

**Staff Name:** .....

## **Verification of Death in a Care Home Competency (Part 1)**

### **Before death confirmation:**

- Prior to death confirmation, the nurse and witness should check the patient's resuscitation status:
- If the patient is not for resuscitation, death confirmation can proceed.
- If there is uncertainty as to the patient's resuscitation status, CPR should be commenced whilst this is clarified.
- Review the patient's notes to gain further details about their medical history.
- Clarify the circumstances surrounding the death with the relevant staff and family members. This information will need to be documented in the patient's notes.
- If family or friends of the patient are present, introduce yourself and offer your condolences. Explain the need to confirm death and offer the family the opportunity to leave or stay whilst you do this. Check if the family have any questions or concerns.

### **Death confirmation**

- Wash your hands and don PPE if appropriate.
- Confirm the identity of the resident and inspect for obvious signs of life such as movement and respiratory effort.
- Assess the patient's response to verbal stimuli (e.g. "Hello, Mr Smith, can you hear me?").
- Assess the patient's response to pain using one of the following methods:
  - Perform a trapezius squeeze.
  - Apply supraorbital pressure.
- Assess the patient's pupillary reflexes using a pen torch: after death, the pupils become fixed and dilated.
- Palpate the carotid artery for a pulse: after death, this will be absent.
- Perform auscultation (with stethoscope) in an attempt to identify any heart or respiratory sounds: i) Listen for heart sounds for at least 1 minute & ii) Listen for respiratory sounds for at least 1 minute.
- Wash your hands, dispose of PPE appropriately and exit the room, making sure the relevant doors and/or curtains are closed/drawn behind you.

**Verification of Death Competency Assessment (Part 2): Pass mark 90%**

1) Who is able to verify a death?

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2) What is the first step in verifying a resident's death?

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3) What PPE is to be worn when verifying a death?

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4) How would you check the circulation if death is suspected

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5) What checks are performed to check for respiration signs?

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6) When testing for cerebral reflexes, do the pupils in the eyes constrict or dilate?

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7) Explain the corneal reflex test in your own words.

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8) Name one pain stimuli that can be used to check for a physical reaction during verification.