Where can I go for further advice and support?

If you have any questions about appointing a next of kin, making a Will or managing your affairs, our Patient and Family Support team will be pleased to help you and provide contact details of local solicitors should you need. To get in touch, please call 020 7787 1000.

How to contact Trinity

Royal Trinity Hospice
30 Clapham Common North Side
London SW4 0RN

Call: 020 7787 1000
Email: enquiries@royaltrinityhospice.london

www.royaltrinityhospice.london

If you would like this information in a different format, such as large print, please speak to the Communications team on 020 7787 1000 or email media@royaltrinityhospice.london
Who can or can’t be my next of kin?

There are no rules or legal definitions about who can or can’t be your next of kin while you are living. You can nominate your spouse, a partner, a family member or a good friend. For some people who to choose will be obvious, for others it may be a more difficult decision.

What can a next of kin do?

Your next of kin cannot consent or refuse consent to treatment on your behalf. But if you are unable to communicate they can let doctors know what decisions they believe you would make if you were able to. A next of kin has no legal liabilities or rights to your medical notes or personal possessions. Nominating a next of kin does not affect who will inherit from you.

Why does the hospice want to know about my next of kin?

We need to know who you would like us to keep informed about your care and get in touch with if there is an emergency. You may also wish to provide us with contact details for other people that you would like us to keep informed, such as children and close friends. We are happy to meet and support whoever you give us permission to contact. We will not divulge medical or personal information to anyone without your consent. We suggest that you inform the person you wish to nominate as your next of kin and explain the responsibilities they might be expected to take on.

What are the responsibilities of my next of kin?

When someone dies at the hospice, the hospice will hand over any property or valuables to the next of kin. The next of kin will normally be the person who registers a death and organises the funeral. The next of kin may of course ask family members or friends to help. If your next of kin (and/or the executor named in your Will) decides they do not wish to take on these responsibilities, the hospice will instruct Lambeth Statutory Funerals to take full responsibility for making all further funeral arrangements and finalising your estate.

What about my Will?

Everyone is encouraged to make a Will and keep it up-to-date. This need not be complicated or costly. A Will is not just for people with property, it is a helpful legal document that will let your relatives and friends know your wishes on your death. Your Will appoints an executor to ensure that your wishes are carried out. Your executor and your next of kin can be the same person or different people. If they are different people bear in mind that it will be the executor who takes control of your possessions and is empowered to arrange your funeral.

If you die without a Will, UK law decides who will inherit all that you own and this may not be the people you would have chosen. The set legal approach for distributing your estate in this event does not currently recognise unmarried partners or non-civil partnerships.

In the absence of information about a next of kin or a Will, Royal Trinity Hospice is obliged, should you die while an inpatient, to pass personal possessions to the Lambeth Registry Office where they will continue further investigations and make all necessary arrangements.