

Completion of Medical Certificates of Death after an Assisted Death: An Environmental Scan of Practices

Produire un certificat médical de décès dans les cas d'aide médicale à mourir : analyse du contexte des pratiques

JANINE BROWN, LILIAN THORPE AND DONNA GOODRIDGE

Table 2.

State	Responsibility for MCD completion	MCD completion and manner	Additional information	Information source
Vermont	Physician	Underlying illness Manner: Natural	There is no information related to care recipient choices reflected on the death certificate.	Vermont Department of Health: Report Concerning Patient Choice at End of Life (Section Summary of Underlying Causes of Death, general statistics, bullet three) E-mail communication with Patient Choices Vermont and with Death with Dignity.
Oregon	Physician	Underlying illness Manner: Natural	No reference to assisted dying or the medications used to protect confidentiality of the care recipient in participation with the Oregon Death with Dignity Act. ME Office is not involved in the process (by design).	E-mail communication with Oregon Health Authority, Center for Public Health Practice and Oregon State Medical Examiner. 127.815 s.3.01 Attending Physician Responsibilities.
Washington State	Physician	Underlying illness Manner: Natural	The cause of death section may not contain any language that indicates that the Death with Dignity Act was used.	Instructions for Physicians and Other Medical Certifiers for Death Certificates: Compliance with the Death with Dignity Act Washington Death with Dignity Act 70.245.040

State	Responsibility for MCD completion	MCD completion and manner	Additional information	Information source
California	Physician, coroners or MEs	Underlying illness Manner: Natural	“Certifiers (physicians, coroners, and medical examiners) report the underlying terminal disease as the cause of death on the death certificates. This approach complies with applicable law; best ensures the reliability and usefulness of data collected from the death certificate for state, national, and international surveillance purposes; and effectuates the California Legislature’s intent to maintain the confidentiality of individuals’ participation in the Act.”	California Department of Public Health. California End of Life Option Act 2016 Data Report (page 4) The California End of Life Option Act (indirect sections, 443.1; 443.13)
Colorado	Physician	Underlying illness Manner: Natural	When a death has occurred in accordance with this law, the cause of death shall be listed as the terminal illness and the death does not constitute grounds for a post-mortem inquiry.	Colorado End of Life Options Act 25-48-109 E-mail communication with Death with Dignity.
Washington, District of Columbia	Physician	Underlying illness Manner: Natural	No reference to the fact that the care recipient ingested medications. Office of the Chief Medical Examiner will review each death and if warranted may conduct an investigation.	Washington, D.C. Death with Dignity Act (Sec. 6, H) E-mail communication with Death with Dignity.