



**AN TSEIRBHÍS CHRÓINÉARA
CORONER SERVICE
Coroners Society of Ireland**

**Modified Requirements for Death Pronouncement in Coroners' Cases
during Covid-19 Pandemic**

Pronouncement of Death by a registered medical practitioner remains a necessary and integral part of the Coroner's death inquiry and of the legal safeguards in that process. During this National Covid-19 Pandemic Emergency the Coroners will accept other competent, trained healthcare professionals, as well as doctors, pronouncing death in certain circumstances.

The **Health Service Executive** has published an *"Interim Clinical Guidance for the Pronouncement of Death by Registered Nurses in Identified Services in the Context of the Global Covid-19 Pandemic (April 2020)"* to outline the role of the registered nurse in the safe pronouncement of death in adults across HSE designated centres for older persons registered by HIQA, and specialists palliative care services where nursing staff are satisfied that death has occurred and a record is made as evidence of pronouncement of death. This interim clinical guidance may be adapted by other non-HSE organisations. Existing requirements for the notification of the death to the Coroner and for the treating Doctor to certify the medical cause of death are unchanged.

Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) registered paramedics or advanced paramedics are trained in Verification of Death (VoD). Where such paramedics attend at the scene of a death during the pandemic a member of An Garda Síochána may now accept, on behalf of the Coroner, a duly completed and signed PHECC Verification of Death Record Form as evidence of the pronouncement of death and are not required to call a registered medical practitioner to pronounce death subsequently.

Any assessment in relation to the circumstances surrounding a death, if relevant, is a matter for An Garda Síochána.

The reporting of any other relevant matters to the Coroner by Registered Nurses or Registered Paramedics remains as it was prior to this Pandemic.

These modifications to death pronouncement in deaths reportable to the Coroner are to reduce the demands on General Practitioners in their Medical Practice and on Out of Hours Services during the pandemic emergency only.

This policy will be kept under active review.

Issued by the Coroner Service / Coroners Society of Ireland

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