

SFHCHS54

Verify an expected death



Overview

This standard covers the verification of an expected death. It includes the assessment of the patient, the recording of the decision and the transmission of relevant information to appropriate professional colleagues. It also includes the confirmation that death has occurred to bereaved persons and the provision of relevant information and advice on the next steps.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 ensure all of your actions adhere to national and/or local policy and guidelines at all times
- P2 identify, access and evaluate all relevant information and consult with colleagues so that you clearly understand the care pathway and the current circumstances
- P3 accurately identify the patient in line with national and/or local policy and guidelines
- P4 identify and greet any key person(s) present and determine their preferences with regard to their role in the procedure and any cultural or religious requirements
- P5 arrange for an independent translator/interpreter if you have reason to believe this will assist the understanding of the key person(s)
- P6 ensure the environment provides for the maximum possible privacy and dignity for the deceased and key person(s) present throughout the procedure
- P7 take action to minimise interruptions
- P8 select and use the appropriate assessment process and documentation
- P9 assess the patient's vital signs and determine whether or not death has occurred
- P10 undertake the assessment involving the key person(s) as appropriate
- P11 assess the emotional state of the key person(s) and respond accordingly throughout the process, using visual clues to add to the understanding
- P12 inform the key person(s) of the death at an appropriate level and pace
- P13 provide opportunities for the key person(s) to ask any questions and respond appropriately
- P14 inform the key person(s) of the next steps in the process and of the range of options available to them, taking account of their preferences and any cultural or religious requirements
- P15 provide and/or signpost the key person(s) with supporting and appropriate information, including how to obtain further information and/or support
- P16 record the verification of the death
- P17 inform appropriate professional colleagues of the death and relevant circumstances
- P18 seek advice and support from an appropriate source when you recognise the complexity of the case is beyond your competence and capability

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 the national and/or local policy and guidelines for patient identification
- K2 the guidelines relevant to your own and others' roles and the responsibilities, accountability and duties of yourself and others
- K3 the national and/or local policy and guidelines for patient records, their storage and confidentiality of information
- K4 the national and/or locally agreed assessment processes, tools and documentation
- K5 the national and/or local guidelines for the recording of death
- K6 professional codes of practice
- K7 the progression and prognosis of the disease
- K8 the management of the disease and possible complications
- K9 the skills, styles and methods of assessment and how to deal with outcomes
- K10 the signs of dying
- K11 the signs of key persons' emotional status
- K12 the management of emotional distress
- K13 psychological, spiritual and social status
- K14 the medical terminology relevant to the procedure
- K15 the range of communication difficulties and sources of resources to aid communication
- K16 the organisations which offer support relevant to the needs of bereaved persons
- K17 the range of information which should be made available to bereaved persons
- K18 the sources of information to assist bereaved persons in deciding on the next step and making choices
- K19 the importance of clear and direct communications
- K20 the importance of bereaved persons' choices and the ways in which they can be supported to make an informed choice
- K21 the interpretation of body language and influence of position and posture
- K22 the importance of working within your own sphere of competence and seeking advice when faced with situations outside your sphere of competence

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Additional Information

External Links

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: HWB6 Assessment and treatment planning

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