APPENDIX 1 FLOWCHART: CONFIRMATION OF DEATH

Registered healthcare professionals with the required skills, knowledge and competencies



Respond to request for a healthcare professional to confirm death



If no immediate signs of life exist, utilise Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (AMRC) criteria to ascertain that clinical signs of life are absent



If immediate signs of life exist, and in the absence of any known formal instruction in the form of an advance statement or welfare power of attorney, initiate resuscitation and call for emergency support



Record:

- observations in line with the AMRC recognised protocol
- the time and date that death was confirmed
- the time that the person was last seen alive and time they were found dead. Relatives or others present should give this information if in a persons' home. This may differ from the time of the confirmation of death but it is necessary information required by the certifying doctor and so should also be recorded
- the time and date that the appropriate medical practitioner, and/or other clinical team members were informed
- communications with other parties such as funeral directors, police, or mortuary staff
- summary of any communications with family or carers
- the presence of any indwelling medical devices or infection control precautions



If the circumstances of the death give rise to any concern, discuss with a senior colleague or medical practitioner. Following discussion, police attendance may be required to support and advise.



Assist with, or arrange for the removal of the body to a funeral home or mortuary (if wished for by the family).



Ensure family and friends have access to information and advice, including the offer of cultural, faith or spiritual support. Explain the process for the issue of Medical Certificate of Cause of Death via a registered medical practitioner, and if any concerns are raised in relation to religious, cultural, compassionate or practical reasons, establish communication with the GP on call or appropriate hospital doctor.



Take the opportunity to reflect and debrief to continuously improve on individual practice as an element of professional and clinical governance.

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