# **LAST OFFICE**

The following is intended as a guide only and should be influenced by the patient’s preferences expressed in life and those of the family or significant others after death.

* Provide support to family as necessary.
* Ensure that death has been verified and discuss with senior nursing and medical staff any specific legal and health and safety issues that may influence last offices practice
* Ascertain if there is any need for referral to the coroner.
* Discuss with family any preferences they may have or that the patient, in life, may have requested that will influence last offices practice
* Collect all equipment necessary.
* Ensure the area where the procedure is to be performed is private and as free from interruptions as possible
* Remove tubes, lines and access devices as agreed with senior medical staff (
* If lines are to remain, cut and spigot off any large-bore tubes and cover with gauze and adhesive dressing. Ensure that documentation alerts mortuary staff to their presence.
* Apply gentle pressure over the bladder area, if the patient is not catheterised, allowing the bladder to drain. This will minimise the risk of post-mortem leakage.
* Remove jewellery and any personal items, unless requested or advised otherwise. Ensure that appropriate records are made of any personal items left on the body or otherwise.
* Attend to hygiene needs, paying particular attention to hair, nail care and oral hygiene.
* If the patient has dentures place them in the mouth, if this cannot be done send them to the mortuary with the patient.
* Attempt to close the eyes, using a small piece of clinical tape if required.
* Attach identification labels/wrist bands according to local guidelines and organisational policy.
* Dress the patient in gown/shroud or own clothes, as required.
* Place an incontinence pad underneath the buttocks to contain any soiling.
* If a body bag is to be used, place the body in the bag as per instructions, completing any necessary documentation.
* If a body bag is not to be used, enclose the body in a sheet, securing it with adhesive tape.
* Complete documentation (notice of death) as per organisational policy. Document last offices practice, including property and any specific requirements for mortuary care.
* Dispose of highly infectious clinical waste.
* Arrange for transfer of the body, communicating any specific requirements to pottering/mortuary staff.
* Transfer property, patient records and any additional items to the bereavement care office or appropriate area.