CRVS course prospectus
Capacity development and medical certification of cause of death training

For more information about this course, contact Dr Saman Gamage, University of Melbourne Course Coordinator (**udaya.gamage@unimelb.edu.au**)

About this course

This course was developed as a training of trainers' program for doctors on International Classification of Diseases (ICD)-compliant death certification practices. Physicians who attend this three-day training program will become "master trainers" for other physicians in their respective countries.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this course, participants should be able to:

■ Explain the importance of correct certification of cause of death (COD) and the role of certifying physicians in producing reliable causes of death statistics for a country

■ Describe the concepts of COD, underlying COD and the sequence of events leading to death

■ Correctly complete the International Form of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death, Frames A and B, with particular attention to Parts 1 and 2 as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO)

■ Demonstrate the skills to conduct workshops to train doctors on correct death certification practices.

Target audience

This program is aimed at training a selected group of doctors to become master trainers on correct certification practices.

Participants are not required to have prior knowledge on death certification practices or ICD. However, it is important that all participants be both willing and able to function as master trainers for their respective countries, provinces, hospitals and heath areas.

English language skills and experience of and commitment to continuing medical education would be an advantage.

Participants are mainly drawn from the public hospital system, although we also encourage doctors from the private sector to participate. Physician-trainers from training institutes, universities and medical schools are also encouraged to participate.
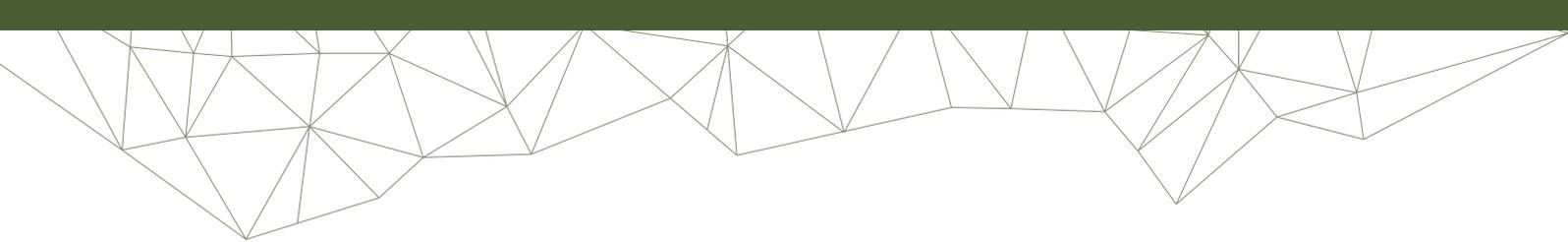
Prior to this training being delivered, we suggest conducting an evaluation of your country's current COD quality using a sample of about 100 death certificates from participating hospitals. Outcomes of the evaluation will provide evidence to demonstrate the need for this training. With hospital's consent, we will also conduct a pre- and post-course evaluation of certification practices.

Learning styles and delivery mechanisms

This medical certification training course is offered as a three-day block. Face-to-face instruction is conducted in a classroom situation to groups of 20 to 30 physicians, employing adult learning principles to provide optimal learning conditions.

The course delivery is diverse and stimulating, and includes:

■ Interactive presentations and discussions based on PowerPoint slides

■ Small group discussions using case scenarios and group presentations

■ Group and individual exercises on the assessment of quality of COD certification using the electronic or paper-based assessment tool

■ Participant-led practice teaching sessions

■ Post training support via email, telephone and social media platforms (the University of Melbourne's medical certification of cause of death trainer's forum)

■ Feedback and support during subsequent, master trainer-led training programs for other physicians.

This course is also offered as an online webinar, in places and during circumstances where direct face-to-face training is not possible.

Course timelines

This program runs as a series of three-day interactive workshops to allow adequate time for exercises and practice.

Course objectives

At the end of this course, participants should have a sound grasp of the following four course objectives:

Course objective 1: The importance of correct certification of cause of death and the role of certifying physicians in producing reliable causes of death statistics for a country. This includes an understanding of:

- The importance of correct death certification practices to produce accurate mortality statistics, and to inform public health policy and planning and the allocation of resources
- The current quality of death certification in your country, and globally
- Physician's role in improving quality of death certification in the country
- The different uses of the death certificate
- Legal, ethical and confidentiality issues related to death certification.

Course objective 2: At the end of the course, Describe the concepts of cause of death, underlying cause of death and the sequence of events leading to death. This includes an understanding of:

- The concept and definition of the *cause of death* and the *underlying cause of death*
- The starting point, sequence of events, and the terminal condition.

Course objective 3: Correctly complete the International Form of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death, Frames A and B, with particular attention to Parts 1 and 2 as recommended by the WHO. This includes an understanding of:

- The International Form of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death
- The importance of, and how to, correctly complete identification data in the death certificate
- How to complete Parts 1 and 2 (Frame A) of the death certificate, including the sequence of events leading from the starting point and the relevance of contributing causes. Case-based examples will be used to support learning.

- How to complete Frame B of the International Form of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death
- Certifying commonly occurring, specific causes of death, such as diabetes mellitus, neoplasms, accidents and violence, etc.
- Avoiding the reporting of ill-defined conditions as the underlying cause of death.

Course objective 4: Demonstrate the skills to conduct workshops to train doctors on correct death certification practices. This includes demonstrating an ability to:

- Assess the quality of cause of death certification
- Develop a plan of action for in-country training programs
- Identify essentials in planning a training program
- Apply adult training principles
- Facilitate practice/mock training sessions for doctors.

Course materials

Supplied during the workshop:

- Handbook for doctors on cause-of-death certification
- Cause of death certification quality assessment tool
- Guidance tool on assessing the quality of death certification
- Case scenarios for group work
- Template for a plan of action
- Checklist for planning a training program
- Copies of completed death certificates with identification data erased (100 from each hospital)
- Set of PowerPoint slides

Supplied by participants:

- Personal laptops

Facilitators

Experienced educators who are staff members of the University of Melbourne will conduct the course.

Potential country partners for development and delivery of course:

We propose to involve officials from participating country's Ministry of Health, local medical schools, professional colleges (e.g. medical associations) and relevant UN organizations (e.g. WHO) as guest speakers. This will facilitate country ownership and engagement to ensure sustainability of the commitment beyond the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative.

The program partners on this initiative include: The University of Melbourne, Australia; CDC Foundation, USA; Vital Strategies, USA; Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, USA; World Health Organization, Switzerland.

Civil Registration and Vital Statistics partners:

For more information contact:

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