

For you in your loss

# Information for Bereaved Relatives and Friends

Community Services



“Memories are the loveliest thing,  
They last from day to day,  
They can’t get lost,  
They don’t wear out,  
and can’t be given away.”

(Anonymous)

## **Options available**

If you would like a large print, audio, braille or a translated version of this booklet, then please call: **01253 955588.**

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## **Introduction**

The Trust staff wish to express their sincere sympathy to you and your family at this sad time.

This booklet aims to provide some useful help and advice during the early days of your bereavement.

Inevitably, there are certain practical issues that need to be organised when someone dies. This booklet advises you on what needs to be done.

Grief is a normal reaction to loss or bereavement. This booklet outlines some of the emotions or feelings that you may encounter.

If you feel that you need further support, advice or help, a number of organisations are listed in this booklet.

We hope that you find the enclosed information useful.

## Tick Box Reminder

### When death occurs

- Contact your GP (or out-of-hours GP) as soon as possible

- Start to make the funeral arrangements

- Collect the Medical Certificate Cause of Death (MCCD) - Register the Death

- Collect the White form for Social Security Office (BD8) or a Tell Us Once (TUO) reference number.

## **Tissue Donation**

At this difficult time if your loved one has expressed a wish or you feel able to consider tissue donation, it may be helpful to know that heart valves, eyes (corneas) and other tissues can be **donated up to 24 hours** after a person has died. A family member can consent on behalf of the patient and it is not necessary to have a Donor Card. Donation will not delay funeral plans or alter the appearance of the deceased.

The decision to donate is of course very personal, so if you wish to discuss this further or if you require more information, please call **TISSUE SERVICES** on **0800 432 0559 (24 hour freephone)**

## When Death Has Occurred

### What to do first

**When death occurs, telephone your GP or health care professional as soon as possible. If the death occurred outside of normal working hours, please contact the out-of-hours GP who will arrange for a community nurse or doctor to verify the death.**

You or your representative will be required to collect the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) from the GP. By law a medical doctor is required to provide a medical certificate when a person has died, to confirm the death and state the cause of death. The doctors will complete this as soon as possible.

They will:

- Provide you with the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD).
- Explain the procedures for Registration of Death

Please telephone the GP practice first to ensure the necessary paperwork has been completed before attending to collect.

**In some cases, if the doctor is uncertain as to the reason or about the circumstances of death it may not be possible for the doctor to issue the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD). If the death was sudden or unexpected she/he is legally obliged to inform the Coroner. More information can be found on page 13.**

### **Contact a Funeral Director**

You do not have to wait until the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) has been issued to contact a Funeral Director and make arrangements to transfer your loved one to the Chapel of Rest. Details of local Funeral Directors can be found at the end of this booklet. Alternatively the internet is a good source of information to compare costs and services provided.

### **Register the Death, (see below and following pages)**

#### **Registration of Death**

**Once the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) has been issued, it should be taken with you for the registration appointment.**

An informant has a legal responsibility to register a death within 5 days of the date of the death. This time limit can be extended where there has been Coroner involvement.

## Where to Register

A death should be registered in the local authority district where it occurred.

Where council tax is payable to Blackpool, deaths should be registered with Blackpool registration service at the Town Hall in Talbot Square FY1 1AD.

You can make an appointment online at [www.blackpool.gov.uk/deaths](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/deaths).

**To make an appointment at the Town Hall, please phone 01253 477 177.**

Deaths that occur within the local authority Boroughs of Wyre or Fylde should be registered with Lancashire Registration Service. There are two registrars offices on the Fylde Coast, one in Fleetwood and one in Lytham.

**You can make an appointment online at <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/births-marriages-and-deaths/deaths>.**

**To make an appointment at any registrars office within Lancashire Registration District please phone - 0300 1236 705**

## Who can Register the Death

You can register the death if you are:

- A relative
- Someone who was present at the death
- The authorised occupier of the nursing/care home where death has occurred
- The person making the decision on the funeral arrangements

**See pages 8 and 9 for what you will need to know.**

## What you will need to know

When you register the death you will need to make an appointment and you will need to take with you the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) from the GP and, if possible, the NHS Medical Card of the deceased.

**You will also need ID for yourself and for the deceased. Preferable forms of ID, would be a Passport, Driving Licence or a Birth, Death or Marriage Certificate. If you are unable to provide any of these, registration will still go ahead.**

The Registrar will ask you for the following information (you may like to fill in the spaces below before you go to the Registrar's Office):

The date and place of death

.....

Full name and surname / family name

.....

Date and place of birth of the deceased

.....

Address, including post code of the deceased

.....

.....

The last full time occupation of the deceased and whether retired

.....

Date and place of birth of surviving spouse / civil partner

.....

If the deceased was a married woman, widow or a civil partner:

Maiden name / family name (if applicable)

.....

The husband's /wife's /civil partners' name, even if deceased

.....

The husband's /wife's /civil partner's last occupation, and whether retired

.....

This information will form an entry in the Death Register.

You may also be asked for the reference number of any occupational pension paid out of public funds (apart from the state retirement pension):

.....

After registering the death, the Registrar will give you:

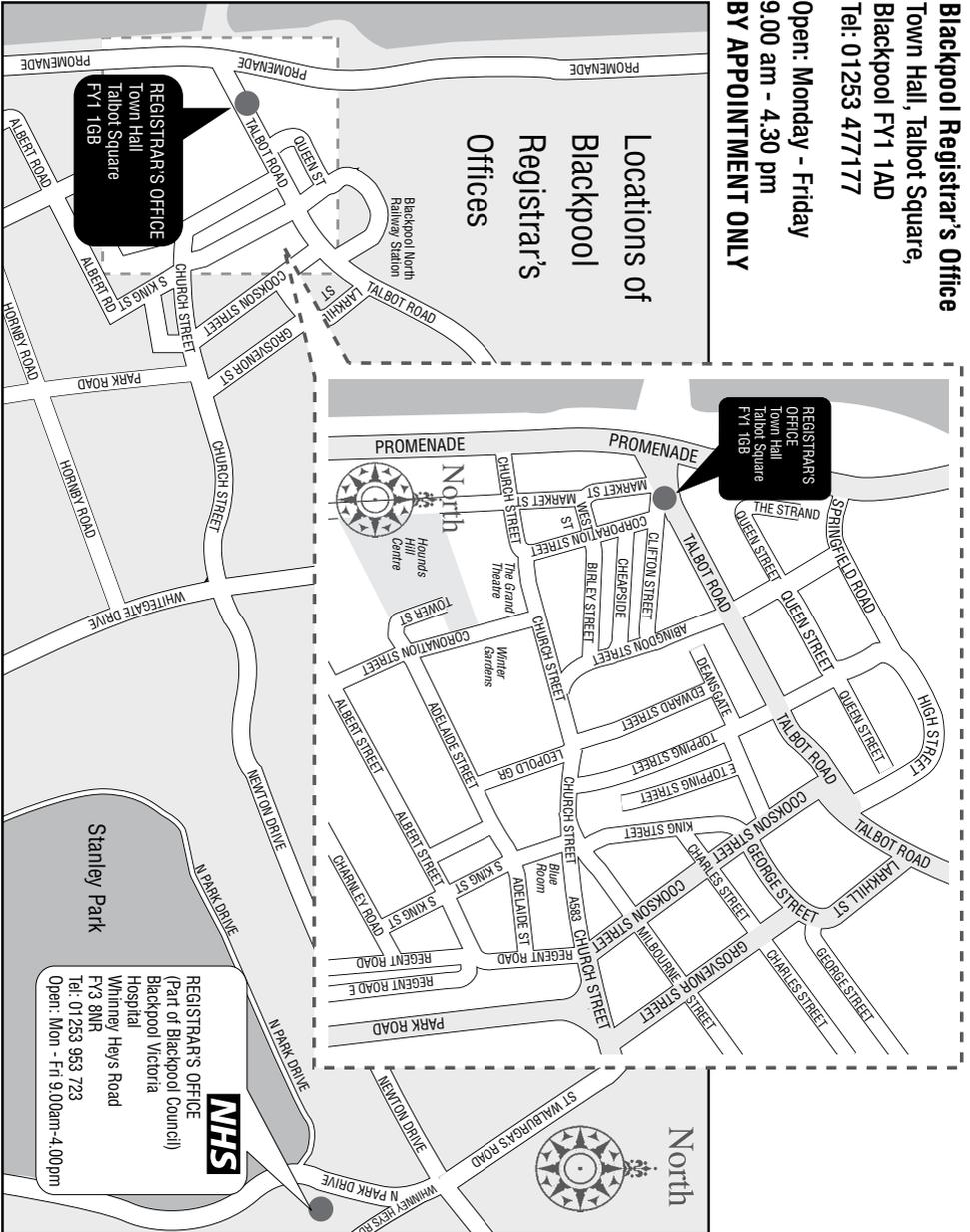
- A green form to hand to the Funeral Director.
- A white form to send to the Social Security office (BD8) or a Tell Us Once (TUO) reference number.
- The Registrar will issue copies of the Death Certificate for £11.00 each. Please ensure all spellings and identification details are accurate on the certificate at time of registration as any amendments can incur a correction fee of up to £90.00.

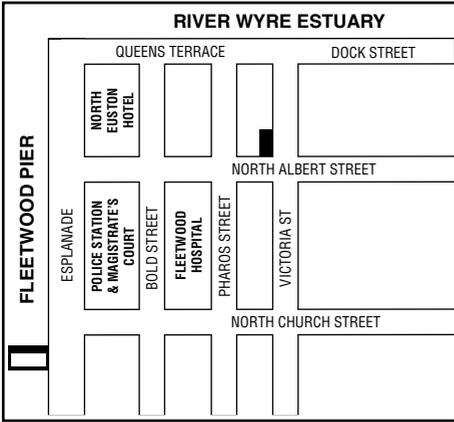
# Location of Blackpool Registrar's Offices

**Blackpool Registrar's Office**  
 Town Hall, Talbot Square,  
 Blackpool FY1 1AD  
 Tel: 01253 477177

**Open: Monday - Friday**  
 9.00 am - 4.30 pm  
**BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**

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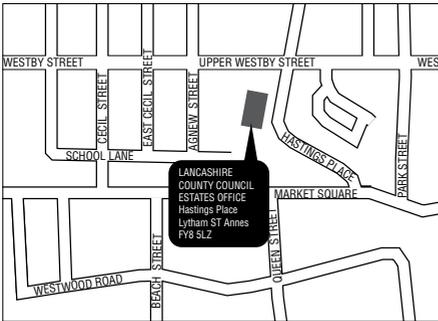
## Fleetwood Registrar's Office

The Registrar's Office  
 New Central Library  
 North Albert Street  
 Fleetwood FY7 6AJ  
 Tel: 0300 123 6705

Open:  
 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday  
 and Friday  
 9.30 am - 3.00 pm

Closed Wednesdays

**BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**



## Lytham Registrar's Office

Lancashire County Council  
 Estates Office  
 Hastings Place  
 Lytham St Annes  
 FY8 5LZ

Tel: 0300 123 6705

Open:  
 Monday, Wednesday  
 and Friday  
 9.30 am - 12.30 pm  
 1.30 pm - 4.30 pm  
 Tuesday 9.30 am to 12.30 pm

Closed Thursdays

**BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**

## 'Tell Us Once' Service

'Tell Us Once' brings together several organisations (see the list below) so that people do not need to notify them individually of the death.

To use 'Tell Us Once' the death must already have been registered. The Registrar will give you information about the service when you go to register the death.

You can also find further information at **[www.gov.uk/tell-us-once](http://www.gov.uk/tell-us-once)**

### **Tell Us Once links information between:**

- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)
- Local Authorities
- Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)
- Identity and Passport Service (IPS)

They **do not** inform the following organisations:

- Royal Mail
- Utilities
- TV Licensing
- Bank / Building society
- Library cards / season tickets
- Insurance companies
- Rental companies

## **A Coroner's Authorisation**

If a death is referred to the Coroner, a representative working for the Coroner will need to contact you to prepare a report relating to the person's medical history. This is standard procedure and should not cause you any alarm.

In certain circumstances the Coroner may authorise the doctor to issue a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) without the need for a post mortem. This will be explained to you by a Coroner's Representative. A death cannot be registered until the Registrar has received written clearance from the Coroner.

Please do not hesitate to ask about anything that is unclear.

## **A Coroner's Post Mortem**

The Coroner may decide that a post mortem is required (your consent is not needed, and you cannot refuse it).

Once the post mortem has been completed, you will receive advice from the Coroner's Office of when and how to register the death. This process usually takes a few days.

### **Contact Numbers**

**For Fylde and Blackpool residents;  
Blackpool Coroner's Office: 01253 477128**

**For Wyre residents;  
Preston Coroner's Office: 01772 536536**

## **A Hospital Post Mortem**

The Doctor who has issued the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) may ask your permission for a post mortem examination to assist in medical knowledge and teaching.

Ensure that you understand why the post mortem is taking place and when. The decision to grant permission for a hospital post mortem is yours (you may wish to discuss this with other family members prior to giving consent). If you do decide to permit this you will be asked to sign a consent form.

## Viewing the deceased

When the person has been taken to a funeral home, please contact your Funeral Director to arrange a viewing.

If your loved one died in the community and transferred to Blackpool Teaching Hospital mortuary please contact your appointed Coroner's Officer if you would like to arrange a viewing (see telephone numbers Page 13).

## Funeral Arrangements

The Funeral Director of your choice will advise you of the options and discuss with you the arrangements you wish to make. The funeral is your opportunity to say your goodbyes in a way that is appropriate both for you and the person who has died. You may wish to choose who might lead the service (not necessarily a Minister of Religion), certain music or readings, and you or other relatives or friends may wish to take part in the service. Take time to consider the possibilities.

## Financial Assistance

Benefit Advice about Funeral Grants (payable to the responsible person if in receipt of qualifying benefit) may be obtained from The Social Fund - Tel: 0345 603 6967 during office hours or visit the website **www.gov.uk** for more information.

For advice on Bereavement Benefit (may be payable to the widow(er) / civil partner if the deceased was under 60) - Telephone 0345 608 8601 or visit the website **www.gov.uk** for information.

## **Pension / Allowance Arrangements**

Any queries regarding pensions and allowances can be directed to the Pension Service - Telephone 0345 300 0168 Monday to Friday 8.00 am to 8.00 pm - or visit the website **www.gov.uk** for information.

If the deceased was in receipt of a war pension, you need to telephone the Veterans Agency on Freephone 0800 169 2277 - or visit the website **www.veterans-uk.info** for information.

You will need the pension information and National Insurance numbers of the deceased and Next of Kin.

## **Funeral Payment Department**

You will need to complete form SF200 available from your local Job Centre Plus office or it can be downloaded at [www.gov.uk/browse/benefits](http://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits). You can telephone for advice and qualification requirement of a benefit:

Monday to Friday 8.00 am to 6.00 pm on 0345 608 8601.

## **NHS equipment**

Please return NHS equipment to the Loan Store it was issued from or telephone 01253 476646 or 01772 286573 for collection.

Wheelchairs issued by Preston Specialist Mobility Rehabilitation Centre (SMRC) need to be returned to them. Please telephone 01772 716921 to arrange collection.

If you are not sure about what to do with any piece of equipment (i.e. a syringe pump) please ask your GP or Healthcare Professional.

Medications need to be returned to the local pharmacy.

## **GRIEF: When Someone Dies**

The death of someone you love may be a devastating experience, causing stronger emotions than most people have ever felt before.

### **Feelings**

Even if you knew your loved one was dying, there is still a sense of shock when the death occurs. You may feel cold, numb, empty and unreal for a time. Following this you may experience such emotions as anger, panic, guilt and sadness. This may also be accompanied by periods of restlessness, especially at night when it may be difficult for you to sleep. You may also react by becoming irritable or critical of yourself and others, or by feeling unable to attend to routine matters or to think straight, which can lead to feelings of despair. All these are natural reactions to bereavement, and are not a sign that you cannot cope any more.

Grief is a very individual process, and everyone reacts differently. What is important is that you allow yourself time to grieve and to come to terms with your loss, in the way that is right for you.

### **Support**

You may prefer to organise things by yourself, but you may also want to consider the help of relatives or a close friend. Often they want to help share the burden.

During this time you may need extra support. Do not be afraid to speak about your feelings to someone. Other people may be afraid to speak about your loved one for fear of upsetting you. You may need to let them know when you want to talk. Tears are a natural way of releasing emotions: do not be embarrassed by them.

Grief takes time and effort. You may already be very drained physically and emotionally if your loved one had been ill for a time. If you feel unwell, or are concerned about physical symptoms, go to see your GP.

You will have good days and bad days, but in time, the pain will ease, and you will find yourself able to remember your loved one without becoming distressed. You never 'get over' a bereavement, but you gradually adjust to the loss, and start to live anew.

Some people may feel unable to grieve after a death, perhaps because they are caring for someone else and feel that they 'have to be strong'. The grief may then be released when a subsequent loss or event occurs, which may even be relatively minor, but is the trigger for emotions to be expressed. Sometimes this can be many years after the original loss.

When two bereavements occur relatively close to each other, the grief may be compounded, and the feelings more extreme. Grief does take time; it needs to be allowed to happen.

If, however, you are concerned about a grief reaction in yourself or in someone close to you, please seek further support.

You may also like to seek the support of a spiritual advisor, regardless of your religious beliefs, and that includes the hospital Chaplain, who can put you in touch with a minister of your denomination or religion. If you wish, you may contact the Chaplain on 01253 300000 at Blackpool Victoria Hospital.

There are also various organisations locally who can offer further support and counselling for you. Some of these are listed on pages 20, 21, 22 and 23.

## **Talking to Children about death**

Adults often feel the need to protect children from death. They may feel children will not understand or that they will be too upset. However, we can often underestimate a child's resources and ability to cope. Children often find it harder if they are not told what is happening, because they may be more frightened by imagined events. Children should be told the facts in a simple manner, using appropriate words, eg. 'dead', 'death', or 'died' rather than 'lost' or 'asleep'. Give them time to ask questions (which may be very direct) and offer plenty of reassurance.

It is helpful for adults to share feelings with children, such as feelings of sadness. By doing this they learn that it is natural to feel sad when someone dies. Children may like to draw pictures as part of their way of saying goodbye.

## **After the Funeral**

Settling the deceased person's estate can be confusing, time consuming and distressing. If you have been named as executor in the will, responsibility for carrying out the person's wishes lies with you. This will include payment of funeral expenses, debts and taxes, as well as arrangements for possessions and other assets.

It is wise to avoid making hasty decisions about the future. The length of time will vary for each individual, but gradually you will realise that you are more able to cope with your bereavement. Then will be the time for thinking about plans for the future.

## Advice and Support: Some Options for You

### **Bereavement Support Network**

Probate, Tax and Benefits Helpline

0808 168 9607

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### **Blackpool Carers Centre**

Beaverbrooks House

147 Newton Drive

Blackpool

FY3 8LZ

Tel: 01253 383748

or visit [www.blackpoolcarers.org](http://www.blackpoolcarers.org)

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### **Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Patients Relations Team**

Tel: 01253 955589

The Patient Relations Team aims to provide information, advice and bereavement support to families and carers.

This information relates primarily to Blackpool and the Fylde. If you live out of the area, similar services will be available to you. Your local telephone directory, Citizens Advice Bureau and General Practitioner should be able to help.

Support, especially where there are health concerns, can be sought from your General Practitioner (your doctor).

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### **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)**

Provides support through free, impartial, confidential information.

Local offices differ in opening times. See telephone directory for numbers.

## **Coping Alone - (Fylde and Wyre Residents only)**

Providing Bereavement Support

Tel: 0300 303 1234 - Your call will be directed to your local office and charged at the local rate.

Or visit [www.ageuklancs.org.uk](http://www.ageuklancs.org.uk)

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## **Counselling in Blackpool**

Website: [www.counselling-directory.org.uk](http://www.counselling-directory.org.uk)

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## **CRUSE Bereavement Care**

Local Tel: 01772 686668

National Helpline Tel: 0808 808 1677

Email: [lancashire@cruse.org.uk](mailto:lancashire@cruse.org.uk)

Website: [www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)

One to one counselling in your home and bereavement support groups for children and adults.

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## **Funeral Directors**

Some local companies are listed at the end of this booklet. They may be contacted for support and advice.

The National Association of Funeral Directors can be contacted on Tel: 0845 230 1343.

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## **Fylde Counselling Service**

Tel: 01253 720270

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## **Linden Centre Information & Support Centre**

Low Moor Road, Bispham, Blackpool FY2 0BG

Tel: 01253 595552

Families and carers who have been bereaved following a significant event either recently or some time ago and who are struggling to come to terms with the loss. Also children's bereavement support service.

## **N-Compass (Fylde and Wyre Residents only)**

Advocacy and carers support

Tel: 0345 013 8208

Or visit [www.ncompassnorthwest.co.uk](http://www.ncompassnorthwest.co.uk)

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## **NHS Choices – Live Well**

Includes information on coping with bereavement, children and bereavement, bereavement and young people and when someone you care for dies. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/coping-with-bereavement/>

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## **Samaritans**

16 Edward Street, Blackpool FY1 1BA - Open for personal visits most days 2.00 pm until 9.00 pm – please telephone to confirm.

Local Tel: 01253 622218

National Tel: 116 123

Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Confidential emotional support (Available 24 hours).

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## **Stop Mail**

A free of charge service to stop unwanted junk mail to the deceased.

0808 168 9607

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## **WAY Widowed and Young**

Website: [www.widowedandyoung.org.uk](http://www.widowedandyoung.org.uk)

WAY offers support and friendship for men and women up to the age of 50 whose husband, wife or partner has died.

## **Widows' Fellowship Group**

Langdale Road, Mereside FY4 4RR Tel: 01253 691600

Meet on a Monday 10.30 am - 12 noon. Support and friendship to widows of any age. Speakers each week, trips out monthly.

There are an increasing number of these, with trained counsellors offering support on various issues, including bereavement. Counselling offers more in-depth support. Many bereaved people actually need a listening ear and more general support rather than counselling.

# Friends After Bereavement



**Welcome to the friend's world**, we are local community group offering help and support to bereaved people in the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre areas who have lost a loved one, friend or simply would like to meet some exceptional like minded people.

**Our support groups** offer friendly guidance & help with emotional practical support needs, Meet people who have experienced the pain of loss.

**Our social activities** include a walking Group, Tea and coffee, Chat, Day Trips, luncheon group, raffle & quiz, guest speakers.

**Information Sessions** are for those people who are friends, neighbours or relatives of the bereaved.

**We can also offer;** One to one bereavement support/ group meet in a safe & confidential environment with a trained listener or qualified counsellor.

Training sessions for health care providers and professional's.



**The support group meets every first Wednesday of the month at:  
St Johns Court  
Warton Street  
Lytham FY8 5JB**

**12:30 pm to 3:30 pm.**

**Hot lunch at 1pm £5.00**

To book a place or for any enquiries please contact  
Mark Bamforth on 07759 480 930 / Catherine Bezzant 07828 939 304

## **They are Gone**

You can shed tears that they are gone,  
Or you can smile because they lived,  
You can close your eyes and pray that they will come back,  
Or you can open your eyes and see all that they have left.  
Your heart can be empty because you can't see them  
Or you can be full of love that you shared,  
You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday,  
Or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.  
You can remember them and only that they are gone  
Or you can cherish their memory and let it live on,  
You can cry and close your mind be empty and turn your back,  
Or you can do what they would want: smile, open your eyes,  
love and go on.

(Anonymous)

*Tree of Lights and Book  
of Remembrance  
Celebrating and Remembering  
your loved ones*



Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust host a special memorial evening each year in December.

Bereaved families, carers and friends are invited to pay tribute to their loved ones, at a beautiful reflective service of music, readings and reflections, followed by light refreshments. Families are welcome to add the name of their loved one/s to our Book of Remembrance which is placed in the chapel throughout December.

All are welcome to attend this special memorial evening, and support the Tree of Lights appeal (which is optional).

For further information or request a leaflet contact  
Fundraising and Voluntary Services - Tel: 01253 957381

E-mail: [info@blueskieshospitalsfund.org.uk](mailto:info@blueskieshospitalsfund.org.uk)

## **Useful contact details**

Blackpool Coroner's Office: 01253 477128  
Preston Coroner's Office: 01772 536536

Hospital Switchboard: **01253 300000**

## **Patient Relations Department**

The Patient Relations Department offer impartial advice and deal with any concerns or complaints the Trust receives. You can contact them via:

Tel: **01253 955589**

Email: **bfwh.PALS@nhs.net**

You can also write to us at:

**Patient Relations Department, Blackpool Victoria Hospital,  
Whinney Heys Road, Blackpool FY3 8NR**

Further information is available on our website:

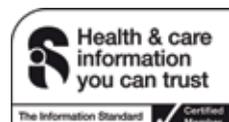
**www.bfwh.nhs.uk**

## **References**

This leaflet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

Details of the references used in writing this leaflet are available on request from: **Procedural Document and Leaflet Coordinator 01253 953397**

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