

## Confirmation of death – for registered nurses

A nurse cannot legally certify death - this is one of the few activities required by law to be carried out by a registered medical practitioner. In the event of death, a registered nurse may confirm or verify death has occurred, providing there is an explicit local protocol in place to allow such an action, which includes guidance on when other authorities, e.g. the police or the coroner, should be informed prior to removal of the body.

Nurses undertaking this responsibility must only do so providing they have received appropriate education and training and have been assessed as competent. The Code says

- You must have the knowledge and skills for safe and effective practice when working without direct supervision
- You must recognise and work within the limits of your competence
- You must keep your knowledge and skills up to date throughout your working life
- You must take part in appropriate learning and practice activities that maintain and develop your competence and performance. They must also be aware of their accountability when performing this role.

### Further information

- The Code: Standards of conduct, performance and ethics for nurses and midwives (2008)