



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Office of the Nursing & Midwifery Services Director
Clinical Programme Implementation & Professional
Development

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Deputy Colm Burke,
Houses of the Oireachtas,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2,
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E-mail: colm.burke@oireachtas.ie;

Friday, 17 November 2023

Re: PQ 48786/23 - To ask the Minister for Health if he will take the necessary steps to enable a registered nurse to sign a declaration of death form for a patient who passes away in hospital or nursing home; and if he will make a statement on the matter. Colm Burke.

Dear Deputy Burke,

The HSE has developed a guideline outlining the role of the registered nurse in the safe pronouncement of death in adults (over 18 years of age) across HSE and Section 38 designated centres for older persons registered by HIQA, as well as in specialist palliative care services. This guideline is supported by a training programme and a Self-Assessment of Competency for a Registered Nurse in the Pronouncement of Death.

The adoption of the guideline is voluntary for both the service and the individual registered nurse. Decisions to implement the guidance are based on service need and agreement by the treating doctor and director of nursing/senior nurse manager. The process is overseen and supported by the coroner. A Pronouncement of Death by Registered Nurse Form is completed by the pronouncing nurse, and a Death Notification Form is completed by the treating doctor. The current guideline is under review and will be replaced by a revised policy in early 2024.

Yours sincerely,

John F Scott
General Manager