



HER MAJESTY'S CORONER
For the County of West Yorkshire (Western District)

For immediate distribution within your organisation

Your ref:

Our ref: MF/MC

30 September 2019

Dear All,

The Notification of Deaths Regulations 2019

I write to inform you that my previously circulated 'Guide to Reporting Deaths (for GP's)' dated April 2019 will be superseded with immediate effect on 01/10/19 given the introduction of the Notification of Deaths Regulations 2019.

You will note that the new regulations make clear that a registered medical practitioner must notify the relevant senior coroner (of the area in which the body of the deceased person lies) of a person's death if they come to know of the death and in certain types of cases.

My previously issued guidelines (April 2019) are therefore withdrawn with immediate effect and the principles set out in this document are now to be applied in order to ensure greater consistency over death reporting.

I understand that guidance has been provided by the MOJ to registered medical practitioners, and as a result of this national guidance there should be no local guides to doctors as to reportable deaths, so as to ensure national consistency.

As a result of the Notification of Death Regulations a senior coroner should expect to receive notification of deaths in the following circumstances:-

- (a) the registered medical practitioner suspects that that the person's death was due to—
- (i) poisoning, including by an otherwise benign substance;
 - (ii) exposure to or contact with a toxic substance;
 - (iii) the use of a medicinal product, controlled drug or psychoactive substance;
 - (iv) violence;
 - (v) trauma or injury;

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- (vi) self-harm;
- (vii) neglect, including self-neglect;
- (viii) the person undergoing a treatment or procedure of a medical or similar nature; or
- (ix) an injury or disease attributable to any employment held by the person during the person's lifetime;

- (b) the registered medical practitioner suspects that the person's death was unnatural but does not fall within any of the circumstances listed in sub-paragraph (a);
- (c) the registered medical practitioner—
 - (i) is an attending medical practitioner required to sign a certificate of cause of death in relation to the deceased person; but
 - (ii) despite taking reasonable steps to determine the cause of death, considers that the cause of death is unknown;
- (d) the registered medical practitioner suspects that the person died while in custody or otherwise in state detention;
- (e) the registered medical practitioner reasonably believes that there is no attending medical practitioner required to sign a certificate of cause of death in relation to the deceased person;
- (f) the registered medical practitioner reasonably believes that—
 - (i) an attending medical practitioner is required to sign a certificate of cause of death in relation to the deceased person; but
 - (ii) the attending medical practitioner is not available within a reasonable time of the person's death to sign the certificate of cause of death;
- (g) the registered medical practitioner, after taking reasonable steps to ascertain the identity of the deceased person, is unable to do so.

The regulations also provide that a registered medical practitioner who must notify a relevant senior coroner of a person's death under these regulations must do so as soon as is reasonably practicable after the duty arises.

Please find enclosed a copy of the notification of Deaths Regulations 2019

Yours sincerely,



M D Fleming
HM Senior Coroner
West Yorkshire West