

Certification of death

- When a patient dies it is the statutory duty of the doctor who has attended in the last illness to issue the MCCD, this means a doctor who has cared for the patient during the illness that led to death and so is familiar with the patient's medical history, investigations and treatment.
- The certifying doctor must have 'seen' the deceased patient face to face for a consultation within 28 days prior to their death.
- What is considered 'seen';
 - (i) Carrying out a full consultation face to face, including examination
 - (ii) a video consultation
- What is not considered 'seen';
 - (i) telephone consultations are no longer sufficient;
 - (ii) an appointment for a jab (whether covid, flu or similar) is not sufficient to be considered as "seen";
 - (iii) saying hello or exchanging pleasantries in passing is insufficient, there must be an actual consultation
- If the certifying doctor has not seen the patient in life within the 28 days prior to death but has seen them in their final illness (which is to be stated as the cause of their death), the doctor must see the patient after death and refer the case to HM Coroner.
- If a doctor has not seen them in life within the 28 days prior to their death & has not seen them in their final illness, they will be unable to certify the death. If there are no other doctors who met the above criteria, the case must be referred to HM Coroner. HM Coroner will then make an informed decision on how to take the case forward.

For further guidance on the certification of death please use the QR code

