gov.uk/after-a-death/organisations-you-need-to-contact-and-tell-us-once)
Practical help

You may need some support with practical things when someone has died, like:

- money
- looking after your children
- what to do with your loved one’s things.

Citizen’s Advice - they offer free advice on benefits, housing, families, immigration and more.

Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Turn2Us - they offer support with money.

Website: www.turn2us.org.uk
**Network** - they offer help and support to under 18 year olds when someone has died.


**Herts Directory** - details about lots of services.

Website: [www.directory.hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.directory.hertfordshire.gov.uk)

**Herts Help** - find local help and support close to where you live.

Link: [www.hertshelp.net/hertshelp.aspx](http://www.hertshelp.net/hertshelp.aspx)

**Herts Sunflower** - they have support groups in Hertfordshire, including black minority and ethnic (BAME) groups.

Link: [www.hertssunflower.org/Herts-Sunflower.aspx](http://www.hertssunflower.org/Herts-Sunflower.aspx)
Herts LGBTQ+ - a list of information and support groups for all ages.


North Herts Minority Ethnic Foundation


Phone: 01462 440224

GATE - advice and support for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

Website: www.gateherts.org.uk
Your feelings and how to cope

Feelings

When someone you love has died, you will experience many different feelings.

They can be:

- new feelings that you haven’t had before
- very strong
- upsetting
- confusing
- physical.

You may even feel numb, like you have no feelings at all.

However you are feeling, it is OK to feel that way.
Feelings are different for everyone and can depend on things like:

- your age
- the person who has died
- how the person died
- your religion or beliefs
- other things that are happening in your life.

**Self care**

It is important to look after yourself when someone has died.

It might be more difficult for your friends and family to be with you and do things to help you, because of Coronavirus.
To help yourself cope you should:

- get plenty of rest
- carry on with any routines like doing exercise
- get some fresh air
- eat well
- do some things to take your mind off what has happened, like reading, music or watching tv.
You should avoid doing anything unhealthy to deal with your feelings, like:

- drinking too much alcohol
- using drugs.

These things will only make you feel worse in the long term.

Support

It is important that you get some support as soon as possible when someone has died.

You may have contact with some friends that can help.

Or you may have family that live with you.
If you are dealing with things on your own it can be very difficult.

There are organisations available to you for support:

Cruse Bereavement Care
Website: www.cruse.org.uk
Phone: 0808 808 1677

Grief Chat
Website: www.griefchat.co.uk

Sue Ryder Online Community
Link: www.community.sueryder.org/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI_O3Hxo7j6AIVZrR3Ch3Bsw9lEAAYASAAEgLuQfD_BwE
A Loss Bereavement support for men

Link: www.ataloss.org/bereavementsupportformen

Lullaby Trust

Email: support@lullabytrust.org.uk

Phone: 0808 802 6868

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide

Website: www.uksobs.org

Phone: 0300 111 5065
SANDS - support for families


Phone: 0808 164 3332

Rethink - support after suicide


Silverline - support for over 50’s

Website: www.thesilverline.org.uk
LGBTQ+ support

There is specialist support available to people who are part of the LGBTQ+ community:

Marie Curie

Link: www.mariecurie.org.uk/blog/palliative-care-lgbt/139594

Good Grief Trust - LGBTQ funeral advice

Link: www.thegoodgrieftrust.org/need-know-info/funerals/lgbtq-queer-funeral-guide/

Herts LGBTQ+

Switchboard - LGBTQ+
Website: www.switchboard.lgbt

London Friend
Website: www.londonfriend.org.uk
Phone: 020 7833 1674

Support for adults with learning disabilities

Anxiety UK
Link: www.anxietyuk.org.uk/coronanxiety-support-resources/
Support for children

Childhood Bereavement Network

Link: www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk/covid-19.aspx

Cruse Bereavement Care - help for parents.

Link: www.cruse.org.uk/get-help/for-parents

Child Bereavement UK - Coronavirus.

Link: www.childbereavementuk.org/coronavirus-supporting-children

Winston’s Wish - Supporting Children with SEND.

Website: www.winstonswish.org
Support for people with Dementia

Dementia UK

Link: www.dementiauk.org/get-support/coronavirus-covid-19/

Alzheimer’s Society

Link: www.alzheimers.org.uk/coronavirus

Support for people at work

ACAS - support for employers to help their staff.

Link: www.acas.org.uk/time-off-for-bereavement
How to carry on with your life

Grief

It can take a long time to get used to life again after someone has died.

Dealing with the loss of someone you love is called grief.

Grief is the way that you:

- feel sad about what you have lost
- deal with your thoughts and feelings
- begin to get used to life without your loved one
- find ways to remember your loved one in a happier way
- come to accept what has happened.
As you go through grief you may have feelings of:

- guilt
- regret
- anger
- really missing your loved one
- sorrow
- relief
- denial - this is when you feel like what has happened isn’t real
- loneliness
- anxiety
- tiredness and lack of concentration
- getting poorly more easily than usual.

Over time, these feelings do change and you begin to move on.
Cruse Bereavement have some helpful advice about coping with grief: www.cruse.org.uk/sites/default/files/default_images/pdf/Documents-and-fact-sheets/Restoring_Hope_Jul2017.pdf


When to get more help

You may feel that you would like more help to cope with your grief.

You might feel as though:

- your grief isn’t getting any easier after a long time
- you’re alone
- you have been experiencing grief all over again because something has brought back memories from the past.
Support

You may find some support from places like a:

- religious group
- social group
- support group
- private therapist - this is someone you pay to give you support to deal with your grief.
Here are some links to help you find what support is available in your area:

**Herts Directory**

Link: [www.directory.hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.directory.hertfordshire.gov.uk)

**Herts Help**

Link: [www.hertshelp.net/hertshelp.aspx](http://www.hertshelp.net/hertshelp.aspx)

**Herts Sunflower**

Link: [www.hertssunflower.org/Herts-Sunflower.aspx](http://www.hertssunflower.org/Herts-Sunflower.aspx)

**Herts LGBTQ+**

Unrecognised grief

You may be reading this information because somebody died that was your:

- ex-partner
- partner, but your relationship was private and their family don’t know about you
- friend
- work colleague.
This can make it difficult to show your grief in the same way as other people, but you may still need support.

Any of the support services in this document can help you too.

You may deal with grief differently because:

- you have a health condition that affects your emotions
- you take medication
- of your culture of beliefs
- you were brought up to hide your feelings.

If you feel you need some support, any of the services in this document can help you too.
If you are worried about your mental health

If you are finding it very difficult to cope, it is important that you get some support.

If you are having negative thoughts about your own life, you should let your doctor know.

They will be able to help you get the right support.

Here are some links to advice and support for you online and over the phone:

**Samaritans**

Website: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

Phone: 116 123
Mind
Website: www.mind.org.uk
Phone: 0300 123 3393

Support Line
Website: www.supportline.org.uk
Email: info@supportline.org.uk
Phone: 01708 765200

Papyrus UK
Website: papyrus-uk.org
Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org
Phone: 07786 209697

CALM
Website: www.thecalmzone.net
Phone: 0800 58 58 58
ANXIETY UK

Website: www.anxietyuk.org.uk
Phone: 03444 775 774

Local support

To find out more about mental health support close to where you live go to Health in Hearts.

Website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/health-in-herts/happiness-wellbeing-and-mental-health.aspx

If you feel like you want to hurt yourself or your life is in danger please call: 999
For more information

If you need any more information about this guide contact us by email: hertsjct@nhs.net