Guidelines on staff support for Muslim patients at end-of-life in an isolated clinical setting

Throughout the process, it is important that a Muslim's modesty – which is often a deeply spiritual practice in life – be maintained even in death. To the best of your ability, please try to keep the patient’s body covered with the available linens.

As death approaches:

1. The patient's linens should be clean, if possible.
2. Using an iPad, navigate to YouTube and search for "Qur'an Recitation", and launch one of the thousands of available playlists. The recited Qur'an is always in Arabic, making it something every Muslim - regardless of background - will be familiar with, and hopefully find meaningful. There might be some cultural differences over which passages from the Qur'an are most appropriate at the end of life, but the team should rest assured knowing there is no 'wrong' or 'inappropriate' passage from the Qur'an. Chapter 13 (Surah Ra'd), and Chapter 36 (Surah Yasin) are very common in such times.
3. Family may wish to be 'present' in the room via speakerphone, so they can say relevant prayers. There is a strong belief that a person, if at all possible, die in a state of belief in God by physically affirming their faith through speech. Loved ones will often coach those at the very end of their lives to express and affirm the foundational beliefs of Islam.

In the moments after the individual's death:

1. The deceased's eyes should be closed.
2. The deceased's limbs should be straightened, if possible, and the feet brought together.
3. The deceased's head may be wrapped around the chin and over the top, in an effort to keep the mouth shut, using available means (like an ACE bandage wrap).
4. The deceased's head may be tilted towards their right shoulder.
5. The deceased should be covered with a clean linen.

Further care:

1. Muslims aim to bury their dead as soon as possible, within 24 hours, unless some medical or legal concern demands otherwise. Family will aim to have their funeral home move quickly to secure the release of the deceased.