

16. Release of the deceased person to the funeral director



- 16.1 Documentation is not usually required for release however funeral directors must be acting on the instructions of an appropriate person dealing with the funeral arrangements: usually the deceased person's nearest relative or executor.
- 16.2 In the event of dispute between family members, the body of the deceased person will only be released according to the instructions of the person with a legal right to make the funeral arrangements.
- 16.3 Occasionally families may request the urgent release of the deceased person out of hours, when there are no mortuary staff on site. This may be for religious, cultural or other reasons. The following services should be contacted to facilitate this:

RIE – Engie Services 0131 242 7015

WGH – Site Manager 0131 537 1000

SJH – Site Manager of Clinical Nurse Manager 01506 522084

The member of staff releasing the deceased person must ensure that the necessary paperwork is completed and available. **N.B.** deceased persons released for burial or cremation require a completed and signed [Deceased Adult Inpatient Notification Form](#).

The member of staff and funeral director / family representative must check the patient ID bands and the Deceased Inpatient Notification Form to confirm deceased's identity. **There is now a requirement for three identifier checks with the funeral director i.e. Deceased person's Name / Date of Birth / Address.** Sections 2 , 3 and 4 must be discussed with funeral director as this will ensure those coming into contact with the deceased person are informed of any potential infection, contamination, pacemakers or potentially explosive devices and any manual handling issues. Deceased person must be checked for any personal belongings, jewellery or mementos and Section 5d must be signed by the funeral director.

The member of staff and funeral director/family representative must **BOTH** sign the mortuary register before the deceased person can be released.

- 16.4 Occasionally the family may request that the deceased person is transferred from the ward directly into the care of their chosen funeral director (bypassing the hospital mortuary). This may be due to personal preferences, religious, cultural or practical reasons. This can happen in hours and out of hours, but requires careful co-ordination to ensure that transfer of the deceased person is seamless as per family's wishes
 - **In hours** – ward staff must liaise with family, funeral director, mortuary staff and porters.
 - **Out of hours** – ward staff must liaise with family, funeral director, Clinical Site Coordinator. When funeral director arrives the porters will collect the deceased person from the ward with concealment trolley or bed as per usual NHSL procedure. If requested the funeral director can accompany the porters to the ward or can remain in the mortuary while porters collect deceased person and paperwork from ward.

Porters transfer deceased person to mortuary where:

- **In hours** – mortuary staff will check the deceased person and all necessary paperwork before releasing to funeral director.
- **Out of hours** – Clinical Site Coordinator will check necessary paperwork prior to releasing deceased person to funeral director.