

# Langley Hospice Society



A PRACTICAL GUIDE  
FOR FAMILIES

Updated June 2017  
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***Mission Statement***

***Langley Hospice Society, a community-based, non-profit organization, provides compassionate support to help people live with dignity and hope while coping with grief and the end of life.***

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[www.langleyhospice.com](http://www.langleyhospice.com)

**Langley Hospice Thrift Store**

**Second Story Treasures**  
#5, 20349—88 Avenue  
Langley, BC V1M 2X5  
Canada  
telephone: 604-513-9319  
fax: 604-513-9318  
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# Death, Dying & Bereavement

## The First Steps . . .

Death is the final stage of life. Recent or impending death can create major change in a person's lifestyle. Not only will you be faced with your own emotional turmoil and grief, you may also be dealing with practical concerns such as home care, wills of estate, advance care, funeral plans, finances, insurance, and so forth. This booklet offers practical information to dying and bereaved people and their families.

This publication is one resource that the Langley Hospice Society (LHS) provides to the community. Society staff and volunteers meet with grieving and palliative people on a one-to-one basis at home, in the hospital, at the hospice residence and at the LHS Supportive Centre. Loss support groups (for adults, teens and children) provide grieving people with the opportunity to talk about their feelings and experiences in a secure environment. The Society also maintains a lending library. For more information on this booklet or any of our services, please call the **Langley Hospice Society Supportive Program Centre at 604-530-1115**.

**Note: *The information within this booklet is intended as a guide only.***

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## Emotional Support . . .

Being around someone who is dying may be awkward and uncomfortable. You may feel as if you are supposed to say something uplifting or insightful; you don't have to.

The dying person may or may not want to talk about how they are feeling. Each person deals with their feelings in their own way. If they want to talk about their feelings they will let you know. One way to respect their needs and wishes is to **just listen**.

Be honest and open about your fears and sincere about your emotions. Remember, when someone knows they are dying, their personality doesn't suddenly change. People who were fun-loving or irritable before will likely remain fun-loving or irritable. What is important is that they know that they are not alone.

*“You matter because of who you are.  
You matter to the last moment of your life  
and we will do all we can not only to help you  
die peacefully but also to live until you die.”*

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### **Support Services:**

<b>Langley Hospice Society</b> .....	604-530-1115
<b>Delta Hospice Society</b> .....	604-948-0660
<b>Richmond Hospice Society</b> .....	604-279-7140
<b>Surrey Hospice Society</b> .....	604-584-7006
<b>White Rock South Surrey Hospice Society</b> .....	604-531-7484
<b>BC Bereavement Help Line</b> .....	604-738.9950
or .....	1-877-779-2223
<b>Abbotsford Hospice Society</b> .....	604-.852-2456
<b>Chilliwack Hospice Society</b> .....	604-795-4660
<b>Burnaby Hospice Society</b> .....	604-520-5024
<b>Crossroads Hospice Society</b> .....	604-949-2270
<b>Mission Hospice Society</b> .....	604-826-2235
<b>Ridge Meadows Hospice Society</b> .....	604-463-7722
<b>Fraser Canyon Hospice Society (Hope)</b> .....	604-860-7713

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## Home Care . . .

Caring for a dying person at home is a big responsibility with many considerations and challenges. The list below suggests ways people can make home care more comfortable for the person receiving care:

- Allow the person being cared for to make their own decisions - for example, if they decide to smoke or they don't feel like eating, respect their decision. Dying people have the right to make choices for themselves.
  - If possible, care for the person in a room that can be both private and public as the need arises.
  - Have entertainment (TV, radio, books, hobbies, etc.) easily accessible to the bed.
  - Use a bell, a walkie-talkie, or some other means of communication so the person being cared for can contact the caregiver at all times.
  - If possible turn the person at least once every two hours to avoid bedsores and skin irritation. Make sure the person is dried thoroughly after each bath. If they can tolerate it, massages are helpful.
  - Set up a network with those you will be working with: doctors, pharmacists, nurses, and any others involved in the care of the person.
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## Financial Matters . . .

### **Compassionate Care Benefits**

Compassionate Care Benefits is a program from Service Canada administered by Employment Insurance (EI). Benefits are paid for a twenty-six-week (26) period to persons who have to be away from work temporarily to provide care or support to a family member who is gravely ill with a significant risk of death within twenty-six (26) weeks.

For more information about this program, please go to the following website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-compassionate.html> or call 1-800-206-7218.

### **Travel and Meal Expenses (Canada Revenue Agency)**

If medical treatment is not available locally (within 40 kilometres), you may be able to claim the cost of travelling and meals to access treatment elsewhere.

For more information on travel and mileage allowances, and other eligible medical/treatment claims, go to: <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/travelcosts/> and click on “Medical Expenses”, or call 1-800-959-8281 (Individual Income Tax Enquiries).

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## Caregivers . . .

The term “caregiver” refers to all those providing direct support to someone with a life-limiting illness. This includes family, volunteers, spiritual counsellors, doctors, nurses, social workers, dieticians, pharmacists, homemakers and friends. The “primary caregiver” is usually a family member or close friend who is familiar with the needs and wishes of the person who is ill and is responsible for coordinating support services.

Often, primary caregivers want to provide all the care for their loved one themselves. The illness may be lengthy, however, so it may be necessary for the primary caregiver to set limits and to seek help in order to prevent burn-out.

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### ***Home Support Services:***

<b>Long Term Care</b> .....	604-532-6537
<b>Home Nursing Care</b> .....	604-532-6514
<b>Home Health Service Line</b> .....	604-953-4965
<b>Classic LifeCare</b> .....	604-534-5663
<b>Revera Home Help</b> .....	604-520-3813
<b>Nurse Next Door</b> .....	604-228-4357
<b>Care Counts Health Services</b> .....	604-597-9406
<b>Cornerstone Care Society</b> .....	604-514-1476
<b>Home Care Assistance</b> .....	604-912-0253
<b>Care at Home Services</b> .....	778-945-2288
<b>Apple-a-Day Home Care Services</b> .....	604-376-1149
<b>Angels There for You</b> .....	604-427-2839
<b>or</b> .....	604-551-7347

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## Caregivers . . .

### ***Physically:***

- Getting enough or some sleep, exercise, and relaxation may help you feel energetic and healthy.
- Exercise can be helpful—try including activities that are suited to you – swimming, bike, riding, walking...
- Adjustments such as daytime naps, a walk/run around the block or short break from routine and more frequent nutritious meals may be required to accommodate your schedule.
- Use caffeine, sugar and alcohol sparingly.
- Learn simple relaxation techniques that will help boost your immune system and calm your mind, resulting in healing benefits to your body, mind and spirit.
- Drink plenty of water

### ***Mentally:***

- Plan your days with flexibility.
- Try to slow your pace and establish priorities.
- Set reasonable limits for yourself – short achievable goals rather than long-term.
- Read and gather information that will support you when you have the energy.
- Ask for the help you need. Family and friends are willing but often unsure of how to help.
- Sort your thoughts and feelings by keeping a journal.

### ***Spirituality:***

- If applicable, reaffirm your beliefs, explore your faith, and seek out a spiritual mentor.
  - Read inspirational, encouraging materials that lift your spirits.
  - Create a space and some solitude for yourself away from the situation, planning something for comfort, pleasure or fun.
  - Practice prayer, meditation or other relaxing activities that nurture your soul.
  - Remember to keep and nurture your sense of humour.
  - Listen to music that calms your mind and refreshes your soul.
  - Surround yourself with living things: plants, pets, water, all aspects of nature.
-



## Caregivers . . .

### **Emotionally:**

- Allow yourself to experience and process the full range of feeling
- Be careful not to feel so responsible for others that you neglect your own emotional needs.
- Allow yourself to cry and to laugh. Both tears and laughter are healing.

### **Socially:**

- Be sensitive to the needs of others.
- Recognize your own limitations to meet their needs.
- Recognize the value of socializing, even briefly.
- Have a manicure, get a massage, go to the hairdresser, walk with a friend, go to church or attend a support or relaxation group.
- Determine which roles and responsibilities are yours and which ones belong to others and delegate. (For example, have friends return phone messages to concerned loved ones.)

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### **Community Services:**

#### **Cancer Agency:**

<b>BC Cancer Agency Vancouver Centre</b> .....	604-877-6000
<b>Fraser Valley Cancer Agency</b> .....	604-930-2098
<b>Patient Family Counselling</b> .....	604-930-4000
<b>Canadian Cancer Society (cancer info line)</b> .....	1-888-939-3333

#### **Food Services:**

<b>Langley Meals on Wheels</b> .....	604-533-1679
<b>Better Meals</b> .....	604-299-1877
.....	Or Toll Free 1-888-838-1888
<b>Langley Memorial Hospital</b> .....	604-534-4121
<b>Lifeline Program</b> .....	604-953-4960
(personal emergency response system)	
<b>Langley Community Services</b> .....	604-534-7921
<b>South Fraser Regional</b>	
<b>Crises Line</b> .....	604-951-8855
<b>Canadian Red Cross</b> .....	604-881-1113
(for loans of medical equipment)	
<b>Langley HandyDART</b> .....	604-575-6600
(transportation for those unable to use regular transit)	
<b>SPARC</b> .....	604-718-7744
(to apply for a handicapped parking permit)	

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# Estate Planning . . .

## Wills

A Will is a document created by a person (Testator) during their lifetime to direct how assets are to be distributed after death. A Will can also direct who is appointed to care for the minor children (Guardian), or to appoint a trustee for an adult child who may be incapacitated or unable to manage their affairs. A Will also appoints the Executor who is charged under the will to carry out the wishes outlined therein. The role of the Executor is one of responsibility and accountability and should be considered carefully.

The Will comes into effect upon the death of the Testator when the Executor takes authority to begin the process of administration. An application for Probate will be required in all but the simplest of estates before the Executor can deal with assets and proceed to wind up the estate.

While many estates can be straightforward there are many more that become complicated because of poorly worded documents leading to ambiguity and failure. It is recommended to seek the advice of a qualified advisor, such as a notary or lawyer, when drafting a will.

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### **Will of Estate:**

<b>Legal Services Provincial</b>	
<b>Call Centre</b> .....	1-866-577-2525
<b>BC Land Title &amp; Survey</b> .....	604-630.9630
<b>People's Law School</b> .....	604-331.5400
<b>Legal Services Society (Legal Aid)</b> .....	604-408-2172
(provides legal information over the phone)	
<b>UBC Law Student</b> .....	604-822-5791
<b>ICBC Driver Services</b>	
<b>&amp; Vehicle Registrar and Licensing</b> .....	1.800.663.3051

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# Making Future Health Care Decisions . . .

(taken from BC Government website)

Advance care planning begins by thinking about your beliefs, values and wishes regarding future health care treatment. It is about having conversations with your close family, friends, and health care provider(s) so that they know the health care treatment you would agree to, or refuse, if you become incapable of expressing your own decisions.

When you write down your wishes and instructions for future health care, you are making an Advance Care Plan. An Advance Care Plan (“My Voice”) is a written summary of a capable adult’s wishes or instructions to guide a substitute decision maker if that person is asked by a physician or other health care provider to make a health care treatment decision on behalf of the adult.

Your Advance Care Plan can also include:

- A Representation Agreement where you write your instructions and name someone to make your health and personal care decisions if you become incapable. Visit [www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2013/MyVoice-AdvanceCarePlanningGuide.pdf](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2013/MyVoice-AdvanceCarePlanningGuide.pdf) to download a “My Voice” guide.
- An Advance Directive with your instructions for health care that are given to your health care provider, which he/she must follow directly when it speaks to the care you need at the time if you become incapable.
- An Enduring Power of Attorney where you appoint someone to make decisions about your financial affairs, business and property. Visit [http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/managing-your-health/incapacity-planning/enduring\\_power\\_of\\_attorney.pdf](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/managing-your-health/incapacity-planning/enduring_power_of_attorney.pdf) to download an “Enduring Power of Attorney” form.

For “clickable” links to the web addresses above, visit our Langley Hospice Society website at [www.langleyhospice.com/resources/practical-guide-for-families](http://www.langleyhospice.com/resources/practical-guide-for-families).

For more information on *Representation Agreements*, you can visit [www.nidus.ca](http://www.nidus.ca) or call 604-408-7414.

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## No Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

A **NO CPR** (AKA DNR—DO NOT RESUSCITATE) form must be signed by a physician and the dying person if you do **not** want ambulance or emergency room personnel to attempt resuscitation after death. It is important that you thoroughly understand this procedure so ask questions of your physician or home care nurse.

## Expected/Planned Home Deaths . . .

The province of British Columbia developed the *Joint Protocol for Expected/Planned Home Deaths in British Columbia* to support individuals to die at home with their families or caregivers.

The Protocol provides guidance to individuals at the end of their lives, families and health care providers on how to have an expected/planned natural home death. It provides clarity to roles, responsibilities and activities involved in a home death. For more information on the Joint Protocol, speak to your community nurse, family physician, or see *How to Arrange for Care* on the BC Government health website at: **<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/accessing-health-care/home-community-care/care-options-and-cost/end-of-life-care/expected-planned-home-deaths>**

For a “clickable” link to this web address, visit our Langley Hospice Society website at **[www.langleyhospice.com/resources/a-practical-guide-for-families](http://www.langleyhospice.com/resources/a-practical-guide-for-families)**.

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# When Death is Close at Hand . . .

## Signs of approaching death

The person *may*:

- Sleep more and at times be difficult to waken. Plan conversation times for when the person seems alert.
  - Lose their appetite and may "forget" to swallow. Offer small servings of favourite food or drink without "forcing."
  - Become confused about time or may not recognize familiar persons. Speak calmly so as not to startle or frighten. Remind the person of the day, the time, and who is in the room.
  - Experience impaired hearing and vision and may develop a fixed stare. Leave a soft light on in the room. Never assume the person cannot hear you. Speak as if each of your words can be heard.
  - Become restless, pull at the bed linen, and have visions of persons or things not visible to others. Provide reassurance and avoid physical restriction when possible.
  - Lose control of bladder or bowels. This is usually not a problem until death is close. The amount of urine may decrease or stop as death approaches. The nurse will help in suggesting appropriate padding or recommend that a catheter be ordered by a physician.
  - Breathe irregularly and may stop breathing for 10–30 second periods. The pulse may get faster and irregular.
  - Secretions collect at the back of the throat that may sound like a rattle. This is because the person cannot swallow saliva, this does not mean they are uncomfortable. Turn the person on their side or raise the head of the bed.
  - Have cool arms and legs as the circulation slows down. Their face may become pale, their feet and legs taking on a purple-blue mottled appearance, and the underside of the body may become a darker color. Use just enough coverings to keep the person comfortable.
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## When Death Occurs . . .

These are general signs only and do not always apply to all dying people.

### When death occurs you may notice:

- The person is entirely unresponsive
- Breathing stops
- Heartbeat and pulse stop
- The eyes will be fixed in one direction and may be open or closed
- Loss of control of bladder or bowels may occur

### What to do if you think death has occurred:

- Do not call 911, the police, or the fire department. These calls are not necessary when death is expected. Calling 911 means that the ambulance crew will attempt to resuscitate unless there is a **NO CPR form**
- If you are uncertain about what to do, or have questions or concerns, call the home care nurse (within office hours) or the after-hours palliative nurse service.
- Call family members, friends, and any spiritual advisor that you would like to be present with you.
- Call the funeral home when you are ready (*see Expected/Planned Home Death—page 10*). Take the time you need with the person who has died.

Although this information may be difficult, please know that the goal is to help prepare you for what to expect. Your physical and emotional well-being are as important as the dying person's. It is important not to expect that all symptoms of approaching death will occur. The focus of this information is to help you prepare for the signs that *may* occur.

Remember to call the home care nurse or physician if you have any concerns or fears about the death or expected death.



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## Following Death . . .

Once the death has occurred there are many tasks to complete. As you complete the tasks below that apply to your individual circumstance you may want to check them off. You may also want to begin a telephone log of the calls you make and receive.

### **Within the first 24 hours...**

- ( ) call the executor of the deceased's will
- ( ) call immediate family and close friends
- ( ) call funeral provider

### **Within the first two to three days...**

- ( ) obtain a certified copy of the death certificate (there may be an extra charge for additional copies)
- ( ) call the deceased person's lawyer, if applicable
- ( ) locate the will
- ( ) arrange for child care, if necessary
- ( ) plan alternatives if there will be no funeral service
- ( ) write an obituary
- ( ) write a list, if applicable, of the pallbearers
- ( ) plan the meals of the household a few days in advance

### **Within the first week...**

- ( ) locate any insurance policies the deceased may have held
- ( ) call business associates and employers
- ( ) call the deceased's insurance companies
- ( ) write a list of people to be notified of the death

### **Within the first month . . .**

- ( ) call the land titles office (if the deceased owned property)
  - ( ) call the deceased's banks
  - ( ) call Canada Employment and Immigration (to cancel the social insurance number)
  - ( ) call ICBC to cancel or transfer vehicle registration
  - ( ) call the landlord of the deceased (if applicable)
-

## Following Death . . .

### Within the first month. . .

- cancel credit cards
- cancel subscriptions
- cancel memberships
- cancel leases

### Information needed for death certificate

- Surname: all given names in full
- Address including postal code
- SIN
- BC Health Card
- Marital status
- Full name of husband or full maiden name of wife
- Date of birth
- Age
- Place of birth
- Name of father
- Birthplace of father
- Name of mother
- Birthplace of mother
- Family physician
- Next of kin (relationship, phone and address)
- Copy of the will, if one available
- birth certificate
- photo identification (valid passport, driver's licence or BC identification)

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<b>Avalon-Surrey Funeral Home</b> .....	604-581-4401
<b>Henderson's Funeral Home, Langley</b> .....	604-530-6488
<b>Henderson's Funeral Home, Abbotsford</b> .....	1-604-854-5534
<b>First Memorial Funeral Services, Aldergrove</b> .....	604-857-0111
<b>Alternatives Funeral &amp; Cremation Services,</b>	
<b>Serving lower mainland</b> .....	604-857-5779
<b>Valley View Funeral Home, Surrey</b> .....	604-596-8866
<b>Woodlawn Funeral Home, Abbotsford</b> .....	1-604-853-2643
<b>Victory Memorial Park</b>	
<b>Funeral Centre, South Surrey</b> .....	604-536-6522
<b>Kearney's Funeral Services, Cloverdale</b> .....	604-574-2603
<b>Just Cremation</b> .....	604-856-2346

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## *Planning a Funeral . . .*

Planning a funeral may seem to be a daunting task. The final wishes of the dying person will guide your decisions. A funeral allows friends and family to pay their respects to the deceased and to say good-bye, a necessary part of healing. This consideration is very important, especially for children. The following options may help you make your choices:

1. Funeral homes usually offer three levels of service: no service (burial or cremation), a memorial service or gathering, and a celebration of life (see Funeral Definitions on page 16).
2. Choosing between burial and cremation may include a consideration of a religious or spiritual belief concerning the body. The cost of cremation is usually lower than burial. Burial costs may include extra services; therefore, you may want to ask for an itemized list of costs.
3. Embalming of the body is not always necessary. It is only mandatory if the body is moved by public transport.
4. It is possible to pay for funeral services ahead of time. If you do pre-pay, be aware of the funeral home's refund/cancellation policy.
5. There are now alternatives to traditional funeral services that offer a different approach and a different fee structure.

You may also want to talk to the Funeral Director or designated person about what they will do with the body when the death occurs. The form on page 17 can guide you as you pre-plan a funeral. Contact your funeral provider of choice to review your options or guide you through the process.

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### **Help Writing Obituaries:**

<b>The Aldergrove Star</b> .....	604-856-8303
<b>The Langley Times</b> .....	604-533-4157
<b>The Langley Advance</b> .....	604-534-8641
<b>The Vancouver Sun or Province</b> .....	604-605-2254 or
.....	604-605-2255

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## *Funeral Definitions . . .*

**No service (burial or cremation)** usually includes...

- Transportation from place of death to mortuary
- Registration of the death
- Completion of the Certificate of Death
- A casket or other alternative
- A burial or cremation permit
- Transportation of the deceased to the crematorium or cemetery  
**(This does not include the cost of burial or cremation or a service of remembrance.)**

**Memorial service or gathering** usually includes...

- The level of service, as above
- A religious or secular service without the body present  
**(This service does not include the cost of cremation or burial.)**

**Celebration of life** usually includes...

- The level of service, as above
- An arranged religious or secular service of remembrance
- The presence of the body at the service
- Transportation of the family and pall bearers to the cemetery
- A time for visiting the deceased before the funeral
- Other options as presented  
**(This does not include the cost of a burial plot.)**

### **Cremation:**

The body and the casket are exposed to direct flame. The ashes are stored in an urn, buried in a cemetery or mausoleum, or scattered where you choose. Urns vary in size, style, and price.

### **Burial:**

The final disposition of the body by burial means the casket and the body are placed in a grave, covered with earth, and are then usually marked with a headstone or a plaque.

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## *Funeral Planning Form . . .*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

For my final wishes...

I would like my remains to be...

- buried                       cremated

If cremated I would like my remains...

given to \_\_\_\_\_  
 permanently scattered at \_\_\_\_\_  
 delivered to \_\_\_\_\_ cemetery

For my funeral I would like...

- no service option (burial or cremation)  
 a memorial service or gathering  
 a celebration of life with...  
      an open casket     a closed casket

I would like the service to be held at...

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Clergy:

Phone:

Music or text to be included in the service:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Give a copy of this form to the Executor of your will and keep a copy with your will – do not put copies in your safety deposit box. Immediately after death the safety deposit box of the deceased is sealed until the will is found and declared valid. Please feel free to make copies of this form.

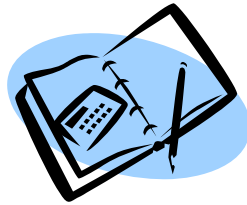
\_\_\_\_\_

## *Finances . . .*

Managing the estate of someone who has died or someone who is dying is easier if you have the financial information required.

When the person dies, notify insurance companies, bankers, the income tax office, credit card companies, the Service Canada office concerning Canada Pension Plan benefits, or any other financial institution that is appropriate.

If you need access to financial accounts or information, talk to a lawyer or a notary about power of attorney. This is best done before the dying person is no longer able to make decisions.



### *Finances:*

Service Canada/Old Age Security & CPP ..... 1-800-277-9914  
 Service Canada—General Inquiries ..... 1-800-622-6232  
 Veterans Affairs Canada ..... 1-866-522-2122

## *Executor's Check List . . .*

The following are suggestions that others have found helpful. While we have attempted to list them in a logical order, it is not our intention that you must follow this order explicitly. We recognize that some tasks will overlap and others may take some time and will be on-going.

- Locate the will of estate
  - Make all funeral or memorial arrangements
  - Apply for death certificate
  - Conduct the will search
  - Notify and advise the beneficiaries of their entitlement under the will
  - Locate all bank accounts of the deceased
  - List the contents of the deceased person's safety deposit box
  - Apply for balance of any amounts payable under insurance policies
  - Obtain any cash from banks or employers
  - Arrange with the post office for mail to be re-directed
  - Apply for Canada Pension Plan benefits (if applicable)
  - Apply for civil service, union, veteran and other possible benefits
  - Review all personal papers to locate and list all assets and debts
  - Arrange for storage of any assets
  - Cancel subscriptions, charge cards, accounts, etc. and destroy cards
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## *Executor's Check List (continued) . . .*

- Make out and sign (before a notary public) all documents required for application for letters of probate of administration
- File applications and pay fees at probate registry
- Receive letters of probate of administration and make certified copies
- Pay funeral expenses and all debts of the deceased. Advertise for creditors, if necessary
- File income tax return for year of death, former years not yet filed, for the estate, if necessary, and pay income tax owing
- Pay any succession duty payable and obtain releases
- Sell real estate assets which must be sold or which the executor chooses to sell if he or she has the legal power
- Pay money bequests found in the will or other legal document
- Transfer insurance on house, cars, boat, R.V., etc.
- Store a licensed automobile until it is re-registered
- Obtain releases for all beneficiaries or pass estate accounts
- Distribute the balance of the estate to the rightful beneficiaries



## *Grief . . .*

Whatever your situation, grieving the death of a friend or family member is not easy. You may feel as if no one else can understand your pain and sadness. You may also experience:

- ◆ Changes in your sleeping pattern
- ◆ Changes in your appetite
- ◆ Seeing or hearing the deceased person
- ◆ Struggles with thinking (focus, concentration, processing, memory)
- ◆ A wide range of intense emotions (sadness, panic, worry, confusion, anger, irritability, frustration, fatigue, fear, exhaustion)
- ◆ More conflicts in your relationships
- ◆ Wanting to withdraw from others

It is important to know that these reactions are normal for grieving people. It is important to allow yourself to grieve.



## *Grief . . .*

You can help yourself by...

- Talking about your feelings with a trusted friend or a relative, someone who won't judge or tell you how to act or feel
- Taking care of yourself – find ways to comfort and nurture yourself (gentle yoga, stretching)
- Simple exercise — nature walk, swimming etc.
- Writing or drawing how you're feeling
- Spending social time with friends
- Laughing and crying when you feel like it
- Trying to get sleep at night
- Talking to your doctor about any persistent physical concerns
- Accepting the way you feel
- Setting aside time everyday to do something you enjoy – go shopping, read, exercise, play a game, walk your dog
- Forgiving yourself for the guilt you may feel about the death. In retrospect you may believe you could have done more. If the guilt becomes overwhelming, consult a professional.

Avoid any major changes in your life, unless necessary, such as selling your house or quitting your job. Please reach out for support during this time. Remember that grief is a natural reaction to loss. It is not unnatural to experience these feelings. Give yourself permission and time to grieve so that healing can occur no matter what others expect of you.

Call the **Langley Hospice Society at 604-530-1115** if you need support with your grieving or if you know someone else who needs support. Both individual and group support for children, teens and adults are provided free of charge. You do not have to be alone at this time. There are people who care and want to help.

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## *Supporting Children Through Grief...*

Well-intentioned adults often attempt to protect children from the pain of death by avoiding the subject altogether. Children who experience a loss, however, will grieve whether their feelings are acknowledged or not. Grieving children need acceptance as they express a range of feelings which may include confusion, fear, anger, despair and abandonment. If not supported, children may feel isolated and alone in their grief.

### **Natural reactions that adults may observe in grieving children may include:**

- Clinging to a surviving parent
- Experiencing a change in sleep patterns and appetite
- Reverting to earlier behaviours
- Expressing a sense of hopelessness
- Being prone to illness, more headaches, stomach aches, colds and flu symptoms
- Feeling different or estranged from companions who are not experiencing loss
- Fearing their own death or the death of a surviving parent
- An impact on learning

### **Suggested guidelines for caring adults:**

- Explore your personal concerns regarding death before attempting to assist children.
- Be honest about the cause of death, providing as much information as children can reasonably understand.
- Invite children to share their feelings when you are prepared to provide your full attention.
- If supporting grieving children is too difficult because of your own grief, find another trusted adult who is willing to help until you feel strong enough to do so.
- Encourage children to partake in and attend funeral services but let it be their choice.

Children learn and grow through joyful as well as painful life experiences. Grieving children who are supported by a caring adult will understand and accept that their reactions to grief are a natural response to the loss of a loved one. The attitudes children form in early years are likely to remain for a lifetime.

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## *Supporting Teens Through Grief...*

Teens are going through many changes as they grow from childhood to adulthood. Life becomes even more complex when a significant person dies. They may have a difficult time understanding another person's reaction to loss if it is not the same as their own, which can add further stress to the family system as each person grieves in their own way. The experience of loss changes a teen's understanding of the world around them, their self-identity, relationships and meaning of life.

**Natural reactions that adults may observe in grieving teens may include:**

- Grieving deeply but often working very hard to hide their feelings
- Looking for distractions rather than staying with the grief process
- Acting very self-conscious and not wanting to be seen as different from their peers
- Having a feeling of invincibility; thinking they will live forever
- Expressing their grief by taking unhealthy risks, such as driving too fast, drinking alcohol and using drugs
- Learning being affected by lack of memory and concentration especially at a time when teens are feeling the academic pressure of high school

**Suggested guidelines for caring adults:**

- To gain the trust of teens, adults must become good, non-judgmental listeners and acknowledge the teen's grief
  - Let teenagers know that you are interested in them, in their views, their ideas and their thoughts.
  - Let them know that you care for them.
  - Support their ideas or gently introduce new ways to approach their ideas.
  - If your teen won't talk to you, encourage them to find a trusted adult that they can talk to (i.e. a family friend, school counsellor, extended family, etc.).
  - Normalize grief and remember that there is no one way to grieve.
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## After . . .

The changes in your life created by the death of a friend, a family member, or a partner may continue long after the death. Give yourself permission to continue living your life - you are not betraying the deceased. Depending on the relationship you had with the person, those changes will affect one or more areas of your life.

**Socially**, you may find that friends and/or family no longer call or visit you. They may feel awkward and unsure around you as you grieve. As a result, you may find your group of friends changing.

**Financially**, you may now be dealing with matters the deceased had previously handled, i.e., bank accounts, investments or taxes. It might help to approach a trusted friend or family member who is experienced with finances. Don't be afraid to ask your bank or financial institution to explain matters to you.

To **transfer ownership** of property, vehicles, or assets you will need copies of the certificate of death and will of the estate.

If you find yourself suddenly needing to return to the work force, we suggest contacting Service Canada to learn about their services. Call toll free 1-800-622-6232 for general enquiries.

If it has been a while since you've prepared a **résumé**, the library has books that may be useful. Include not only your job experience but any significant experience like running a household, raising children, or volunteering in the community.

**Personally**, if it was your spouse or your partner that died, you may eventually think of beginning a new relationship. It is important that you understand you are not betraying the deceased. Beginning new relationships is part of living and healing.



## *Langley Hospice Society . . .*

### **Mission Statement**

***Langley Hospice Society, a community-based, non-profit organization, provides compassionate support to help people live with dignity and hope while coping with grief and the end of life.***

Established in 1983, The Langley Hospice Society, a registered non-profit organization, is committed to providing support for people who are living with a life-threatening illness, their families and friends, as well as bereavement support for those in need.

The Langley Hospice Society provides support within the community through:

- Trained staff and volunteers who visit with both dying and bereaved people providing practical and emotional support
- Loss support groups for children, teens and adults
- Memorial and seasonal holiday services
- A free lending library

This community-based organization is able to continue its work with the generous support of the community and funding through general donations, fund-raising events, memorial and in honor gifts, planned giving, grants, Second Story Treasures Thrift Store, BC Gaming, United Way and a service contract with Fraser Health.

Langley Hospice Society

20660 - 48 Ave.

Langley, BC

V3A 3L6

Phone: 604-530-1115

Fax: 604-530-8851

[www.langleyhospice.com](http://www.langleyhospice.com)

Second Story Treasures Thrift Store

#5 -20349 - 88<sup>th</sup> Ave.

Langley, BC

V1M 2X5

Phone: 604-513-9319

Fax: 604-513-9318



# Resource Index

## Community Services

### **Cancer Agencies:**

Canadian Cancer Society (cancer info line) .....	1-888-939-3333
Volunteer Drivers' Program .....	604-215-5462
Fraser Valley Cancer Agency .....	604-930-2098
Patient Family Counselling.....	604-930-4000
BC Cancer Agency—Vancouver Centre.....	604-877-6000
Canadian Red Cross.....	604-881-1113
Langley HandyDART .....	604-576-6600
Langley Community Services .....	604-534-7921
Langley Memorial Hospital .....	604-534-4121
Lifeline Program .....	604-514-6041
South Fraser Regional Crisis Line .....	604-951-8855
SPARC .....	604-718-7744
Langley Seniors Resource Society.....	604-530-3020

### **Food Services:**

Better Meals .....	604-299-1877
..... Or Toll Free 1-888-838-1888	
Langley Meal on Wheels .....	604-533-1679

### **Emotional Support Services**

BC Bereavement Help line .....	604-738-9950
Delta Hospice Society.....	604-948-0660
Langley Hospice Society .....	604-530-1115
Richmond Hospice Society.....	604-279-7140
Surrey Hospice Society.....	604-543-7006
White Rock Hospice Society.....	604-531-7484

### **Finances**

Income Security.....	1-800-277-9914
Veterans Affairs Canada.....	1-866-522-2122

## *Resource Index*

### **Home Support Services**

Home Health Service Line .....	604-953-4965
Classic LifeCare .....	604-534-5663
Home Nursing Care .....	604-532-6514
Langley Home Health (Long Term Care).....	604-532-6500
Care Counts Health Services.....	604-597-9406
Nurse Next Door .....	604-228-4357
Cornerstone Care Society .....	604-514-1476
Apple-a-Day Home Care Services.....	604-376-1149

### **Other Resources**

- www.centerforloss.com (Support for the bereaved and their caregivers)
- www.dougy.org (Children's grief)
- www.virtualhospice.ca (a network of information and support for people dealing with life-limiting illness and loss)
- www.sidsCanada.org (Support for families who have had their babies die unexpectedly)
- www.nidus.ca (Representation Agreement Resource Centre)

### **Other Services**

- Girl Friday — Errand, Household & Driving Services .....
- |              |
|--------------|
| 604-240-3602 |
|--------------|

### **Planning a Funeral**

Avalon Surrey Funeral Home.....	604-581-4401
First Memorial Funeral Services, Aldergrove.....	604-857-0111
Henderson's Funeral Home, Langley .....	604-530-6488
Henderson's Funeral Home, Abbotsford .....	604-854-5534
Alternatives Funeral & Cremation Services, Aldergrove, Langley, Abbotsford.....	604-857-5779
Alternatives Funeral & Cremation Services, Surrey, White Rock, N. Delta.....	604-596-2215
Valley View Funeral Home, Surrey.....	604-596-8866
Victory Memorial Park Funeral Centre, South Surrey .....	604-536-6522
Woodlawn Funeral Home, Abbotsford .....	604-853-2643
Kearney's Funeral Services, Cloverdale.....	604-574-2603

# Resource Index

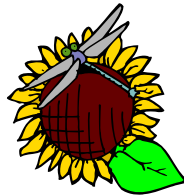
## Planning a Funeral

### *For Help Writing Obituaries*

The Aldergrove Star .....	604-856-8303
The Langley Advance .....	604-444-3056
The Langley Times .....	604-533-4157
The Vancouver Sun or Province .....	604-605-2254 or
.....	604-605-2255

## Will of Estates

BC Land Title & Survey .....	604-630-9630
Legal Services Society (Legal Aid) .....	604-408-2172
Or .....	1-866-577-2525
ICBC Driver Services, .....	1-800-950-1498
& Vehicle Registrar and Licensing .....	1-800-663-3051
People's Law School .....	604-331-5400
UBC Law Student .....	604-822-5791



# *Personal Contacts*

**Your Doctor:**

**Notes**

**Your Lawyer:**

**Pastoral Care:**

**Home Care Nurse:**

**Family:**

**Friends:**

**Volunteer:**

**Client Service Team:**

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*Notes . . .*

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*Notes . . .*

## ***The Dying Person's Bill of Rights...***

I have the right...

- To be treated as a living human being until I die
- To maintain a sense of hopefulness, however changing its focus may be
- To be cared for by those who can maintain a sense of hopefulness, however changing this may be
- To express my feelings and emotions about my approaching death in my own way
- To participate in decisions concerning my care
- To expect continuing medical and nursing attention, even though “cure” goals must be changed to “comfort” goals
- Not to die alone
- To die alone
- To be free from pain
- To have my questions answered honestly
- Not to be deceived
- To retain my individuality and not be judged for my decisions which may be contrary to beliefs of others
- To discuss and enlarge my religious and/or spiritual experiences, whatever these may mean to others
- To expect that the sanctity of my body will be respected after my death
- To be cared for by caring, sensitive, knowledgeable people who will attempt to understand my needs and will be able to gain some satisfaction in helping me face my death

Adapted from the Southwestern Michigan In-service Educational Council



**Langley Hospice Society**  
**604-530-1115**