

To:	General Practices, After-Hours Centres, Emergency Departments, DHB clinicians and Aged Residential Care facilities in the greater Wellington and Wairarapa regions
From:	Dr Craig Thornley, Medical Officer of Health
Date:	7 April 2022
Title:	Public Health Advisory: Reporting COVID-related Deaths

Please distribute the following information to relevant staff in your organisation.

All public health alerts are available at www.rph.org.nz/publichealthalerts

Reporting of COVID-related Deaths

All COVID-related deaths are legally required¹ to be notified to the Medical Officer of Health, whether occurring in hospital or in the community. Notify COVID-related deaths using one of the following pathways:

- Phone **04 570 9267** (the standard disease notification RPH phone number). This number is available 24/7; a call-back service operates outside normal business hours.
- Complete and email the secure notification form. A template for the form accompanies this Advisory; for those who receive this Advisory by fax, the template can be downloaded at <https://www.rph.org.nz/health-professionals/coronavirus-covid-19/>.
 - To open the form and enter details, use the password **PublicHealth** (case sensitive).
 - Email the completed form to **RPHIMT_SPOC@huttvalleydhb.org.nz**, with the subject line CONFIDENTIAL. Do not include the password in the email.

The Ministry of Health defines a COVID-19 related death as a death meeting *any* of the following criteria:

- A person who dies within 28 days of testing positive for COVID-19
- A person for whom it is clear that COVID-19 is the cause of death (i.e. there are no underlying conditions that would account for death)
- A person who had (or who was subsequently found to have) COVID-19 when they died but their cause of death was clearly not COVID-19 related
- A person whose cause of death is still under investigation, e.g. it is being considered by the coroner, but the person was known to have had COVID-19 when they died

When reporting, please advise that the family/whānau have been informed of the death and that they understand that high level (non-identifying) details of the death will be released by the Ministry of Health: these details will be the age band, ethnicity, gender and DHB region.

¹ As per Health Act 1956