

Steps to follow when a death occurs:

- Contact a **Medical Officer** to certify death
- Notify **DonateLife ACT Donation Specialist Nursing Coordinators (DSNC)**. DCNC must be notified of all deaths via the Canberra Hospital Switchboard

Nursing Staff or Medical Officer:

- Notify next of kin in a sensitive and timely fashion.
 - Refer family to Social Work Service and raise awareness of Pastoral Care Services available

OR

- If family cannot be located, contact Police to request the next of kin be located.

Medical Officer:

- MUST** complete Deceased Person Checklist (page 1 of this document):

if **NO** is the answer to **all** 6 questions and the death will not be referred to the Coroner

Medical Officer:

- Determines that the deceased person is **NOT** a Coronial case
- Completes the *Medical Certificate of Cause of Death*
- Completes and sends the *Discharge Summary* to the deceased person's GP
- Advises Ward Clerk of the patients death.

Ward Clerk or Administration Officer:

- Checks the patient progress notes for the Medical Officer documentation of time and date of death for registering in ACTPAS.

Medical Officer or Nursing staff:

- Determines if the deceased person was exposed to **radioactive therapy OR infectious disease** and contacts the relevant number for advice:
 - **Medical Physics Expert via Canberra Hospital Switchboard**
 - **Infection Control Ph: 5124 3695**

Ward Clerk or Administration Officer:

- Sends the Record to Health Information Service: Mezzanine level, Building 12, Canberra Hospital as soon as practicable.

Office hours:

Monday–Friday: 7:00am–10:51pm
Weekends and Public Holidays: 8:30am–5:00pm

- If outside these hours, retains the record on the ward and sends to Health Information Service as soon as office hours resume.

Wards person and Unit Nurse:

- Escorts the deceased person to the Mortuary

Nursing Staff:

- Notes any valuables and personal effects belonging to the deceased person and returns these to the next of kin upon completion of appropriate documentation.

if **YES** is the answer to **any** question and the death is being referred to the Coroner

Refer to When Death Occurs Operational Procedure

Medical Officer:

- DOES NOT WRITE DEATH CERTIFICATE**
- Completes and sends the *Discharge Summary* to the deceased person's GP
- Refers to the *ACT Policing Coroner's Team* as soon as practicable after death is pronounced (Phone: 0413 009 547)

Medical Officer or Social Worker:

- Informs the next of kin about referral and the next steps

Staff MUST NOT:

- move
- wash
- take foot and/or hand prints
- remove any devices or equipment
- remove or place anything on, or in, the deceased person, unless you have spoken to and obtained permission from the ACT Policing Coroner's Team

Medical Officer:

- Completes life extinct certificate**
- Staff must assist ACT Policing when they attend the hospital**

URN: _____

Family name: _____

Given names: _____

DOB: _____ Gender: _____

DECEASED PERSON CHECKLIST

This form must be completed for all deaths pronounced within Canberra Health Services (CHS) to facilitate notification to the Coroner and to ensure compliance with the ACT Coroners Act 1997.

To be completed by the Medical Officer (MO) certifying life extinct and included in the patient / client / consumer's Clinical Record.

Notification of all deaths to DonateLife ACT Donor Coordinator is mandatory in CHS. Contact the Donor Coordinator via Canberra Hospital switch on 5124 0000 to advise of death.

Date of Death:		Time of Death:	
MO's name:			

I provide the following information after reviewing the patients notes and contacting the appropriate consultant:

If you believe the death falls into any of the categories below, the matter must be discussed with the Coroner's Court representative within two hours of death being pronounced and a determination made if the matter will be a Coroner's case. DO NOT WRITE A DEATH CERTIFICATE UNTIL THE CHECKLIST HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND CONFIRMED THAT THE DEATH WILL NOT BE REFERRED TO THE CORONER.

Did the patient/consumer: <i>(Please tick the appropriate box)</i>	Yes	No
1 Die violently, or unnaturally, in unknown circumstances.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Die under suspicious circumstances.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Die and the death appears to be completely or partly attributable to an operation or procedure. (Note: Operation or procedure means: an operation of a medical, surgical, dental or similar nature; or an invasive medical or diagnostic procedure)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Die and the doctor has not given a certificate about the cause of death.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Dies after an accident where the cause of death appears to be directly attributable to the accident. (Note: This includes death after a fall where the cause of death is a direct result of the fall)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Die in custody. (This includes persons who die while being taken into or detained in custody or subject to an order under the Mental Health Act 2015)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

IF YOU HAVE TICKED YES TO ANY QUESTION, DO NOT WRITE A DEATH CERTIFICATE

If you have ticked yes to any questions or if you have any questions or concerns, contact the ACT Policing Coroner's Team on 0413 009 547 as soon as possible after certifying life extinct. If you cannot contact the Coroner's Team, please call Police Operations on 131 444

Coroner's requirements:

- If the death falls into any of the above categories, **DO NOT** remove or disconnect any devices or equipment used to treat the patient unless you have spoken to and obtained permission from the Coroner's Court Representative.
- **Document the asset number**, if labeled, of any devices or equipment connected to the patient at the time of death in the patient's Clinical Record. *(Use other side of this page)*
- Do not move the body or equipment or clean the area unless you have spoken to and obtained permission from the ACT Policing Coroner's Team.

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DO NOT WRITE IN THIS BINDING MARGIN

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