

BRISBANE MUSLIM BURIAL SERVICES

1) When a MUSLIM is at the point of death:

Family members and close friends of the dying person should be informed and should be present to help him or her turn their thoughts to God(Allah), remind him about all the good deeds that he has done, about Allah's mercy, and Allah's forgiveness and encourage him very gently to repent. Those who are present near a dying Muslim should do the following - be kind and patient, should give the person hope and try not to leave him or her alone.

They should prompt him very gently (encouragement without insistence) to say the Shahada: "La ilaha il-lallah", which means 'There is no God but Allah,' in a very kind and sincere manner as these may be his last words.

Contact a member of the local Muslim Burial Service now and then as soon death occurs. Contact details below.

2) When Death Occurs

When someone dies at home, their GP should be called as soon as possible. If the person did not have a GP or you do not know the name of the GP, an ambulance should be called instead.

If the doctor can ascertain the cause of death he or she will issue the 'Cause of Death Certificate'

Many deaths occur in hospitals. There is a concern that a Muslim who dies in such an institution may not be treated in accordance with Islamic tradition especially when the family may not be present at the time of death.

There have been concerns related to how the body of the deceased should be handled as improper handling can be quite distressful to the Muslim family particularly when the handlers are of the opposite sex.

In order to counteract possible problems emerging in the hospital, a number of guidelines have been laid down and initiatives have been set up.

When death comes the body should be handled with the maximum respect, gentleness and decency. It is preferable that Hospital staff wear gloves when handling the body of the deceased and preferably be of the same gender.

Under no circumstances should the body be washed in preparation for the funeral. This is an important duty which the deceased's family members or members of the local Muslim community are obliged to perform.

Ensure that the following procedures have been carried out (if possible by staff of the same sex as the deceased):

- Any tubes, false teeth, contact lenses or artificial limbs should be removed and any incisions plugged so as to prevent a flow of blood, apply a dressing to any bleeding.
- Close the eyes of the deceased.
- Close the jaw and to keep it closed by binding the lower jaw with a bandage or a strip of cloth which is tied at the top of the head.
- The ankles must be brought together and again to keep it together you may fasten the two first toes with a piece of cloth or bandage.
- Arms must be placed straight down the side of the body with straightened fingers. The body, still fully clothed, should then be wrapped in a sheet.
- If death occurs in Hospital then wait for the body to be placed in the hospital mortuary. The body shall remain at the hospital mortuary, untouched, until such time that the necessary paperwork has been issued to release the body of the deceased to the family. Do not leave the hospital until the death certificate is completed by the doctor. The funeral director & your local Muslim burial service should be advised as soon as the release of the body is authorized.

'Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji' un' (To Allah we belong and truly to Him we shall Return)

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