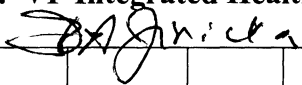
 PRAIRIE NORTH REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY	POLICIES & PROCEDURES Number: 15647 Category: Continuing Care Title: Death Protocol - Pronouncement												
Approved by: VP Integrated Health Services  <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Review Date:</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Initial:</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Review Date:						Initial:						Source: Home Care Managers Date Effective: December 18, 2008
Review Date:													
Initial:													

PURPOSE

To review and inform about the statutory requirement with respect to pronouncement and certification of death and provide definitions for the actions:

Pronouncement: Registered Nurses/Registered Psychiatric Nurse/Licensed Practical Nurses may pronounce the death. There is no legal requirement that the pronouncement needs to be done by a physician.

Certification: There is a legal requirement that death must be certified by a physician or by a Coroner; this duty cannot be delegated. The physician or Coroner must sign the death certificate. If the physician does not view the body, he/she must be satisfied as to a natural cause of death according to good medical practice and judgement.

Moving a Body: There is no legal requirement that a body must be seen by a physician before it may be moved, **but if the death falls under the Coroners Act**, the body **my NOT** be moved until the Coroner authorizes it.

POLICY

1. **When death is expected, anticipated and/or due to natural causes** the RN/RPN/LPN will:

1.1 **Pronounce death based on the following criteria:**

- Client is unresponsive
- No respirations, chest movements or breath sounds
- No pulse or heart sounds

Institutional Setting		Home Setting	
1.2	Inform the family physician immediately and leave messages for all other physicians involved in the patient's care.	1.2	Inform the physician, determine whether the physician wishes to make a home visit.
1.2.1	Determine if the physician will be requesting an autopsy.		
1.2.2	Determine if the physician will be contacting the family. Note: if the physician will be contacting family, please ask the physician to let the nursing staff know if family will be coming in to view the body		
1.3	Notify the family if not done by the physician.	1.3	Assist family, as they require, with contacting family and friends.
1.3.1	Determine if the family will be coming in to view the body.		
1.3.2	Ask family which funeral home they would like the body sent to, if not determined earlier.		
1.4	Prepare the body following site policy on care of body and belongings.	1.4	There is no required care of the body other than as per family's request (e.g. washing, dressing). Removal of catheters, IV lines and NG tubes may be done in the home.
1.5	Authorize the removal to morgue/funeral home. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This can only be done if there is no autopsy and if it is not a Coroner's case. 	1.5	May phone funeral home for removal of body. Inform funeral home if there is a pacemaker or implanted vascular access device.
1.6	Document the following in the Progress Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria for death (as outlines in 1.1) Date and time of death Name of individual pronouncing death Whether family or others are present at death Physician notified and time Family notified and time Disposition of belongings (n/a in home setting) 	1.6	Document the following in the progress notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria for death Date and time of death Name of individual pronouncing death Physician notified and time

2. When death is unexpected, unexplained or appears to be from unnatural causes, or otherwise falls under the Coroner's Act the RN/RPN/LPN will:

2.1 Pronounce death based on the following criteria:

- Same criteria as 1.1

2.2 Inform the family physician immediately regarding the death pronouncement. The body cannot be moved until the RCMP has viewed it. Should the RCMP feel it is necessary to inform a Coroner, the body shall remain undisturbed until the Coroner authorizes it.

2.3 Continue at 1.4 above.