**22. When a child dies – checklist and staff support**

The following checklist is a guide to help staff know what to do when a child dies following traumatic injury. This list is not intended to replace local procedures and checklists where they already exist.

SUDIC = Sudden Unexpected Death in Childhood (applies until 18th birthday)

and will include all deaths related to trauma and suicide.

For guidance on when to refer a death to the coroner

<https://www.gov.uk/after-a-death/when-a-death-is-reported-to-a-coroner>

**The following should all be documented clearly and legibly, on a local proforma if this is available:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Child and family details |  | Child’s full name, date of birth and gender |
|  | Child’s address |
|  | NHS number and Emergency department ID |
|  | Date of admission |
|  | Next of kin including names, addresses, contact details |
|  | Any other significant family member details, including siblings |
|  | First language and whether interpreter required |
|  | School or nursery |
| Medical responsibilities |  | Follow local SUDIC procedure and involve a senior paediatrician |
|  | Document time and place of death, and who certified the death |
|  | Document consultant(s) responsible at time of death |
|  | Make Coroner’s referral including* + - Name and grade of doctor who made referral
		- Name of Coroner’s officer and contact details
		- Details and outcome of discussion
 |
|  | Issue death certificate if the coroner gives permission* + - Name of doctor, GMC number, contact details
		- Cause of death
 |
|  | Complete Cremation Form if appropriate |
|  | Record police officer name, collar number and contact details |
|  | Consider offering hospital post mortem – if so, arrange for consent |
|  | Consider organ donation and referral to SNOD (specialist nurse in organ donation) |
|  | Inform colleagues previously involved in care of patient |
|  | Inform GP |
|  | Write a formal letter to summarise events leading up to the death, which can be copied to the GP, relevant professionals and the coroner if needed |
|  | If you think you will need to write a statement, complete this in the next week whilst events are fresh in your mind |
| Nursing responsibilities |  | Document which nurse(s) involved / present at time of death |
|  | Note any special requests regarding care of child’s body / possessions such as clothes and toys |
|  | Organise keepsakes, such as hand and footprints, a lock of hair |
|  | Given written information on bereavement / when a child dies if available |
|  | Make family aware of how to return to see their child after death |
|  | Notify midwife if under 4 weeks old |
|  | Notify health visitor or school nurse depending on age |
|  | Notify local safeguarding team if appropriate |
|  | Notify social care if appropriate |
|  | Identify whether any other agencies involved and notify them |
|  | Identify any local sources of psychology or bereavement support that may be offered to the family |
|  | If you may need to write a statement, complete this in the next week |
| Leaving the department |  | Two name bands in situ |
|  | Mortuary card completed |
|  | Mortuary staff informed |
|  | Porters requested |
|  | Update patient information system to record death of the child |
|  | Photocopy all notes and keep them safe |

**Staff support**

The serious injury or death of a child is usually a traumatic event for those involved, including the staff who have looked after the child. After the event, consider holding a meeting inviting all staff involved in the care of the child.

The aims of the meeting should be:

* To review the event and reflect upon what happened
* To provide an opportunity for staff to share their experiences in a safe and supportive environment
* To identify areas of good practice
* To identify any lessons learned
* To identify any further actions that need to be taken, and by whom
* To signpost staff to further support if needed

**Staff needing to access further support following an event may do so in the following ways:**

1. Individual support from the clinical supervisor / educational supervisor / line manager

2. Referral to the local Occupational Health Service, or local Psychology Service if available

3. Referral to the General Practitioner

4. Referral to professional bodies and unions

<https://www.rcn.org.uk/> <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/work-life-support/your-wellbeing>

<https://www.unison.org.uk/> <http://www.medicalprotection.org/uk>

<http://www.themdu.com/>

<http://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/pgmde/pgmde/trainee_support/>

**Appendix 12 - Sources of support for families**

<http://www.suddendeath.org/>

Sudden – supporting people after sudden death. An initiative by Brake, the road safety charity

<http://www.brake.org.uk/>

Support for UK residents who have been bereaved or seriously injured in a crash

<https://childbereavementuk.org/>

Support for families after the death of a child, including siblings

<https://www.cruse.org.uk/>

Cruse bereavement care – support for bereaved families

<http://leedssbs.org.uk/>

Leeds suicide bereavement service

<http://www.starwakefield.org.uk/>

Wakefield bereavement support for children

<http://lbforum.org.uk/>

Leeds bereavement forum – charity based in Leeds who will signpost individuals to the most appropriate bereavement service either locally or nationally

<http://www.childfuneralcharity.org.uk/> or <https://www.familyfund.org.uk/>

May be able to offer financial support with funeral costs

**Children’s Hospices in Yorkshire & Humber**

All with the exception of Bluebell Wood offer bereavement support to families not previously registered with the hospice.

<https://www.martinhouse.org.uk/>

Martin House, Wetherby (West, North and East Yorkshire)

<https://www.forgetmenotchild.co.uk/>

Forget Me Not, Huddersfield (West Yorkshire, North and Greater Manchester)

<http://www.standrewshospice.com/andys>

St Andrews (Andy’s), Grimsby (NE Lincs, N Lincs, Hull, East Riding, Lincolnshire)

<http://www.bluebellwood.org/>

Bluebell Wood, Sheffield (South Yorkshire, North Derbyshire, North Nottinghamshire, North Lincolnshire Bassetlaw)