



- Performs intake processing of decedents in the morgue
- Inventories belongings of decedent
- Coordinates autopsies for decedents
- Coordinates storage and disposition of fetal remains
- Coordinates viewings of decedent in the morgue
- Coordinates disposition of surgically removed limbs
- Communicates with and educates Hennepin Healthcare team members regarding the death protocol
- Responds to questions and inquiries from Hennepin Healthcare team members and families of decedents
- Provides culturally appropriate post-mortem care for families
- Maintains morgue equipment, including cleaning, decontamination/sterilization of instruments

Facts and or Taboo:
Take a few moments to write down your fact or taboo
thought about after death

**QUICK BREAK FOR
WRITING OR OTHER
NEEDS**

What and Who are Decedents?

Clients
 Patients
 Community member
 Person loved by family
 Addictions
 Suicides
 Homicides
 Domestic Violence
 Children
 Babies
 Fetus
 Limbs
 Donators

What do families need?

In hospital or Hospice
 Working with Palliative Care/Comfort Care
 Next steps in person and hand out
 Grief and dying hand outs
 Chaplin services
 Transitions from In room to Morgue
 Social Worker following along side of there journey

1 Sentence:

Your loved one is here
 with me, and they are
 safe and secure

Community
 Stat to State
 International
 Religion/ Culture
 News
 Social Media
 Family and Friends

The Other Part:
 Funeral Directors
 Medical Examiner
 State, Local Agencies
 Detectives
 Search (NOK)
 Technology

**Follow up with family as the
 Decedent is leaving the morgue:**

Phone call, email, text
 In person
 Your peace of mind
 Contacting back after?

- The life cycle as we know it from birth to death
We were born in a cozy nest, as soon as our mothers birthed us we began to Die a slow death of sorrow, happiness, adventure, health, love and soon

When we grow no on says the forbidden words of death and what happens. Humans do not see it as a good part of life. When we go our bodies are telling us, or if it's a tragic event, the shock of it give people sadness.
What if death gave you happiness? No more suffering, not being sick, being at peace.

Lets take a moment and think about the ways death is different from how we were taught.

- Celebration of life
Rituals for loved ones to go in happiness and protect the living
Memorializing them in ways like an altar, certain day of the year
Make a stone or plant a tree

This is all part of death that bring the Decedents loved ones together.
Sensing them by smell, taste, or image

Keeping this in mind, lets look at the other side

Health: ongoing, complex, from birth, no curable
The pain and suffering you believe you see
Loved ones crying sometimes of sadness
sometimes of happiness.

"They are not suffering anymore"

Hospitals are unique to be able to provide a unit
Dedicated to dying. Some terms are:

Comfort care
Palliative care
Medication therapy
Hospice

Picture the room with loved ones, soft spoken professional letting last wishes be made. May be a Chaplin? No more pain, no more pain. Last gasp of air(the rattle) then peace, stillness in the air. Family get to spent time with the decedent and are able to stay as long as they need to. Some stay minutes, others stay hours. Fetus, babies, children families may keep them longer. I have had mothers keep their still born full term babies in their arms for 3-5 days.

Once the families or loved ones are done, the bedside RN and maybe the PCA will proceed to clean up decedent, pull IV, Drains, then put the body bag around the deceased. Last, check correct information and MRN to the toe tag and transport down to the Morgue or Decedent Affairs department.

Social workers are involved a lot of times in the ICU units, labor and delivery. They will help along side the unit team. It is a big role helping loved ones process a loved one may about to pass or to be an organ donor. Coming to terms require a skilled Social Worker license and involved in Hospital work or with a back ground in deaths. We are critical to be there for listening, empathy, resources, planning, paperwork, and much more.

Where do you meet them at?
 Where are your comfort zones, boundaries?
 I tend to meet them at their level, reality, and understanding.
 Not all Social workers can do this.
 It takes knowledge, personal experience, and some tough skin.
 Its ok to show emotion with loved ones. Its ok to hug or to give them Kleenex, water and soon.

Social work does not stop at the hospital bed once loved ones leave and the room is dark.
 We start a whole different role, that not many hospitals have for a social worker.
 Lets discuss thoughts roles.

Arriving
 Intake
 Property
 Documentation
 Checking the decedents body and look for facts
 storing them in the coolers, kept at 36 degrees
 Counting and relooking at toe tags and name plates
 keeping a clean environment. (fluids, body falls, clothes may be soaked with blood, urine, and others.
 For a social worker it is very alone, cold, segregated.
 Not as social as you are in other social work fields.

It can be at times very hard mentally, emotionally and physically
 When they enter your unit they are still Mr. or Miss, by first name, by their preferred name.
 They are gently looked over and handled.
 Every one has loved ones and we would want to be treated the same way.
 As a Decedent affairs coordinator you will receive many types of calls.

Humans trying to find a loved one
 Suicidal loved one
 Substance use loved ones
 Homelessness
 Homicides
 Medical examiner cases.
 Sheriff, state, local law
 Humans from other countries looking for their Relative
 Loved ones in different states.

As our profession, we have to handle situations on the go, on the phone, on the streets, and anywhere people are.
 The call to the decedent affairs office is not a easy one for humans. There are a high percent of calls that they are not familiar with the process.
 In my experience I have spent hours listening to crying, stories of life, family dynamics.
 Worried to grateful of finding their loved one.
 Every word you say on the phone and in person does imprint the rest of the story.

Questions with free flow chat
Respect others
No one is wrong
Be Kind

Where do Social Workers need to
be?

Simple:

EVERYWHERE!
