End-of-Life Symbol

This symbol appears on many of the resources developed by the Hospice Friendly Hospitals Programme to respectfully identify items connected with the end of life in hospitals.

In conjunction with good practice in hospitals and care facilities, the symbol aims to add respect and solemnity to items used following the death of a person and to make resources relating to the end of life instantly identifiable.

The symbol is inspired by ancient Irish history and is not associated with any one religion or denomination. The 3-stranded white spiral represents the interconnected cycle of life – birth, life and death. The white outer circle represents continuity, infinity and completion. Purple was chosen as the background colour as it is associated with nobility, solemnity and spirituality.
Ward Altar

The Hospice Friendly Hospitals Programme designed and developed an attractive oak ward altar for use in hospitals when a patient is dying or following their death. The table-top of the altar features the end-of-life spiral to denote its significance and, coupled with its unique shape, it distinguishes it from a standard piece of hospital furniture.

To order:

Contact: Grace O’Sullivan
Tel: 01 673 0068

Contact: Michael Devoy & Co. Ltd.
Tel: 01 456 0280
Website: www.devoy.ie

Hospital Contact
End-of-Life Symbol
This is an idea adopted from the Royal Hospital in Donnybrook. This symbol is displayed at the nurses’ station or on the ward door to notify staff that a patient is dying or has died.

To obtain a copy:
Contact: Hospice Friendly Hospitals Programme
Tel: 01 673 0068
e-mail: info@hospicefriendlyhospitals.net
Download from: www.hospicefriendlyhospitals.net
Family Handover Bag
The principle of the family handover bag is to promote a dignified and sensitive way of returning the deceased patient’s personal possessions to the family.

To order:
Contact: Peter Kelly,
Tel: 021 451 3020
Email: cotab@eircom.net
NorMors Chin-Collar

NorMors is a chin support for the deceased. It is a simple collar that is put around deceased’s neck and supported by the collarbone. It is partly hidden by the deceased’s shirt or blouse. The chin-collar was developed as a more dignified alternative to other equipment and practices used to keep the mouth closed.

To order:
Contact: Shepherds Mortuary & Funeral Supplies
Tel: 01 43 49702
e-mail: andrew@shepherds.ie

Hospital Contact
Ceremonial Resources

Mortuary Trolley Drape
A purple drape is available for use with mortuary trolleys while transporting the body of a deceased person through the hospital. The drape can be ordered in different sizes to accommodate different types of mortuary trolley. The drape can also be used within the mortuary itself for viewing the body.

To order
Contact:  NCD Medical Ltd.
Tel:  01 8834299
e-mail:  prestigemed@indigo.ie

Hospital Contact
Sympathy Cards

It is good practice for hospitals to send sympathy cards to the next-of-kin of those who die in the hospital. Ideally, the sympathy card should be handwritten by a person who was involved in the care of the patient – this is much more personal than having a card with preprinted wording which is then signed by a staff member.

It would be preferable that the sympathy card would be sent prior to any bills being sent from the hospital. Ideally, the bill would be delayed by at least 2 weeks to allow for a sympathy card to be sent from the ward.

To obtain a sample copy:
Contact: Hospice Friendly Hospitals Programme
Tel: 01 673 0068
e-mail: info@hospicefriendlyhospitals.net
Insert
hospital specific
information