Guidance to assist doctors with the electronic transfer of Medical Certificates of Cause of Death (MCCDs) from health services to registrars and next of kin during the Covid-19 pandemic was issued by Scottish Government Population Health Directorate and National Records of Scotland (NRS) in May 2020.  NRS has recently been receiving reports that some certifying doctors may be returning to processes associated with in-person registration of deaths and still-births, despite Scotland still officially registering all deaths and still-births remotely.

We would be grateful if doctors and/or administrative staff could be reminded that, in line with the guidelines:

         A scanned copy of the MCCD should be sent to **the registration office nominated by the next of kin**, which may the office nearest the home of the deceased or the next of kin, rather than the registration office closest to the hospital/GP practice. Asking the next of kin which registration office they would prefer to deal with helps the death registration process run more smoothly, which in turn allows for funeral arrangements to be finalised more quickly.

         In addition to sending a scanned copy of the MCCD to the registration office, **the original MCCD should be posted to the nominated registration office,**rather than being handed to the next of kin. This avoids the need for registrars to have to contact the certifying doctor to ask for a duplicate MCCD because they have been unable to retrieve the original form from the next of kin.

Certifying doctors will be aware that all registration of deaths and still-births continues to take place **remotely**, and no informant is being asked to attend a registration office to give information, or to sign a death or still-birth register page.  The **previously issued guidance (linked**[**here**](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-transfer-of-medical-certificates-of-cause-of-death---guidance-for-doctors/)**and attached) therefore remains in place**. NRS is currently seeking legislative powers to enable remote registration of deaths and still-births to continue on a permanent basis (as well as enabling remote birth registration); further information will be provided about this in due course.

Thank you very much for your assistance in ensuring that death certification and registration processes continue to run smoothly.

Yours,

Rod Burns

Deputy Registrar General

National Records of Scotland (NRS)