



Capacity development and medical certification of cause of death training

About this course

This course is developed as a training of trainers program for doctors on International Classification of Diseases (ICD)-compliant death certification practices. The doctors who attend this 3-day training program will be the master trainers for training doctors in their respective countries. .

Learning objectives

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

1. Explain the importance of correct certification of the cause of death (COD) and the role of certifying physicians in producing reliable causes of death statistics for a country.
2. Describe the concept of underlying COD and the sequence of events leading to death.
3. Correctly complete the International Form of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death with particular attention to Parts 1 and 2 as recommended by the World Health Organization.
4. 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 who will become master trainers on correct certification practices. It is not required for them to have prior knowledge on death certification practices or of the ICD. However it is important that all participants would be both willing and able to function as master trainers for their respective countries, provinces, hospitals and health areas.

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

Participants would mainly be drawn from the public hospital system although we would also encourage participation of doctors from the private sector. The class size would be 20-30 doctors.

Learning styles and delivery mechanisms

The medical certification training course will be offered as a three day block. Face-to-face instruction is conducted in a classroom situation using adult learning principles that provide optimal learning conditions.

The program's teaching mix is diverse and stimulating and includes:

- Interactive presentations and discussion based on power-point slides
- Small group discussions using case scenarios and group presentations
- Individual exercises on the assessment of COD certification using the assessment tool
- Post training support via emails and telephone
- Feedback and support during their initial training programs

We suggest conducting an evaluation of the current COD quality of the country using a sample of about 100 death certificates from each hospital to use as evidence for need of the training. With their consent we will also propose conducting a pre and post evaluation of the course.

Course timelines

The training of trainer program is planned as a 3-day interactive work shop to allow adequate time for exercise and practice.

Course outline

Learning objective 1: Explain the importance of correct certification of COD and the role of certifying physicians in producing reliable causes of death statistics for a country.

- Importance of correct death certification to accurate mortality statistics, and to public health policy and planning and the allocation of resources
- Current quality of death certification in the country and in the world
- Doctors role in improving quality of death certification in the country
- The different uses of death certificate
- Legal, ethical and confidentiality issues related to death certification

Learning objective 2: Describe the concept of underlying cause of death and the sequence of events leading to death.

- Concept and definition of underlying cause of death (UCOD)
- Sequence of events; the terminal condition and the starting point

Learning objective 3: Correctly complete the International Form of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death with particular attention to Parts 1 and 2 as recommended by the World Health Organization.

- Introduction to the International Form of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death
- Completing identification data in the death certificate correctly and its importance
- Generic instructions for completing a death certificate including explanation of the sequence of events leading from the starting point and the relevance of contributing causes
- Case based examples on completing death certificates with explanations
- Instructions for certifying commonly occurring, specific CODs

Learning objective 4: Demonstrate the skills to conduct workshops to train doctors on correct death certification practices.

- Skills in assessing the quality of COD certification
- Developing a plan of action for in-country training programs
- Identify essentials in planning a training program
- The application of adult training principles
- Practice sessions in running a training programs for doctors

Course materials

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

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 Ministry of Health, local medical schools, professional colleges (eg medical associations) and relevant UN organisations (eg WHO) as guest speakers. This would 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:



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