

# GUIDE FOR THE USER'S FAMILY

## What to Do When Death Occurs at Home

### The Choice of Death at Home

When considering the possibility of a death at home, it is important that it be the choice of the entire household and that everyone is comfortable in expressing their expectations and fears. This decision may be revised, and without problem. The choice may seem to be the right one today but change possibly according to developments.

Having multiple caregivers can be a big advantage during end-of-life care at home. It facilitates the support and care given to the sick person. It also allows caregivers to have a respite, which contributes to their ability to support the patient on his or her journey.

### Nurse's Visits

At the end of life, nurse's visits will be more frequent according to identified needs. If desired, visits can take place on a daily basis. As you provide accompaniment for the patient round the clock, we offer a 24/7 number that allows you to speak with a nurse at any time and have an extra visit from a nurse or doctor, if necessary. We hope this service will be of help.

### Preliminary Steps

When the last moments of life approach, it is best to undertake some preliminary steps. To the extent possible, we recommend that you:

- know the expectations, hopes and rituals that are important to each of you at death (e.g. to have time alone for each one involved, etc.);
- identify the funeral home where the loved one will be conducted after death;
- keep important documents handy (phone numbers, prearrangement documents, birth certificate or birth place, last will and testament, etc.).

**Following Death**, the first step will be to contact the doctor to certify the death. According to what has been agreed with the doctor and staff nurse, you will:

- Contact the \_\_\_\_\_ to notify your doctor or the doctor on duty if death occurs between 8:00am and 4:30pm, Monday-Friday.
- If death occurs in the evening, night, on a weekend or holiday, contact the 24/7 centre at **1 800 361-7073**. The duty doctor will be notified. If death occurs at night, the doctor will visit early in the morning.

**Do not dial 911**; this will cause the arrival of an ambulance with professionals who

would want to revive your loved one. The ambulance will be accompanied by a police car. This will greatly complicate the death situation.

**If you do dial 911 and the emergency team arrives at your home.**

- Advise them you are under the CLSC's care and show them the Do-Not-Resuscitate order signed by the doctor.
- Make sure that all those present agree that no resuscitation attempt should be made.

Once the death certificate is signed by the doctor, you may call the funeral home. Tell the funeral home staff when you want them to arrive.

***Take the time needed to say goodbye.***

This is the last moment with a loved one. Sometimes, relatives find comfort in gathering around the person before the body is taken away.

<b>What care should be given to the body?</b>	<b>How should medicines be disposed of safely?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The person should be lying on their back, head slightly elevated on a pillow.</li><li>▪ Close the person's eyes.</li><li>▪ Open a window.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Return the drugs to the pharmacy so they can be destroyed in an environmentally safe manner.</li><li>▪ Do not dispose of medications in the trash or in the toilet.</li></ul>

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