

Management of Deceased Patient calls made from Law Enforcement to Urgent Care

Call from law enforcement reporting a deceased patient. Law enforcement cannot leave until the body is removed from location by a Funeral Home. If you have any immediate questions, you can call Lynn Keil (518)-744-0185 for her assistance and recommendations.

If the decedent is NOT a patient of HHHN, officer should attempt to call the patient's PCP. If necessary, utilize HIXNY and Epic to help determine who a patient's PCP is. If unknown, the Coroner should be called. Patients only seen at Urgent Care and who do not have a PCP at HHHN should also be directed to the Coroner.

For any death, review/ask basic questions, such as:

- Was death sudden?
- Was death expected?
- Was there a resuscitation attempt by EMS etc?
- Any evidence of foul play?
- Any evidence of drug or alcohol abuse?
- Any evidence of trauma or falls?
- Was there a recent surgery?
- Was there a recent Hospitalization?
- Was Death Witnessed?
- Was patient alone?
- When were they last seen alive?
- Was the patient on prescription medications?
- Was patient followed by specialists (Cardiology or Pulmonology)?
- When were they last seen by PCP, Urgent Care or Hospital?
- Was patient on Hospice or Palliative Care?
- How long does the officer feel that patient was expired based on appearance?

If there is any evidence of foul play or any concerning information, trauma or illicit drug use, law enforcement should be instructed to call the Coroner

No concerning or unusual circumstances

• If patient age < 40:

- The vast majority of these younger deaths are referred directly to the Coroner and Autopsy ordered. Many of these deaths are due to drugs or drug use.
- In the less-likely event this was due to chronic illness and was an expected death due to natural causes, and Law Enforcement's information is consistent, follow the instructions below for creating an Athena case
- If patient is middle aged or older and Law Enforcement's information is consistent with a death from natural causes, the body can be removed from scene by the funeral home. Create a case in Athena with the following information and send to PCP to create death certificate:
 - Time of Death (typically determined based on Time of EMS call or stamp on EMS Rhythm strip)
 - Location of Death
 - Funeral Home handling the removal
 - Let law enforcement know Death Certificate will be completed by PCP (if Covering Provider completes death certificate, put certificate number in the case)
 - Be sure to send case to PCP so they can either complete death certificate or (less commonly) be notified that covering provider completed the death certificate

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