

### Death of a Hospice Patient PC.D10

**Regulation(s):** | None  
**L-Tag(s):** | None

**POLICY:** Members of the hospice's interdisciplinary group are available to attend patient deaths 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. The RN Case Manager (or designee) visits the home of a patient when notified that the patient has died. The Social Worker, Chaplain, or Bereavement Coordinator may visit as appropriate.
2. The RN Case Manager assesses the patient for the absence of an apical pulse and respirations.
3. The patient's death is assessed, documented and communicated in accordance with State laws and regulations.
4. The hospice staff attending the death respect the cultural, religious and spiritual traditions of the patient's family and provides support as needed and appropriate. This should include the provision of appropriate post-mortem care if allowed.
5. The hospice nurse clamps and removes all tubing that enters the body, empties all drainage bags, turns off IV pumps and oxygen.
6. The body is placed in as natural a position as is possible and is handled with respect and dignity.
7. If funeral arrangements have not been made, assistance is provided.
8. The nurse educates on and encourages the proper disposal of controlled medications.
9. The patient's attending physician is notified of the date and time of death. A message is left with the physician's answering service for deaths occurring after normal business hours.
10. The hospice nurse and/or other hospice staff remain at the residence until the body has been removed and the bereaved are coping effectively.

<b>Created:</b>	<b>Reviewed:</b>	<b>Revised:</b>	<b>Effective:</b>
5/17/18	2/11/19		4/2019
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11. The hospice office is notified as soon as feasible when a death occurs and:
- notifies all team members involved in the patient's care as soon as possible;
  - removes the patient from the pharmacy system,
  - contacts the equipment company to remove DME from the patient's home.

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