

RNVoEAD Training – National Guidance

May 2020 - Summary of Questions and Answers Sessions

Q. Will this training be valid after Covid 19? Will I need top up training to continue to verify death?

A. Whilst it is likely that after Covid 19, training and assessment for VoEAD will revert to the previous arrangements, your competency to verify expected death will continue. Like any nursing skill, it will need to be kept up-to-date. It should be in your Personal Development Plan and Annual Appraisal and if you have not verified an expected death for a few months, you should refresh your skill, for example by revisiting VoEAD training video and guidance documents

Q. Will access to the previous VoEAD training be available later ?

A. The current VoEAD training is equivalent in content to previous training. The main difference is in the introduction of self-assessment of competency.

Q. After Covid 19 will we have to be witnessed verifying a death?

A. You do not have to be witnessed verifying an expected death, if you have gone through the current stages of training and assessed yourself as competent. If however you do not feel confident and competent you can arrange to be observed by a colleague who is competent in verifying expected death.

Q. What we will use for our self-assessment of competency ?

A. You can use the self-assessment form that is part of the national document which includes a comprehensive guidance for VoEAD. After training (including watching the training video) you complete, sign and date the form. This can then be kept in your personal development plan along with your certificate of completion for the training as evidence.

Q. Is there a time frame the self-assessment has to be completed by following this training?

A. As soon after the training as possible.

Q. Is competency based on self-assessment only?

A. The current VoEAD training model for Registered Nurses during this Covid-19 period is: watching the requisite training video and using the recognised self-assessment form linked to the national guidance for self-assessment of competency. If you do not feel confident, you can ask support from a colleague who is competent in VoEAD .

Q. After attending the training, am I legally allowed to verify the expected death in my Care Home?

A. The training model has two elements to it, the first is a training video, supported by a question and answer session and the second is the completion of a self-assessment of the competencies required. Just watching the video does **NOT** make you competent. You must follow this by working through the competencies in the self-assessment form linked to the national guidance.

Q. Is this training in line with Care Quality Commission requirements?

A. Care Quality Commission requirements are met by compliance with national guidance. This requires that you have had current VoEAD training (watching the training video)and have assed yourself to be competent. It is also required that your organisation has a policy in place which you need to be aware of and follow.

Q. Can we share the online training links and documents with colleagues or do they need to attend a Q&A training session as well?

A. If your colleagues (Registered Nurses) have not been able to access these sessions they can still watch the training video available online and then complete the self-assessment competency document linked to the national guidance. The more Registered Nurses that can verify expected adult death competently the better.

Q. When we feel competent in this, would we be able to complete another person's competency?

A. If you have completed the training and assessed yourself as competent you can support another RN if they do not feel confident or competent yet.

Q. Please clarify the requirement for a GP to have seen the patient within 28 days before death

One of the policy changes during Covid-19 is that the Medical Certificate of the Cause of Death can be issued where the Medical Practitioner has seen the deceased within 28 days prior to death (rather than 14 days as previously) this includes seeing the patient via video link, or after death. A telephone call without video does not meet the new requirements agreed between the Government, BMA and Royal College of General Practitioners.

Q. What about senior carers; are they able to verify death in residential homes ? and

Are we looking at remote support via telemedicine hub?

A. This training is based on the national guidance for VoEAD by Registered nurses so does not cover these issues. Some of the CCGs are looking at supporting non-registered staff. Different things are being explored in different localities. You will need to check locally, with your clinical leads in your CCG; what are local policies; what is being taken forward in your locality ?

Q. Do we have to use particular documentation to record the verification of expected death, can we use our own organisations documentation?

A. If you have your own verification of death form, in-house, use this. If you do not have one already, use a locally or nationally developed form. Following VoEAD the information to be recorded must include, tests carried out, who was present when verification of death done, time noted for death, when last seen by a Medical Practitioner, name and signature of verifier. The form is then kept in the patients records (paper or electronic)

Q. When is the actual time of death?

A. Actual time of death is the time the Registered Nurse verifies it, after all the required VoEAD tests are done, i.e. it is not the time the last breath was taken but the recorded time that all checks to verify death are completed.

Q. The order of the procedure for VoEAD has been changed due to COVID-19. Will this change remain post COVID? Does it matter as long as everything is done?

A. The changed order is recommended for infection control reasons. The important thing is that currently and in the future all tests are done safely

Q. Are there any tips on applying the tests?

A. The skills are detailed in the national guidance . Be properly prepared, have confidence, carry the tests out systematically, take your time. If you are not feeling confident, ask a colleague who is competent in VoEAD to support you, remotely or face-to-face. If they support you remotely you both need to have a mobile phone with camera.

Q. Do I leave tubes or lines in when verifying death?

A. Cap off or turn off anything that is running, but leave tubes, lines, syringe drivers in place, whilst verifying death. These are to be removed at a different stage, when last offices are being done.

Q. How do I arrange the deactivation of implantable devices? Does it have to be cardiologist or can it be deactivated in house?

A. In the case of an implantable cardiac defibrillator(ICD), arrangements would normally be made to turn off the devise in advance of death, when the patient is entering the terminal phase. The advance conversation about this would have been had with the patient, their relatives and the local cardiology team. A cardiologist will be required to deactivate the device. If deactivation has not happened prior to death, the RN verifying death will need to set in motion the procedure for deactivation to be done after death. Pacemakers do not need to be deactivated. The RN verifying death will need to ensure the Funeral Director is made aware of any implantable devices. These need to be removed before cremation and in the current situation of Covid-19 this might not be possible which would mean cremation can- not take place.

Q. What is the required equipment for verifying death?

A. Required equipment is: a pen, a torch, a stethoscope, a watch with second hand, PPE.

For remote support, a mobile phone with camera will be required by both parties

Q. When verifying death of patients in their own home setting, how do I check patient identification?

A. Suggested ways would be to confirm identification with the relative or carer looking after the person and check against the District Nursing records kept in the home.

Training video; National Guidance and Competency document can be found:

<https://leedspalliativecare.org.uk/professionals/education-training/verification-of-expected-adult-death-training/>