MANAGEMENT OF DEATH IN NURSE LED RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES

Hygienic preparation

- Embalming is not recommended
- If a COVID positive patient use IPC COVID guidelines and PPE
- Infection control procedures continued in handling the deceased person after death.
- Hygienic preparation includes washing of the face and hands, closing the mouth and eyes, tidying the hair and in some cases shaving the face.
- Washing or preparing the body is acceptable if those carrying out the task wear long-sleeved gowns, gloves, a surgical mask and eye protection (if there is a risk of splashing) which should then be discarded.

Transporting deceased body

- If moving the body with the care setting to the mortuary. The remains should be placed in a body bag prior to transportation to the mortuary as this facilitates lifting and further reduces the risk of infection. Await the funeral director if no body bag available in house.
- A face mask or similar should be placed over the mouth of the deceased before lifting the remains into the body bag.
- Those physically handling the body and placing the body into the bag should wear, at a minimum, the following PPE:
  - Gloves
  - Long sleeved gown
  - Surgical facemask
  - Play close attention to washing hands after removal of PPE

Mortuary Advice

- It would be acceptable to open the body bag for family viewing only.
- The family should be advised not to kiss the deceased and should clean their hands with alcohol hand rub or soap and water after touching the deceased.
- PPE is not required for transfer once the body has been placed in the coffin.
- Refer to the HPSC guidelines for funeral directors available here

Bereavement Supports

- The Irish Hospice Foundation provides information on bereavement and grieving in exceptional times available at:
- The Employee Assistance and Counselling Service” (EACS) is a national independent service that is available free of charge to all employees in HSE funded hospitals and community health organisations and divisions.

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