Support following a death in Service Policy

This procedural document supersedes: CORP/EMP 24 v.4 – Support Following the Death of a Member of Staff.

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Executive Sponsor(s):	Zoe Lintin – Chief People Officer
Author/reviewer: (this version)	Tully Monk, People Systems & Workforce Information Manager
Date written/revised:	June 2025
Approved by:	Policy Formulation Group
Date of approval:	July 2025
Date issued:	August 2025
Next review date:	July 2028
Target audience:	Trust-wide

Amendment Form

Please record brief details of the changes made alongside the next version number. If the procedural document has been reviewed **without change**, this information will still need to be recorded although the version number will remain the same.

Version	Date Issued	Brief Summary of Changes	Author
Version 5	13 August 2025	• Policy name change • Policy reviewed for factual accuracy regarding reporting process to the pay and pensions team • Contact details for Employee Assistance Programme updated • Additional line management information added • Appendix 2 flowchart added • Appendix 3 death in service pension form added	Tully Monk
Version 4	14 December 2017	• Policy reviewed and contact details updated • Chaplaincy added	John Scott
Version 3	13 January 2015	• Policy reviewed and put into new format • New employee assistance service promoted – HELP Employee Assistance • Contact numbers updated	Ruth Cooper
Version 2	May 2010	• Policy reviewed and put into new format. • Amendment form and contents page added • Occupational Health contact numbers updated	Jayne Lang

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1 INTRODUCTION

We understand that the death of a colleague, whether at work or not, can have devastating consequences both for the individual's immediate family and for you and your work colleagues. At such a difficult time, you don't always think clearly about the practical things you need to do quickly and where you can go for further support.

You need to ensure that issues for both the individual's immediate family and their work colleagues are identified and dealt with quickly, sensitively and sympathetically. This policy sets out what we expect of you and gives you a guide on some of the practical details you may need to consider.

2 PURPOSE

The policy sets out the key actions and issues required:

Policy Overview

Communication & Immediate action	Further action on practical issues
Colleague	**Colleague**
• Inform your manager as soon as reasonably practicable of the sad news.	• If you find it difficult covering duties, or using office space of the deceased colleaguetalk to your manager.
	• You can seek personal support by contacting Vivup, the external employee assistance service, on 03303 800658 or visit www.vivup.co.uk.
	• If you want to attend the funeral for the deceased, or set up a collection, talk to your manager about it.
Line Manager	**Line Manager**
• Inform our Chief Executive, the Chief People Officer and the relevant executive director during normal working hours.	• Regularly check in with your team to see if they need further support. Try to accommodate requests for time off to attend the funeral, where appropriate.
• Notify the Hospital Bleep Holder and Executive Director on-call if out of normal working hours.	• Agree with immediate family, the information they want you to share with work colleagues.

• consider how you should break the news to team members, both on and off shift, and take immediate action to inform them.	• agree the continued method of communication with the family/ relatives.
• talk to your own manager for support and/or call vivup on 03303 800658 or visit www.vivup.co.uk (the external employee assistance service).	• notify the people systems team of the death immediately and complete the termination on esr as soon as practically possible.
• contact the chief executive's office to arrange for written contact to be made with the family on behalf of the trust, acknowledging the bereavement and offering condolences.	• consider how and when you will handle the vacancy and the interim arrangements to cover the work. seek advice from the people business partner team when necessary.

3 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Line Managers

- Act as the contact point for immediate family, making sure their wishes are met.
- Offer your support to colleagues who may be affected by the death and remind them of how to access further emotional or practical support from Vivup Employee Assistance by calling 03303 800658 or visiting www.vivup.co.uk – a 24 hour, 7 day a week advice/counselling service for all employees.
- Ensure all affected colleagues are aware of the Trust Wellbeing Handbook which can be accessed via the Hive and provides advice on a range of support mechanisms within the Trust.
- Take action on the immediate practical steps that need completing – see procedure section and also Appendix 2 and 3.

Employees

- If you have been affected by the death of your colleague talk to your manager immediately.
- Consider contacting Vivup Employee Assistance on 03303 800658 or by visiting www.vivup.co.uk – a 24-hour, 7 day a week advice/counselling service for all employees.
- The chaplaincy service is also available at DRI (01302 642237) and Bassetlaw (01909 572846)

4 PROCEDURE

4.1 Communications and Immediate Action

- Anyone receiving notification of the death of a colleague should report the matter to their immediate line manager as soon as reasonably practicable. The manager should in turn notify the Chief Executive, the Chief People Officer and the senior management team in their Division or Directorate. Where notification occurs out of hours, they should notify the Hospital Bleep Holder and the Executive Director on call at the time.

- As a manager you will then need to consider how to inform work colleagues. Breaking bad news to colleagues, who are likely to be distressed, is never easy. It is often helpful to inform them that you have bad news, before proceeding to impart the news of the death. It might be helpful to talk this through with your senior manager, a colleague who has dealt with a matter of this kind previously, or your People Business Partner.

- As a manager you can also seek guidance and support from Vivup Employee Assistance on 03303 800658 or by visiting www.vivup.co.uk. Trained counsellors can help you think through the issues that arise as a result of bereavement and how best to support everyone through a difficult period. Where teams have been particularly affected by death or other forms of crisis, Vivup Employee Assistance also offer on-site counselling.

- It is also useful to keep a record of when colleagues have been informed of the death in order to prevent uncertainty at a later stage and to ensure that you have not overlooked anybody, particularly individuals who are absent from work, or not on shift at the time.

- The Chief Executive will write to the family on behalf of the Trust acknowledging the bereavement and offering condolences. To follow up your immediate notification of the death, you will then need to provide the office with details of the deceased employee's role, period of service, etc.

- As a manager you need to contact the People Systems Team to notify the death quickly. This helps avoid salary overpayments, but also avoids mail being sent which may distress the family. It is important that the People Systems Team are provided with the information required so that Victoria Pay Services can give notification to the NHSBSA regarding any pension benefits, which may be important for the family. You then need to follow-up this notification by ending the assignment via ESR Manager Self Service (or a termination form for medical and dental colleagues) as soon as practically possible. Given the sensitive circumstances, the People Systems Team can support you to action the required information in ESR, please dbth.vpspayrollliaison@nhs.net or 01302 644107 should you need any support.

4.2 Manager Guidance - Practical Actions

- Make contact with the family and agree how and when you will keep in contact with them. In the initial conversation with them agree how and what news they would like you to communicate to work colleagues. They may have strong preferences on what they want you to say and we should make every effort to comply with their wishes.

- Liaise with the Trust Communications & Engagement Team so that any agreed information can be shared more widely with colleagues as appropriate.

- After imparting the initial news to colleagues, you will need to consider the practical actions you need to take. People deal with the shock of bereavement in different ways, so try to be as flexible as possible in the support you offer – for example, some individuals may want to take some immediate time off, while others may just want a short period of quiet time on their own to digest the news. In the following weeks, speak to your team members about how they are feeling and check on any further support they need.

- In the period immediately following the death you will need to be sensitive where colleagues feel uncomfortable about using the workspace/equipment of the deceased, or covering duties previously allocated to them. You have a responsibility to continue delivery of Trust services but seek advice from your own manager on handling the reallocation of work – for example, there may be areas where some worked can be paused for a very short period.

- Local circumstances will determine how quickly you need to make arrangements to fill the lost role, but it is often helpful not to rush this process, giving team members some time to adapt to the loss. Your People Business Partner can advise on handling.

- When talking to the family you will need to ensure their wishes are met with regards to attendance at a funeral and/or sending flowers and condolences. Where they are content for former colleagues to attend funeral services, you need to be as flexible as possible in allowing time off for colleagues to attend.

- Agree an appropriate arrangement with the family/ relative to return personal belongings or receive property back into the Trust.

4.3 Manager Guidance – Pay and Pensions

- If the individual was a member of the NHS pension scheme (or receiving NHS Pension benefits) you should complete the form as detailed in Appendix 3 which includes the following information:
- Date of Death
- Next of Kin – Name, Address, Telephone contact and email if possible
- Relationship of next of kin to deceased
- Who notified of the death if different to above, and their details as above
- If the individual was married or in a partnership
- If the individual had any dependent children
- Calculation of any outstanding annual leave to date of passing or confirmation of that if nothing due.
- The completed form should be returned to the People Systems Team as soon as possible via dbth.vpspayrollliaison@nhs.net .

- If you are not sure whether the individual was a member of the NHS Pension please contact the People Systems Team on the contact details above who will support you to identify this information. The People Systems Team may need to liaise with Victoria Pay Services to verify this information.

- The termination of the assignment will need to be completed on ESR (please see Appendix 2). The People Systems Team will support you as needed (see above). The People Systems Team will liaise with the Victoria Pay Services Pensions Team to ensure VPS have all the relevant information required.

- The Victoria Pay Services Pensions Teams completes the death in service notification which is submitted to the central NHS Pensions Bereavement Team (the notification cannot be completed without confirmation of the above information). The Bereavement Team will then liaise directly with the next of kin regarding any NHS pension entitlements.

- If the individual was a member of the NEST pension scheme then the family/ next of kin will need to make contact with NEST directly. Further information on this process can be found on the NEST website using the following link. The manager may wish to share this information with the family member if useful:
  A member's pension after death | Nest pensions

- Any final payments will be made to the deceased bank account, if this has been closed it will come back to the trust bank account, the Trust finance team should inform Victoria Pay Services if this

occurs. Victoria Pay Services will require confirmation of next of kin bank details and a replacement payment will be made. Paper payslips are not normally issued however, the next of kin may request from Victoria Pay Services as needed. The People Systems Team can also help the manager to obtain any relevant pay slips as needed for the next of kin. No P45 is generated when an individual has passed away during employment. This is in line with HMRC requirements, more information can be found here:
What to do when an employee dies: Paying an employee who has died - GOV.UK

- The manager should notify the relevant teams to stop/ remove the individual's details from any internal Trust subscriptions – this may include car parking team or colleague lottery for example. The People Systems Team can assist you with identifying any pay related subscriptions. You may wish to consider any other circulation or communication lists that the individual was a member of. Once the assignment is ended in ESR this will generate notification to the IT department to end the email and IT accounts.

- Consideration will need to be given if the individual has any ongoing salary sacrifice arrangements, for example, lease car or Vivup home electronics. The People Systems Team will be able to review the individuals pay records to determine any ongoing arrangements and can provide information to the relevant manager. The manager will communicate sensitively with the family/ relatives regarding any arrangements to return items (for example a lease car) taking into account the appropriate time to do this and any agreements regarding the method of communication with the family. For some schemes a copy of the death certificate will be required to avoid early termination fees, and this should also be broached sensitively by the manager with the appropriate family member.

- If any overpayments remain following final salary and deductions (for example if there was a pre-existing overpayment plan, or an outstanding value remaining on Vivup orders) then this must be addressed sensitively with the family at the appropriate time. The manager will need to ascertain if there is an estate executor/administrator. The Trust will then need to inform the executor/ administrator of the amount owed to the Trust (in writing). The executor/ administrator will determine / discuss with the line manager how to settle the debt. If there are insufficient assets to cover the debt then the debt becomes unrecoverable. In such instances the manager will need to follow the divisional/ directorate procedure for declaring unrecoverable monies. This may include the completion of a loss & comp form to identify the loss for transparency. The manager can seek support from the People Systems Team to obtain the detail regarding any overpayment information. The People Systems Team will liaise with Victoria Pay Services to collate the relevant information as required.

5 TRAINING/SUPPORT AND USEFUL CONTACTS

Individual training requirements will be identified through a training needs analysis. Role specific education will be delivered by the service lead.

Below is a list of contacts which you will find useful when dealing with the death of a member of DBTH.

CONTACT	
Chief Executive	01302 644150
People Systems & Workforce Information Team	dbth.vpspayrollliaison@nhs.net or 01302 644107
Victoria Pay Services	**Payroll Enquiries:** sth.dbthpayrollenquiries@nhs.net **Pensions (existing):** sth.pensions@nhs.net **Phone number for pay and pension queries:** 0114 3052220 choose option 6
Vivup Employee Assistance	03303 800658 or by visiting www.vivup.co.uk

6 MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROCEDURAL DOCUMENT

What is being Monitored	Who will carry out the Monitoring	How often	How Reviewed/ Where Reported to
Overall effectiveness of the policy	Chief People Officer, or nominated person	Annually	P&OD Policy Formulation Group People Committee as part of policy development update
Fitness for purpose	Chief People Officer or nominated person	Three years	Formal review every three years

7 DEFINITIONS

None identified.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Trust aims to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, population and workforce, ensuring that none are disadvantaged over others. Our objectives and responsibilities relating to equality and diversity are outlined within our equality schemes. When considering the needs and assessing the impact of a procedural document any discriminatory factors must be identified.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been conducted on this procedural document in line with the principles of the Equality Analysis Policy (CORP/EMP 27) the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy (CORP/EMP 59) and the Civility, Respect and Resolution Policy (CORP/EMP 58).

The purpose of the EIA is to minimise and if possible remove any disproportionate impact on employees on the grounds of race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation or religious belief. No detriment was identified. (See Appendix 1)

8 ASSOCIATED TRUST PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS

Sickness Absence Policy (CORP/EMP 1)
Equality Analysis Policy (CORP/EMP 27)
Special Leave Policy (CORP/ EMP 47)
Flexible Working Policy (CORP/EMP 48)
Health & Wellbeing Policy (COPR/EMP 31)
Over and Underpayments Policy (CORP/EMP 34)
Special Leave Policy (CORP/EMP 47)
DBTH Leave Policy (CORP/EMP 49)
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (CORP/EMP 59)
Civility, Respect and Resolution Policy (CORP/EMP 58)

9 DATA PROTECTION

Any personal data processing associated with this policy will be carried out under 'Current data protection legislation' as in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2021.

For further information on data processing carried out by the trust, please refer to our Privacy Notices and other information which you can find on the trust website: https://www.dbth.nhs.uk/about-us/our-publications/information-governance/

10 REFERENCES

Vivup Employee Assistance 03303 800658 or by visiting www.vivup.co.uk

APPENDIX 1 - IMMEDIATE STEPS TO FOLLOW

1

- Please contact the People Systems Team as soon as reasonably practicable on dbth.vpspayrollliaison@nhs.net to advise of the death
- Complete Termination Form on ESR Manager Self Service
- For medical and dental colleagues a termination form should be completed and submitted to dbth.esr_hr_admin_processing@nhs.net
- Please advise the People Systems Team if you need support to process the termination of the assignment.

2

- If the individual was a member of the NHS Pension Scheme/ receiving NHS pension benefits, the manager to obtain the following information and complete the form in Appendix 3. Please return the completed form to the People Systems Team via dbth.vpspayrollliaison@nhs.net as soon as reasonably practicable:
- Date of Death
- Next of Kin – Name, Address, Telephone contact and email if possible
- Relationship of next of kin to deceased
- Who notified the Trust of the death if different to above, and their details as above
- Whether the deceased was married or in a partnership
- Whether the deceased had any dependant children
- Calculation of any outstanding annual leave to date of death or confirmation if no leave due.

3

- The People Systems Team will liaise with the Victoria Pay Services Pensions Team on the managers behalf ensuring the above information is provided so that the pensions team can complete the notification of death in service where required.

APPENDIX 2 - DEATH IN SERVICE NHS PENSION INFORMATION

The line manager should complete the following information where the individual was a member of the NHS Pension Scheme:

Information Required	**Answer**
Name of deceased	
Assignment number of deceased	
Date of Death	
Next of Kin – Name, Address, Telephone contact and email if possible	
Relationship of next of kin to deceased	
Who notified the Trust of the death if different to above, and their details as above	
Whether the deceased was married or in a partnership	
Whether the deceased had any dependant children, name and age	
Calculation of any outstanding annual leave to date of death or confirmation if no leave due	

Once completed please return this form to:

dbth.vpspayrollliaison@nhs.net

APPENDIX 3 - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT PART 1 INITIAL SCREENING

Service/Function/Policy/Project/ Strategy	Care Group/Executive Directorate and Department	Assessor (s)	New or Existing Service or Policy?	Date of Assessment
Guidance for support following a death in service	People and Organisation Development Human Resources	Tully Monk	Existing	18 June 2025

1) Who is responsible for this policy? People & OD

2) Describe the purpose of the service / function / policy / project/ strategy? Intended to benefit the Trust as a whole, managers and employees. To provide managers with a reference point in order to offer support and guidance for colleagues who may be affected by the death of a colleague. To help managers give consideration to the practical implications of the death of a colleague

3) Are there any associated objectives? Employee and colleague support, pay and pensions requirements

4) What factors contribute or detract from achieving intended outcomes? – None

5) Does the policy have an impact in terms of age, race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy and religion/belief? No

- **If yes, please describe current or planned activities to address the impact** n/a

6) Is there any scope for new measures which would promote equality? n/a

7) Are any of the following groups adversely affected by the policy?

Protected Characteristics	Affected?	Impact
a) Age	No	
b) Disability	No	
c) Gender	No	
d) Gender Reassignment	No	
e) Marriage/Civil Partnership	No	
f) Maternity/Pregnancy	No	
g) Race	No	
h) Religion/Belief	No	
i) Sexual Orientation	No	

8) Provide the Equality Rating of the service / function /policy / project / strategy – tick (✓) outcome box

✓ Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4

If you have rated the policy as having an outcome of 2, 3 or 4, it is necessary to carry out a detailed assessment and complete a* **Detailed Equality Analysis form – see CORP/EMP 27.

Date for next review:	**June 2028**		
Checked by:	**Adam Evans**	**Date:**	**30/07/2025**