

Quick Guide to After Death Administration - COVID 19

MCCD

- COVID-19 is a natural, acceptable cause of death.
- A swab is not needed if COVID-19 is believed to be the cause for death.
- COVID-19 cases should not be referred to the coroner unless there is another reason for doing so. Full list of reasons to refer can be found [here](#).
- Any registered medical practitioner can sign an MCCD, even if the deceased was not attended during their last illness and not seen after death, provided that they are able to state the cause of death to the best of their knowledge and belief.
- If there was no attendance either within 28 days before death or after death, then the registrar would need to refer that to the coroner.
- Attendance before death can be visual (i.e. in person) or by video consultation; it cannot be audio only.
- Attendance after death must be in person.

Registration

- Death registration appointments will take place over the telephone. The Coronavirus Act also allow email transfer.
- If NOK is ill, a funeral director can act as the informant.
- A death must be registered in the registration district in which it occurs.
- Scan individual MCCDs direct to the register office, along with NOK name and telephone number, (please ask for consent for information sharing in line with GDPR).
- Email the office where the death occurred and state if the death has been reported to the coroner.

Devon: srteign@devon.gov.uk

Plymouth: regoff@plymouth.gov.uk

Torbay: registrationdeaths@torbay.gov.uk

Cremation

- Cremation Form 5 is suspended. Only one doctor is required to complete a cremation form (Form 4).
- You do not need to have seen the deceased.
- A medical practitioner should have attended the deceased (in person or video consult) within 28 days before death, or viewed the body after death. 'Viewed' means in person and not via video consult.

Verification

- HospiceUK special Covid-19 guidance accessible [here](#).
- The RCGP and BMA have worked together to produce guidance supporting any staff to verify death remotely. They advise to follow your local pathway if available. More information on their remote verification protocol can be found [here](#).
- Further guidance on Covid -19 and verifying in an emergency can be found [here](#). If the deceased is to be referred to the coroner, then 'normal' verification processes are required.
- We advise that staff may perform remote verification when they have attended a training course (which may be online) and are yet to have a witnessed VOED in practice or if they do not feel confident in the skills required and there are no other trained and competent members of staff to witness VOED on site.
- The process of VOED in respect of timings and procedure should be identical in both witnessed VOED on site or via video remotely to achieve competency. You may then witness other members of staff and support a greater available workforce to perform VOED.
- There is a change to order of examination to minimise contamination of equipment and pupillary response is checked earlier.
- Observe for no cardiorespiratory effort for a full 5 minutes before checking motor response with trapezius squeeze.
- If the deceased requires a referral to the coroner, you may still verify the death, if there are no suspicious circumstances.
- A fall before death does not stop you verifying death. If the fall caused death, a SIRI is required.
- Length of time that a medical practitioner must have attended the deceased (in person/video consult) before a referral to coroner is required is now 28 days.
- If rigor mortis is present and there is no DNACPR decision, you do not need to perform CPR but can proceed to verification.
- Appropriate PPE should be worn during verification and physical care after death. The latest guidance can be found [here](#).
- Advise family that keepsakes e.g. lock of hair/rings must be offered and obtained before transfer of the deceased. These should be placed in a sealed plastic bag and families advised not to open for 7 days. For further information see RCGP guidance [here](#).

Key legislation changes of the Coronavirus Act can be found [here](#).

The latest PPE guidance can be found [here](#).