

FORM FOR THE COLLECTION FROM HOSPITAL OF A PERSON WHO HAS DIED

This is a national exemplar form for local adoption and adaptation that can be used to allow the collection of the person who has died from a hospital. ⁽¹⁾Where the hospital has a mortuary or equivalent facility and can keep the body, collection will not usually be possible until the cause of death has been established and stated on a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death by the attending doctor and either confirmed or certified by a medical examiner; or for a *stillbirth Form 34 has been completed by an attending doctor or midwife. ⁽²⁾In cases where a coroner has decided to conduct an investigation, or has been notified about the death and may conduct an investigation, the body of the person who has died must not be collected until the coroner has provided authorisation. The completed and signed form should be kept by the organisation named in section B and a copy given to the person named in section F. *For a stillbirth, please complete sections below, as appropriate.

This exemplar form can be adapted for use in other settings. However, this would need to be done in conjunction with the medical examiner's and coroner's office.

A. Name of the person who has died and the date of death [note: sections A to D bereavement service to arrange completion]

Forename(s).....	NHS or Hospital Number
Surname or family name.....	
Date of birth.....	Date of death.....

B. Name and address of hospital from where the person who has died will be collected

Name.....	Telephone.....
Address (including postcode).....	
.....	

C. Declaration by the person authorising collection of the person who has died

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, I am entitled to take lawful possession of the body for the purpose of burial or cremation ⁽³⁾ and (<i>where applicable</i>) I authorise the person or organisation named in section D to take into their care the person who has died and any personal effects noted in section E.	
Name.....	Relationship to the person who has died
Address (including postcode).....	
..... Telephone/mobile	
Signature.....(not required for verbal declaration) Date.....	
or <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal declaration to the person named below	
Name.....	position
Organisation.....	

D. Name of person or organisation authorised to take into their care the person who has died⁽⁴⁾

Name of person or organisation authorised to take into their care the person who has died and any personal effects remaining on or with the body
.....

E. Personal effects remaining on or with the body of the person who has died [note: completion by mortuary or ward staff]

Please list or describe any personal effects remaining on, or with, the body or state 'None'

F. Declaration by person into whose care the body of the person who has died will now pass [note: completion by person or organisation named in section D (*where applicable*) or by person entitled to take lawful possession in section C]

I confirm that I have checked the identity and collected the person who has died, named in section A and any personal effects noted in section E in accordance with the wishes of the person named in section C (*where applicable*). I have also read and understood explanatory note (2) below.

Name..... Organisation

Address.....Telephone.....

Signature..... Date.....

G. Declaration by person witnessing the collection of the person who has died [note: completion by mortuary or ward staff]

I confirm that I have checked the identity of the person named in section A and witnessed the collection of the body of the person who has died by the person / organisation named in section F above and that I have done so in accordance with locally agreed policies and procedures.

Name..... Position.....

Signature..... Date.....

Explanatory notes

- 1) Where a death occurs in a place with a mortuary or equivalent facility that can be used to keep the body of the person who has died, the organisation in possession of the person's body will usually want to assure itself that there is no duty to notify a coroner, or if notification is required, that there is no need for the coroner to conduct an investigation, before assisting with the collection of the body. This assurance will be provided by the medical examiner's confirmation or certification of the cause of death. Where a death occurs in a place where the body of the person who has died cannot be kept and an attending doctor has advised that there is no apparent reason for the death to be notified to a coroner, the person's body may be collected and removed to a funeral home or other suitable place.
- 2) Where collection of the body of the person who has died is before a medical examiner has confirmed or certified the cause of death, the person or organisation who collects the body of the person who has died will need to wait until a medical certificate of cause of death has been issued (usually on the next working day), or obtain agreement from the coroner, before making or allowing any change to the body (including embalming) that may interfere with a coroner's post-mortem examination. They will also need to ensure that the body of the person who has died is available for external examination carried out by or on behalf of the medical examiner that is scrutinising the death. If a coroner is notified of the death as a result of scrutiny by a medical examiner and decides to conduct an investigation, the person or organisation who collected the body of the person who has died will need to return the body to a place nominated by the coroner.
- 3) You may be entitled to lawful possession of the body for the purposes of burial or cremation if you are entitled to apply for grant of probate to manage the estate of the person who has died. This is likely to be the case if you are a personal representative or relative of the person who has died. For further guidance about who is entitled to apply for probate see HM Courts and Tribunals Service leaflet PA2 "*How to obtain probate - A guide for people acting without a solicitor.*" If there is uncertainty or a dispute about who is entitled to lawful possession for these purposes it would be for the court to resolve.
- 4) Collection of the body of the person who has died does not give an automatic right to bury, cremate or repatriate the body. This can only take place after a registrar has issued a certificate for burial or cremation; commonly known as the "Green Form" (this usually takes place after registration of the death, though in some circumstances may take place beforehand) and/or authorisation has been granted by the Coroner in the district where the body lies.