

## After the death

Below is a guide as to what to do immediately after the person you are caring for passes away.

- If you chose to, you may spend as much time as you want to sit with the person.
- Tell a doctor or nurse – If you are at home, you will need to call the doctor (the main doctor who has been involved in the person's care or your family doctor) or the palliative care service to let them know the person has passed away. A doctor needs to verify the death for the death certificate. Sometimes an ambulance or bush nursing service will be called if the doctor is unavailable. If you are in a hospital or aged care facility, let a staff member know that you think the person has passed away and they will take care of verifying the death.
- Wash and dress the body – You may like to wash the body on your own, or ask for a staff member or nurse (from the palliative care or nursing service) to come and assist you.
- Inform family, friends or religious leader – You may like to let certain people know that the person has passed away. You may also like to give this task to a family member to do for you.
- Call the funeral company \* – The funeral company will come pick up the body and look after the body until the funeral. You can choose when they come. The funeral company will also help register the death and organise the death certificate.
- The funeral – There needs to be a cremation or burial for the body, however a funeral service is optional. Discuss the options and be aware that there is a huge variation in cost.

- Death Certificate – Once you have the death certificate you will need to send copies to all relevant services including banks, superannuation, services and utility companies etc.
  - Contact the lawyer involved in the person's Last Will and Testament to start the process to finalise the person's estate.
  - If the person you were caring had wishes to be buried overseas, now is a good time to contact the embassy of their country and they will guide you and help you fulfil these wishes.
  - If you are working, talk to your employer about compassionate leave. Many employers give paid leave for 2-3 days after a close relative has passed away, while other employers will be happy to provide you with unpaid leave.
  - If the person who passed away was a registered organ donor now is good time to inform the doctors.
- \* You do not have to have a funeral company involved, however if you choose not to have one involved then you need to adhere to the legalities for your state relating to registering the death and keeping and disposing of the body.