

Improving the health of the people in our communities by providing quality, compassionate care to everyone, every time

# **Death Certificate Tips**

#### DO:

- Enter the <u>underlying</u> disease that caused death
- Only list things that actually contributed to the death
- Pay attention to "Due to" between lines in Box 36 Part I to form a logical sequence (A due to B due to C due to D)
- Enter the Manner of Death (Box 39)

### Examples

a) Atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease

- a) End Stage Renal DiseaseDue Tob) Diabetic nephropathy
- a) Cardiac tamponade
  Due To
  b) Hemopericardium
  Due to
  c) Ruptured myocardial infarction

## DO NOT:

- List nonspecific mechanisms like "shock", "sepsis", "cardiac arrest", "respiratory failure". Instead list the actual disease that caused such a mechanism.
- List random stuff in Box 36 Part I (it must form a logical sequence)
- Certify deaths from trauma (e.g. hip fractures) or toxicity (e.g. drug overdose) – call the Medical Examiner
- List ESRD or CHF without listing the disease that caused the organ to fail
- Use the term Intracranial hemorrhage. Rather, specify the type and etiology of the hemorrhage

#### **Red Flags:**

Stop to consider **NON-Natural** causes for any of the following:

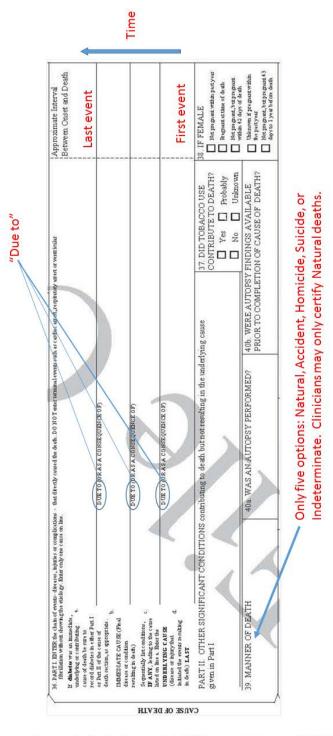
- Failure to thrive
- Sepsis
- Seizures
- Cerebral Palsy
- -plegia of any kind
- Brain/Intracranial bleeds
- Aspiration pneumonia
- Malnutrition
- Dehydration

Include the cause of any of these, as appropriate.

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