

PRACTICAL & FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS



CBN POLICY BRIEFING

THE ISSUE

There have been two changes in the way that details about a person are handled following their death.

BACKGROUND

Until recently, **registering a death** involved completing, alongside a Registrar, a form with details of the person who died; and subsequently using the death registration certificate to notify other organisations from whom the person had received services and/or benefits. This may involve many tiring and upsetting separate contacts and conversations. Equally, contacting HMRC (HM Revenue and Customs) in connection with the **tax position** of someone who has died can involve complicated forms and conversations with many individuals.

Changes have recently been made to both systems with the aim of reducing the distress of the bereaved and simplifying the processes for those dealing with a deceased's affairs.

CURRENT POSITION - TELL US ONCE

Following well-received pilots of the service, the Tell Us Once initiative has been rolled out across Registry offices in England, Scotland and Wales and is now available in most areas. After the death has been registered, if the person registering wants to use the Tell Us Once service, the Registrar will give them a unique reference number to access the service online or by telephone.

The service uses the information provided to notify the whole range of government departments (for example, adult and children's services, council housing, council tax, disability and carers' services, the DVLA, Child Benefit, Tax Credits, Passport service, Pension service etc) about a death: the information is only passed to the relevant departments.

CURRENT POSITION - HMRC

The HMRC has introduced changes that streamline the process for dealing with PAYE and/or Self Assessment tax affairs after a bereavement. They have an online questionnaire to help people through the process <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/tools/bereavement/index.htm>. There is a new form (R27) and the option to appoint someone other than the executor or administrator of the estate to handle tax affairs; the HMRC will also provide a single point of contact for those dealing with a deceased's estate to make the process simpler and less stressful. The forms can be found on www.hmrc.gov.uk by searching for 'R27'.

WHAT CBN IS DOING

We are in touch with the people behind Tell Us Once to explore ways in which those registering a death can be informed about the benefits to which they are entitled and the services that can offer bereavement support. We will also be contacting HMRC to see how their new system is being received by bereaved people.

WHAT CBN MEMBERS CAN DO

Please could you let us know about any experiences that families you support have with these new systems. We will treat any such information as confidential but it will help us to build up a picture of what is actually happening in this area. Please send this to dstubbs@ncb.org.uk.

If you have any questions or would like more information, do get in touch.

Briefing updated September 2014