

## TRANSLATION

### CGCOM Statement on standard and Covid-19 Death Certificates

Given the Declaration of the State of Alarm for the management of the health crisis caused by Covid-19, and following the guidelines of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Justice, in relation to Death Certificates of deceased by natural causes, and especially in cases with suspected or confirmed diagnosis of Covid-19, and according to the definitions proposed by WHO, the GCCOM National Committee of Doctors working in Public Administrations reports on the procedure to follow about Death Certificates:

1.- Due to the need to have adequate means of protection against biological risks and, in particular, against exposure to COVID-19, we remember that the recommendations made by the Ministry of Health must be followed and the recognitions in risky situations should be reduced to the bare minimum.

2.- The forensic doctor's legal intervention will be limited, therefore, to cases of violent death or in which there is a clear suspicion of criminality.

3.- In all other cases, certificating death corresponds to the attending physicians of the Public or Private Health Services.

4.- In order to issue the corresponding death certificate, **in cases of suspected Covid-19 infection in the community environment without analytical confirmation**, once consulted, if possible, the medical record of the defunct, with special attention to the described symptoms of the infection, the certification procedure will be as follows:

- Initial or Main Cause of Death: NOT CONFIRMED COVID-19 or SUSPECTED CORONAVIRUS INFECTION.
- Immediate Cause: the last cause that is considered correct, e.g. "multi-organ failure", "respiratory distress" or "acute respiratory failure".
- Intermediate Causes: could be reflected if there were or were known: "pneumonia" "sepsis" or "coagulopathy".
- Pathologies or comorbidities that entail an increased risk of developing serious disease, if they exist, e.g. "cardiovascular diseases" "arterial hypertension" or "diabetes", should be included in the section on Other Processes.

5.- In cases of **COVID 19 confirmed by laboratory testing**, the Main Cause must appear as follows: CONFIRMED COVID-19. For the rest of the certification, please proceed as in previous paragraphs.

Notwithstanding any collaboration required by health authorities to forensic doctors.

The content of this document complies with the principles of Medical Ethics and is in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Medical Ethics in force.

Links of interest:

Ministry of Health

<https://www.mscbs.gob.es/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov-China/documentos.htm>

Ministry of Justice

<https://www.mjusticia.gob.es/cs/Satellite/Portal/es/ciudadanos/servicios-esenciales-justicia>

WHO

<https://www.who.int/classifications/icd/covid19/en/>

Madrid, 28 March 2020