

**HEMS
SYSTEM**

HOSPICE PATIENT COORDINATION OF SERVICES

Date: April 2013

Last Revised Date: 1/4/2024

Section: 8-30

Wayne County/City of Detroit Hospice Patient Coordination of Services

Purpose

Hospice programs in Wayne County will observe the State laws and regulations that apply to a death from natural causes in the home. At the time of death, the Hospice program will provide appropriate emotional support and notify the various agencies required, reducing the necessity for response by Law Enforcement and Emergency Medical Services to Hospice home deaths. This protocol covers agency response to the home death of patients enrolled in Wayne County Hospice programs authorized by the Wayne County Medical Examiner to assist in the investigation of these deaths. Other home deaths are subject to individual department protocols.

Planning for Home Death

Hospice nurses will be trained under guidelines established by the Wayne County Medical Examiner and will be registered with the Medical Examiner's office.

Individual contacts Hospice to enroll in the program. Hospice will present an orientation program for the patient and family.

Orientation will include guidelines for accessing 9-1-1 and the emergency response that can be expected.

The patient or legal guardian signs a consent Hospice Care Form.

Agency notification of patient enrollment in a Hospice program (form attached):

1. Wayne County – Hospice will send the jurisdictional law enforcement agency a “Notification of Hospice Patient” form.
2. City of Detroit – Hospice will send the Detroit Police Department notification and control section a “Notification of Hospice Patient” form.
3. The notification form provides law enforcement with:
 - Information on an impending home death.
 - Confirmation of enrollment in a Hospice program when notified of patient's death.
4. A copy of the “Notification of Hospice Patient” form will be kept at the patient's home and the Hospice agency.
5. Hospice will notify the Wayne County Medical Examiner of patient's enrollment in a Hospice program.

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Imminent Death in the Home

The responsible person(s) for the Hospice patient may notify Hospice of imminent death per their orientation for support and direction.

If for any reason 9-1-1 is accessed, all agencies will respond according to their general emergency response procedures.

Post Death in the Home – Hospice Representative Available to Respond

The responsible person(s) for the patient will contact Hospice to report patient's death.

The Hospice nurse will respond to the patient's home:

- Assess if patient has expired.
- Gather required information for the Medical Examiner.
- Assess scene and patient for signs of unnatural death as trained by the Wayne County Medical Examiner's office.

The Hospice nurse will telephone the Wayne County Medical Examiner's office to report the Hospice patient's death and give the required information.

The Medical Examiner's investigator will give the Hospice nurse a "Case Number" for the patient and the name of the investigator for the nurse's report.

The Hospice nurse will record the "Medical Examiner Case Number" on appropriate form(s) so the responsible person(s) for the patient at the scene can contact the funeral director.

If the patient's representative is not at the scene to contact the funeral director with the "Medical Examiner Case Number" and Hospice is not designated to do so, the Medical Examiner's protocols will be followed.

Notification of the jurisdictional Law Enforcement agency will occur as follows:

1. The Hospice nurse will notify out Wayne County (patients with non-Detroit addresses) Law Enforcement Agencies of:
 - The patient's death at home
 - Other information required by the law enforcement agency for its report
 - The Medical Examiner Case Number
2. The Medical Examiner's office will inform the City of Detroit Police Department Homicide section of Hospice home deaths.

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3. The law enforcement agency can confirm patient's enrollment in the program by referring to the "Notification of Hospice Patient" form sent to the department or by contacting the Hospice program involved in the patient's case.

Post Death in the Home – Hospice Representative Unable to Respond to Patient's Home

The responsible person(s) for the patient at the scene will contact Hospice to report the patient's death.

Hospice will provide phone support to the family.

Hospice will contact the jurisdictional law enforcement agency for assistance. Calls to Wayne County Law Enforcement agencies will not be made on the 9-1-1 emergency phone system, but on the department's non-emergency telephone number (unless instructed otherwise in writing by the law enforcement agency). In the City of Detroit, calls for assistance will be made through the 9-1-1 system.

LAW ENFORCEMENT WILL RESPOND TO THE PATIENT'S HOME AND INVESTIGATE THE REPORTED DEATH. IF A LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY'S PROTOCOL REQUIRES EMS SUPPORT TO INVESTIGATE A REPORTED HOSPICE HOME DEATH, EMS WILL BE ACTIVATED TO RESPOND IN A NON-EMERGENCY MODE.

IF LAW ENFORCEMENT BELIEVES A MEDICAL EMERGENCY EXISTS, EMS WILL BE ACTIVATED FOR AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE.

Upon conclusion of the investigation, law enforcement will notify the Wayne County Medical Examiner's office to report the Hospice patient's death and give the required information.

The Medical Examiner's office will give the law enforcement officer the patient's "case number" and the investigator's name

Law enforcement will:

- Give the "Medical Examiner Case Number" on appropriate form(s) to the responsible person(s) for the patient at the scene, in order to contact the funeral director.
- If the patient's representative is not at the scene to contact the funeral director with the "Medical Examiner Case Number", department and/or Medical Examiner's protocols will be followed.

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Hospice Request for Law Enforcement Assistance and Law Enforcement Response

Hospice will contact law enforcement for respond assistance:

- If the patient's home is located in an area potentially unsafe for the Hospice representative to travel unescorted, in the City of Detroit the Hospice representative will go to the precinct station in the precinct in which the Hospice patient resides. The officer in charge of the precinct station desk will contact the emergency service operator to dispatch a response unit to the station. Upon the arrival of the response unit at the station, the officer in charge of the station desk will advise the Hospice nurse to meet the response unit at the Hospice patient's residence.
- If in the judgment of the responding Hospice nurse or other representative for further investigation of the patient's death, investigation will proceed according to the guidelines established by the Medical Examiner.

In either of these cases law enforcement will be contacted prior to notification of the Medical Examiner's office.

If contacted by Hospice for assistance, law enforcement will respond to the scene per department protocol.

Law enforcement can confirm the patient's enrollment in a Hospice program by referring to the "Notification of Hospice Patient" form sent to the department or by contacting the Hospice program involved in the patient's care.

Emergency Medical Services

EMS will not be notified of a patient's enrollment in a Hospice program, or of the patient's expiration.

EMS may be accessed if the patient is affected by any affliction other than the illness that precipitated enrollment in the Hospice program. The patient, family, and others should be prepared for an emergency medical response.

IF EMS IS CONTACTED, EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND TREATMENT WILL BE INITIATED.

EMS WILL INITIATE FULL EMERGENCY TREATMENT PROCEDURES, UNLESS THE PATIENT MEETS THE CRITERIA FOR EXEMPTION TO TREATMENT AS DESCRIBED IN THE MEDICAL CONTROL AUTHORITIES GUIDELINES FOR DECLARATION OF DEATH ON SCENE. IF THE EMS CREW HAS ANY DOUBTS

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AS IN WHETHER THE PROTOCOL'S EXEMPTIONS TO TREATMENT APPLY MEDICAL CONTROL WILL BE ESTABLISHED, AND RESUSCITATION EFFORTS WILL COMMENCE IMMEDIATELY. IF NOT ALREADY ON SCENE, EMS WILL NOTIFY LAW ENFORCEMENT FOR ASSISTANCE.

Quality Review

Hospice will be responsible for internal review of procedures followed for each patient's death.

The Medical Examiner will be responsible for implementing any review, evaluation, and procedural updates for all Wayne County Hospice programs authorized to assist in home death investigations.

Authorization of Hospice Programs to Participate under this Protocol

Hospice programs must be authorized by the Medical Examiner to participate in this protocol. Authorization is granted following a request by the Hospice director when all requirements are met.

Authorized Hospice programs are responsible for arranging with the Medical Examiner's office for the training of nurses who will be participating in this protocol. The Medical Examiner's office must also be notified of personnel changes regarding nurses participating in this protocol.

The Medical Examiner's office is responsible for the training of Hospice nurses in the investigation procedures required by this protocol. The Medical Examiner's office will also notify Wayne County law enforcement agencies of changes in the authorization of Hospice programs to participate in this protocol.