



## Caring for your loved one in Assisi Hospice



Dear family and friends

As a partner in the care of your loved one, the team at Assisi Hospice would like to share useful information on what to do when death approaches.

When a loved one goes through the final journey and passes on, we may experience a wide range of emotions. This could include sadness, confusion, anger, anxiety and perhaps even guilt or relief. In addition, we need to complete many tasks which are unfamiliar to us. In this booklet, you will find information related to the following:

- Signs that someone is close to death.
- What you can do for your loved one who is dying
- Practical matters to consider
- Signs that death has occurred
- What to do when death occurs

We hope that our Assisi Team has provided some comfort to you and your loved one. We thank you for giving us this privilege to journey with you.

Sincerely

Choo Shiu Ling

Chief Executive

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## Signs that someone is close to death.

It is difficult to tell if someone is close to death by observing their physical appearance. However, there are some common signs and symptoms that may appear a few hours or a few days before death.

### **Loss of appetite**

During the days or weeks before death, there may be decreased desire to eat and drink. As bodily functions gradually wind down, your loved one may not need as much food and water. He/she may not feel hunger or thirst. You may however want to offer his/her favourite food/drinks to taste and keep the mouth moist.

### **Sleeping**

Your loved one will be sleeping more and may be difficult to wake. Let him/her rest and sleep. He/she will be comforted by you being present with them.

### **Changes in speech and hearing**

Your loved one may become less responsive or difficult to understand as the nervous system slows down. However, continue to speak to him/her clearly and gently. Evidence suggests that hearing is the last sense to be lost. Instead of asking questions (which your loved one may not be able to answer), you may want to share good memories or play his/her favourite music.

### **Confusion and restlessness**

Reduced supply of oxygen or blood to the brain may cause confusion and restlessness. These are common symptoms and there are medications available to control them. You may help by assuring and orientating your loved one to the date, time, place, and people around him/her. Also, be aware of safety issues while caring for him/her.

### **Coolness of the skin**

His/her extremities may be increasingly cool to touch, and the colour of the skin may change. This is a normal indication that the blood circulation is decreasing to the body's extremities and being reserved for the most vital organs.

### **Reduced production of urine**

Urine output normally decreases and may become darker or more concentrated. This is due to the decreased fluid intake and a decrease in circulation through the kidneys. This does not cause distress to your loved one.

### **Changes in breathing patterns and noisy breathing**

Breathing may become irregular, with periods of absent breaths for up to 20 to 30 seconds. Sometimes, breathing may be noisy due to throat secretions. Such situations may be worrying but be assured that this does not bring discomfort to your loved one. Certain medications may be useful in reducing throat secretions.

## What you can do for your loved one who is dying



Your presence is a great source of comfort to your loved one, and you can continue to participate in taking care of your loved one's basic needs at the end of life. These activities include:

**Mouth care:** cleaning the mouth and keeping it moist with a combination of oral gel and lip balm.

**Skin care:** gentle massage and application of moisturisers every few hours.

**Repositioning:** turning your loved one every 3 to 4 hours will help prevent pressure sores. Repositioning is also useful for managing throat secretions. Turn your loved one to the side and use a small towel to let secretions drain via gravity.

**Keeping warm:** ensure that your loved one, especially his/her extremities, is kept warm with a blanket.

**Environment:** play soft music (religious or other preferred music) that your loved one likes. You may want to adjust the lighting in the room to make it softer and more comfortable.

**Family:** you may want to inform family and friends so they can visit or stay by the bedside. If your loved one is in a single room, one visitor is allowed to stay overnight with them.

**Spiritual support:** you may arrange with religious leaders for prayers or any other rites that are appropriate. If there are any specific rites that you would like to be observed for your loved one (chanting, etc), please inform our staff as early as possible so we can make arrangements to accommodate your request as best as possible.

**Communication:** this is a good time to express your love and care through touch or words of affirmation. You may hold their hands and speak or pray gently into their ears.

Use short, simple sentences to reassure them of your presence and that they are being cared for.

Orientate your loved one by telling them the day and time, who is present in the room, what has been happening in your life or reminisce about your memories with them.

You and your loved one may also wish to express your feelings to each other by saying:

- Thank you.
- I'm sorry.
- I forgive you.
- I love you.
- Goodbye.



**Caring for yourself:** while providing your loved one with your presence during this period is important, caring for yourself is just as important.

**Do remember to:**

- ❖ Stay hydrated and have your meals.
- ❖ Continue taking your medication (if any) regularly.
- ❖ Get adequate rest. If possible, family members are encouraged to take turns between spending time with your loved one and getting rest.
- ❖ Give yourself permission to take short breaks (for physical and psychological wellness)
- ❖ Reach out to our Medical Social Workers or Clinical Pastoral Counsellors should you wish to speak to someone.
- ❖ If required, Assisi Hospice provides Grief and Bereavement support for family members and significant others. Please feel free to speak to our Medical Social Workers for more information.

For more information on our Grief and Bereavement Care, please refer to this link or scan this QR code:

<https://www.assisihospice.org.sg/patients/#ourcareservices>





## Practical matters to consider

**Deciding on a casket company:** when appropriate, explore with your loved one and family members on the type of funeral rites and casket company preferred. You may also wish to call some casket companies to ask for a no-obligation quote. Doing this will help ease some of your concerns and allow you to focus on spending time with your loved one in the days ahead.

**Assigning duties:** you may wish to pre-assign some family members certain tasks to be carried out when death occurs such as informing other family members, casket company, religious leaders, etc. Sharing of duties helps to share the administrative load and reduce chances of it being overwhelming for any one person.

**Useful reading material on planning a funeral and Estate Matters:**

<https://singaporehospice.org.sg/e-library/docs/when-a-death-occurs-a-guide-to-practical-matters/>



## Signs that death has occurred

It is often difficult for family and friends to accept that death has occurred. The following is a list of signs to indicate that a person has died.

- No breathing.
- No heartbeat or pulse.
- No response to touch.
- Voiding of bowel and bladder, that is, soiling of clothes and sheets.
- Mouth slightly ajar and there may be a small discharge of fluid from the mouth or nose.
- Eyes remaining fixed, look glazed or cloudy.
- Eyelids may be opened or closed. If his/ her eyes are opened, you may like to close them. Moist cotton pads can be applied to the eyelids to help them close.

Please inform the nurses as soon as possible should you observe that your loved one has passed on or if you are unsure at any point.

The time immediately after death is a special moment and should not be rushed.

You may wish to have some private time with your loved one.

## What to do when death occurs

### Step 1: Doctor to certify death

The ward nurses will contact the doctor to examine your loved one to certify that death has occurred.

### Step 2: Download Death Certificate from My Legacy website

The death certificate (also known as eCCOD) will be generated by the Immigration and Checkpoint Authority (ICA) once the doctor has certified the death.

The doctor/nurse will print the confirmation page for you. It will include:

1. Death Certificate Number
2. Deceased's ID Number (*that was used during death certification*)
3. Date of Death

With the information from the confirmation page, please log onto the My Legacy website to download the digital death certificate.

My Legacy website: <https://mylegacy.gov.sg> or scan the QR code to access the website.

Once the eCCOD is generated, you may either save it as a PDF copy or as a screenshot.



The eCCOD must be **downloaded within one month** from the date the death occurred. There is no limit to the number of times the next-of-kin can download the death certificate.

*(Please refer to page 16- 18 for the steps to download the death certificate.)*

If you encounter any issue with the death certificate,  
please contact the ward.

**NRIC:** The family of the deceased no longer need to surrender the deceased's NRIC to the police station or ICA for verification of death. However, the NRIC must be destroyed (e.g., cutting in half) to prevent it from being misused.

### **Step 3: Engage a Casket Company of your choice.**

Inform the funeral director of the casket company of your loved one's ward details in Assisi Hospice. Once confirmed, inform the ward nurse of the funeral director's estimated time of arrival.

The funeral director will need a copy of the eCCOD from the family for further arrangements like application for permit to bury/cremate/management of ashes, etc.

Here is a useful list of some funeral directors in Singapore:  
<https://afd.org.sg/finding-a-funeral-director/>

You may refer to the table on page 13 and 14 or you may scan this QR code to access the website.



<p><b>1Stop Buddhist Funeral Services</b> Blk 37 Sing Ming Drive #01-573 Singapore 575711 Tel: 6452 9588</p>	<p><b>24 Hours Direct Casket</b> Blk 89 Geylang Bahru #01-2734 Singapore 339696 Tel: 6296 5051</p>	<p><b>All Saints Care Services</b> 125A Lavender Street Singapore 338734 Tel: 6341 7117</p>
<p><b>Ang Chin Huat Casket Pte Ltd</b> Blk 88 Geylang Bahru #01-2724 Singapore 339696 Tel: 6292 4376</p>	<p><b>Ang Chin Moh Funeral Directors Pte Ltd</b> Blk 88 Geylang Bahru #01-2724 Singapore 339696 Tel: 6226 3333</p>	<p><b>Ang Yew Seng Funeral Parlour</b> Blk 38 Sin Ming Drive #01-537 and #01-543 Singapore 575712 Tel: 6456 8557</p>
<p><b>Budget Casket and Funeral Services</b> Blk 37 Sin Ming Drive #01-569 Singapore 575711 Tel: 6456 5195</p>	<p><b>Casket Company Embalming &amp; Funeral Services Pte Ltd</b> Blk 37 Sin Ming Drive #01-575 Singapore 575711 Tel: 6456 7423</p>	<p><b>Casket Fairprice</b> Blk 37 Sin Ming Drive #01-571 Singapore 575711 Tel: 6455 9909</p>
<p><b>Chye Seng Undertaker</b> Blk 4 Toa Payoh Lor 8 Toa Payoh Industrial Park #01-1343 and #01-1345 Singapore 319056 Tel: 6251 2833</p>	<p><b>Direct Funeral Services Pte Ltd</b> Blk 88 Geylang Bahru #01-2722 Singapore 339696 Tel: 6555 1115</p>	<p><b>Flying Home Pte Ltd</b> Blk 4 Toa Payoh Lor 8 Toa Payoh Industrial Park #01-1345A Singapore 319056 Tel: 6253 0001</p>
<p><b>Goh Soon Moh Undertaker</b> Blk 88 Geylang Bahru #01-2728 Singapore 339696 Tel: 6292 4783</p>	<p><b>Hindu Casket</b> Blk 88 Geylang Bahru #01-2718 Singapore 339696 Tel: 6222 4444</p>	<p><b>Hosanna Bereavement Services Pte Ltd</b> Blk 4 Toa Payoh Lor 8 Toa Payoh Industrial Park #01-1333 Singapore 319056 Tel: 6352 7797</p>
<p><b>International Funeral Repatriation Services (Singapore)</b> Blk 78 Geylang Bahru #01-2910 Singapore 339686 Tel: 6294 1368</p>	<p><b>Lee Teoh Heng Undertaker</b> Blk 87 Geylang Bahru #01-2706 Singapore 339695 Tel: 6299 1049</p>	<p><b>Mount Vernon Sanctuary Pte Ltd</b> Blk 89 Geylang Bahru #01-2730 and #01-2732 Singapore 339697 Tel: 6285 4111</p>

<p><b>Roland Tay Undertaker</b> Blk 37 Sin Ming Drive #01-573 Singapore 575711 Tel: 6294 8588</p>	<p><b>Serbaguna Muslim Funeral Services &amp; Contractor Pte Ltd</b> Blk 78 Geylang Bahru #01-2910 Singapore 339686 Tel: 6440 8471</p>	<p><b>Serenity Casket</b> Blk 89 Geylang Bahru #01-2736 Singapore 339697 Tel: 6289 6689</p>
<p><b>Simplicity Casket Pte Ltd</b> Blk 37 Sin Ming Drive #01-575 Singapore 575711 Tel: 6456 7423</p>	<p><b>Singapore Muslim Casket and Marble Contractor Pte Ltd</b> Blk 78 Geylang Bahru #01-2910 Singapore 339686 Tel: 6440 7259</p>	<p><b>Sin Ming Funeral Parlour</b> Blk 37 Sin Ming Drive #01-577 and #01-581 Singapore 575711 Tel: 6456 8989</p>
<p><b>Singapore Casket Co. Pte Ltd</b> 131 Lavender Street Singapore 338737 Tel: 6293 4388</p>	<p><b>Singapore Funeral Services</b> Blk 4 Toa Payoh Lor 8 Toa Payoh Industrial Park #01-1341 Singapore 319056 Tel: 6841 4666</p>	<p><b>Telok Kurau Pengurusan Jenazah</b> Blk 78 Geylang Bahru #01-2910 Singapore 339686 Tel: 6298 1897</p>
<p><b>Tong Aik Undertaker</b> 125 Lavender Street Singapore 338734 Tel: 6455 3832</p>	<p><b>Trinity Casket Pte Ltd</b> Blk 38 Sin Ming Drive #01-527 and #01-531 Singapore 575712 Tel: 6451 4496</p>	<p><b>Union Casket</b> Blk 4 Toa Payoh Lor 8 Toa Payoh Industrial Park #01-1329 Singapore 319056 Tel: 6353 8449</p>
<p><b>Western Casket Pte Ltd</b> Blk 4 Toa Payoh Lor 8 Toa Payoh Industrial Park #01-1345A Singapore 319056 Tel: 6253 8073</p>	<p><b>World Casket Pte Ltd</b> Blk 37 Sin Ming Drive #01-571 Singapore 575711 Tel: 6457 2112</p>	<p><b>Wu Fu Funeral Parlour</b> Blk 4 Toa Payoh Lor 8 Toa Payoh Industrial Park #01-1329 Singapore 319056 Tel: 6353 8449</p>

*(This list is not exhaustive. There are other funeral directors that may not be on this list. Families are allowed to engage any Funeral Directors in Singapore.)*

## Step 4: Preparation for Last Office at Assisi Hospice

### Please prepare 2 sets of clothing:

**1<sup>st</sup> set:** one set of non-tight-fitting clothing (e.g. one top and one pair of bottoms). The nurses will do a simple cleaning for your loved one and change them into this 1<sup>st</sup> set of clothing before the casket company arrives. Please note that this set of clothing may be discarded after embalming.

**2<sup>nd</sup> set:** this will be the final set of clothing which your loved one will wear for the funeral. Please prepare this 2<sup>nd</sup> set of clothing, including footwear and pass this to the Funeral Director. Please ensure that the clothing should be easy to wear for your loved one (e.g., avoid tight fitting clothing). If you have any items that you would like to place into the coffin with your loved one (e.g., spectacles, letters, soft toys, non-metallic items, etc), please pass it to the Funeral Director.

## New Process When Death Happens



Doctor certifies the death online and the death is automatically registered.



Certifying doctor issues the Death Certificate Number and deceased's information to the Next-of-Kin to download the digital death certificate.



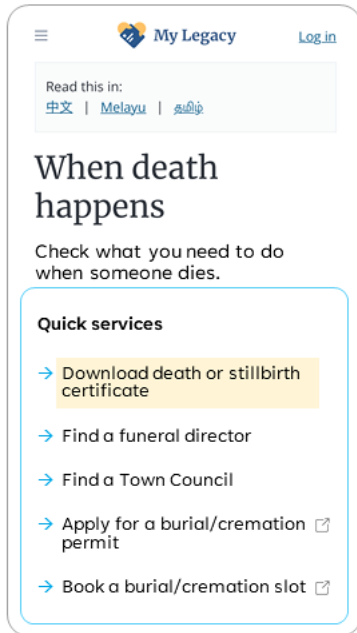
Visit **My Legacy** to download and save the digital certificate in your personal device for easy access and sharing.



Apply for Permit to Bury/ Cremate at  
[www.eportal.nea.gov.sg](http://www.eportal.nea.gov.sg)

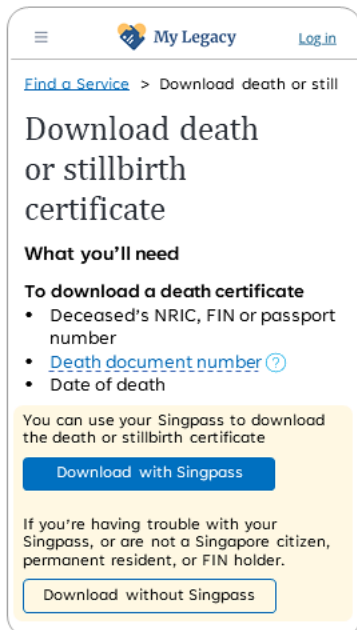


## 4-Step Process



### Step 1

Visit [go.gov.sg/mylegacy-edc](https://go.gov.sg/mylegacy-edc) or scan QR code:



### Step 2

Login with either your Singpass or your identification details

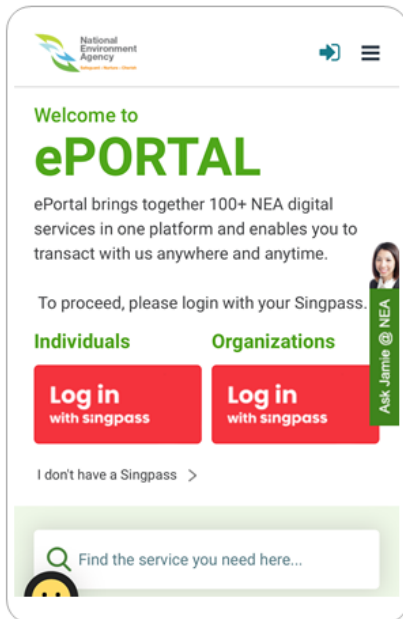
Enter the following:

1. Deceased's NRIC, FIN or passport no.
2. Death Cert No.
3. Deceased's date of death



### Step 3

Confirm details and download certificate to your device



### Step 4

With the certificate, you may authorise a person (such as a Funeral Director) or directly apply for a Permit to Cremate/Bury at [www.eportal.nea.gov.sg](http://www.eportal.nea.gov.sg)



**Your feedback is important to us, so we can continuously improve on our resources for caregivers.**

**Please scan this QR code to share your feedback on "Caring for your loved one in Assisi Hospice"**



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