



2 CLINICAL SERVICES OFFERED

2.4 Mortuary Services

The department of Cellular Pathology currently provides a hospital and public mortuary service on three South of Tyne and Wear hospital sites. These include Gateshead Queen Elizabeth (QEH), South Tyneside (STDH) and Sunderland Royal (SRH) Hospitals.

These comprise facilities for body storage, body release to funeral directors, body viewing and autopsy services (including autopsies for HM Coroner). All three Mortuaries are licensed by the Human Tissue Authority to undertake post mortem examinations and store the deceased.

2.4.1 Key Personnel and Contact Numbers

Role	Name	Telephone	e-mail
Designated Individual QEH	Dr James Henry, Consultant Pathologist	0191 445 6520	james.henry2@nhs.net
Designated Individual SRH	Dr Debra Milne, Consultant Pathologist	0191 445 6516	debra.milne1@nhs.net
Designated Individual STDH	Hannah Stoker Business Manager – Clinical Support Services	0191 4041000 ext 4161/bleep 414	Hannah.stoker@chsft.nhs.uk
Cellular Pathology Departmental Manager	Janet Rodgers	0191 4456572	janet.rodgers@nhs.net
Mortuary Manager	Kerry Maddison	0191 4452309	kerry.maddison1@nhs.net

2.4.2 Opening Times

	Opening Times	Telephone Numbers	
		Direct Line	Internal
Gateshead Queen Elizabeth	Monday – Thursday 8am – 16:45pm Friday 8am – 16:15pm Closed to funeral Directors 1pm – 2pm Body Collection Times Monday 2pm – 4pm Tues – Fri 10am – 1pm & 2pm – 4pm	0191 445 2309	Ext 2309 Ext 3888 Ext 6437
South Tyneside	Monday – Friday 8.30am - 5pm Closed 1pm – 2pm (NB Occasional 4.30pm close due to staffing levels) Body Collection Times Monday 2pm – 4pm Tues – Fri 10am – 1pm & 2pm – 4pm	0191 2024164	Ext 4164
Sunderland Royal	Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm	0191 5699042	Ext 42418 Ext 49042
A member of the mortuary staff from each site is on call out of hours and contactable via the respective hospital switchboard.			



2.4.3 Identification of bodies

The deceased must have at least one wrist band attached, giving accurate details of the identification of the deceased. Any patient that died on a ward in Sunderland must have 2 ID tags on as per Trust Patient Identification Policy There should also be two body cards, one attached to the shroud, and the other attached to the sheet or body bag containing the deceased. Nursing or medical staff who were caring for the deceased may need to be called to the mortuary to identify and re-label bodies which bear inadequate or inconsistent identification information

2.4.4 Transport of bodies

Hospital Deaths: These are transported to the mortuary by the portering service, at the request of individual wards. **Considerations for the control of infection following patient death** must be adhered to. Facilities/ hospital portering services have written procedures for the safe and respectful transport of bodies to the mortuaries.

Community Deaths: These are transported to the mortuary by local undertakers at the request of the Coroner or the Coroners' Officer.

2.4.5 Post mortem examinations

Post mortems fall into 3 categories:

1. Hospital (consented) post mortems

A hospital (consented) post mortem is requested by the consultant clinician or surgeon of the deceased. Informed consent must be gained by appropriately trained individuals from the person ranked highest in the Hierarchy as specified by the HTA. Contact the designated individual on the appropriate hospital site for further information. It is important that all documentation is completed accurately to minimise further distress to the family.

The purpose of hospital post mortems is:

1. To confirm the cause of death
2. To assess the extent and severity of disease
3. To assess the effects of treatment

The death certificate needs to be completed before requesting a hospital post Mortem. See below for consenting procedure for each site:

- **Queen Elizabeth Hospital**
 - ✓ Contact the histology secretaries on 0191 445 6551 to obtain a Hospital Consent Post Mortem pack. The pack contains an information leaflet for relatives, a consent form for the post mortem and a clinician request form along with instructions.
 - ✓ Requesting doctors are invited to attend the post-mortem.
 - ✓ For out of hours consent - contact the night sister / on-call pathologist.
 - ✓ Requesting doctors are expected to bring the completed pack and hospital notes of the patient to the Histology secretaries.
 - ✓ Ensure that all parts of the consent form are completed and signed
 - ✓ Please ensure those giving consent understand the procedure for which they are giving consent, and be sure that this is proper informed consent.



- ✓ If you have any questions please contact one of the consultant pathologists.
- **South Tyneside Hospital**
 - ✓ Copies of the Consent forms are available from designated individual.
 - ✓ Consent must be taken by an appropriately trained person
 - ✓ The person requesting the post mortem would inform the mortuary staff and bring the fully completed paperwork down to the mortuary along with the case notes.
 - ✓ The deceased will be transferred from South Tyneside to QE for the PM to be performed.
 - ✓ Requesting doctors are invited to attend the post-mortem.
- **Sunderland Royal Hospital**
 - ✓ Consent must be obtained by a senior clinician who is familiar with the patient.
 - ✓ If the clinician seeking consent hasn't received appropriate training, then consent must be taken in conjunction with an appropriately trained person.
 - ✓ Information, including Consent and Request forms are available on the Trust intranet
 - ✓ The fully completed Request and Consent forms should be taken to the mortuary along with the patients' case notes.
 - ✓ Requesting doctors are invited to attend the post-mortem.

2. Coroner's post mortems

A Coroner's post mortem is required when the cause of death is unknown or unnatural and is undertaken at the request of the Coroner.

To report a death to the Coroner in Gateshead or South Tyneside contact Coroners Officers:

- Jan Iveson 0191 4838192
- Karen Rowe 0191 4838189
- Lyndsay Kohberg 0191 4838189
- Laura Whing 0191 4838189
- Katherine Watson 0191 4838192

To report a death to the Sunderland Coroner contact the Coroners Officers:

- Vicky Ross 0191 5617839
- Reginald Hooper 0191 5617840
- Andy Weighill 0191 5617841
- Neville Dixon 0191 5617842
- Jessica Lee 0191 5617844

Deaths to be reported to the Coroner include:

1. When the cause of death is unknown
2. Deaths related to surgery/anaesthetic
3. Deaths due to action of deceased e.g. suicide
4. Deaths related to trauma/accident (no matter when the trauma/accident occurred).
5. Deaths due to industrial disease including mesothelioma, asbestosis and pneumoconiosis etc.
6. Deaths related to a medical procedure or drug.



If a case is referred to the coroner and they accept the case you do not need to fill out a death certificate or cremation form. If in doubt as to whether or not to refer a death contact either a pathologist or the Coroners Officer (see above) who will be more than happy to discuss the case.

Reporting a death to the Coroner does not automatically mean that a post mortem will be performed, if in doubt it is best to speak to the Coroner or his officer. A Consultant Pathologist is also available to offer advice. Coroner's post mortem reports are dispatched directly to the Coroner who must provide consent for the release of the report to other sources.

3. Home Office Post mortems

Home Office post mortems are also known as forensic post mortems. Home office post mortems are carried out at the instruction of the police.

For more information regarding post mortem examination, please visit the Human Tissue Authority website: <https://www.hta.gov.uk/>

2.4.6 Cremation Forms

See below for details for each site:

- **Queen Elizabeth Hospital**
 - Cremation forms are administered by the mortuary at QEH.
 - Cremation forms need to be completed as soon as possible so as not to delay the funeral. The completed signed first part (Form B) **MUST** be returned to the Mortuary by the first part doctor.
 - There is a rota of Consultant medical staff for completion of the second part - All second parts should be completed in the mortuary.
 - You **MUST** see the body after death. The Anatomical Pathology Technician will be available between 8:30am and 4:30pm Monday to Friday for this purpose.
 - Remember to complete the section on Implanted Cardiac Pacemakers (including ICDS) and radioactive implants.
 - If you have discussed the death with the Coroner 's Officer please record this on the form (Question 18).
- **South Tyneside Hospital**
 - Cremation forms are administered by Patient Welfare department.
- **Sunderland Royal Hospital**
 - Cremation forms are administered by the Bereavement Office

2.4.7 Viewing of Deceased

See below for details for each site:

- **Queen Elizabeth Hospital**

Visits to the chapel must be arranged by prior appointment with the Anatomical Pathology Technician who can be contacted on 0191 445 2309 between 8.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday. (An on-call service operates outside these hours and a technician can be contacted via hospital switchboard).



- **South Tyneside Hospital**
 - Appointments to view should be made in advance whenever possible.
 - During normal working hours viewings/formal identification are prepared by the mortuary staff.
 - If the deceased died on a ward, visits to the chapel must be arranged with the nursing staff on the ward on which the patient died. The ward will contact the mortuary to arrange a suitable time.
 - Viewing/identification of Community Deaths are arranged direct with the mortuary staff 0191 202 4164
 - Out of hours viewing is done by the portering staff. For ward deaths nursing staff can contact the porters to arrange a convenient time.
 - Relatives ringing in to make an appointment out of hours are put through to the site manager. The site manager will then liaise with the porters to arrange a convenient time.
 - An on call technician is available should formal identification by police require any remedial work.

- **Sunderland Royal Hospital**
 - Appointments to view should be made in advance whenever possible.
 - During normal working hours viewings are done by the mortuary staff.
 - If the patient died on the ward, relatives can arrange this either via the ward or directly with the mortuary staff.
 - Viewing/formal identification of a deceased who died in the community can be arranged directly with the mortuary staff.
 - Out of hours viewing is done by the portering staff.
 - Ward staff can contact the porters to arrange a convenient time.
 - Viewings/formal identification of community deaths can be arranged via the Duty Matron

ALL VIEWINGS MUST ADHERE TO HOSPITAL HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES.

2.4.8 Late Miscarriages/Stillbirth/ Neonatal Death

A separate protocol for the above exists, details of which are available within Maternity and Gynae & Obstetric ward areas. (Please contact the Mortuary if further information is required). This describes in detail the procedure for handling the above, from specimen taking, arranging for genetics samples, PM and consent, and for disposal. Further information for sending of samples for genetics is available in this handbook under Specimen Collection and Preparation Section 9.4 Products of Conception for Cytogenetic Studies.