

# Core brief

Thursday, 02 April 2015

## Introduction

This issue of Core Brief provides information on changes to the Certification of Death (Scotland) Act.

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### **Certification of Death (Scotland) Act 2011**

The Certification of Death (Scotland) Act 2011 introduces a number of changes to the current system of Death Certification within Scotland. The first phase of this process began last year with the introduction of a new MCCD (Medical Certificate of the Cause of Death or Form 11) on 5 August 2014. The new MCCD paperwork now includes:

- the deceased's CHI number
- the Health Board area in which the death occurred
- the certifying doctor's GMC number and business contact telephone number
- information about potential disposal hazards

The next phase of the CDA will begin on **13 May 2015** and will introduce randomised checks on the accuracy of the completion of the MCCD through the creation of a national review system. The reviews will be conducted by a team of Medical Reviewers, all of whom are experienced doctors and the service will be based in Healthcare Improvement Scotland.

These reviews are designed to check the quality and accuracy of MCCDs and to improve the way that information about deaths is recorded. **The review process is not about the assessment of the treatment or care provided.** Reviews will fall under one of two categories:

- Level 1 (shorter): In this situation, a Medical Reviewer will scrutinise the MCCD and speak to certifying doctor (or other knowledgeable team member) before authorising the completion of death registration. The intention is for this to be completed within one working day.
- Level 2 (comprehensive): In this situation, the Medical Reviewer will speak to the certifying doctor (or member of the team) and checks relevant medical records. This should be completed within 3 working days.

The reviews will be conducted regardless of whether a burial or cremation is chosen. In addition as of 13 May there will no longer be a requirement for the completion of cremation forms B and C in Scotland.

### What does this mean for staff?

A number of training resources on both the completion of the MCCD and the scrutiny process are currently being developed by NHS Education Scotland to support doctors and non certifying staff to understand these important changes. These resources will be made available later on this month. All certifying doctors in particular are very much encouraged to access these training resources once available and in advance of the 13 May. Further information will be made available to doctors in both primary and secondary care as to how they might access this important training.

In advance of these resources, NHSGGC has developed a short PowerPoint presentation on the changes involved in the Death Certification (Scotland) Act and we encourage all doctors and non certifying staff who are involved supporting bereaved relatives/carers to become familiar with these changes.

The presentation lasts 20 minutes and can be found on StaffNet by [clicking here](#).

A specific web resource to support the implementation of the Death Certification Act which includes Frequently Asked questions can be found on StaffNet by clicking [clicking here](#).

**Are your contact details up-to-date? [Click here](#) to check**