UW Medicine Autopsy & After Death Services (AADS)
COVID-19 Response

This policy is in addition to standard Postmortem protocols.

- All deaths in King County related to COVID-19 should be reported to the King County Medical Examiner (KCME). This is for confirmed positives and suspected positives. KCME phone number: 206.731.3232. KCME will give a KCME case # but will not be picking up the bodies.

- Do not offer/request autopsies on confirmed COVID-19 deaths. AADS will not perform autopsy examination on confirmed or suspected COVID-19 deaths.

- Attempt to obtain NP and/or OP swabs while patient admitted (prior to death) for COVID-19 testing whenever possible. Most decedents will have had antemortem testing. However, for a suspected/unconfirmed (not tested) COVID-19 death, AADS can perform a “swab only” autopsy. Using the standard autopsy consenting protocol and autopsy consent form, the provider should obtain consent from Legal Next of Kin noting restrictions “swab only exam.” NP and OP swabs will be obtained postmortem and submitted for testing at the UW Virology Lab. Unrestricted/standard autopsies will not be performed on these patients.

- Do not offer/allow viewings at this time on any patients at UWMC-MT or HMC.

- Families should be encouraged to choose a Funeral Home or Cremation Society as soon as possible. For UWMC-MT & HMC this information should be given to AADS. AADS phone number: 206.598.4205. AADS facilitates release of decedents to funeral homes and will communicate with them regarding COVID status.

- For all other non-COVID-19 related deaths, AADS will continue to perform routine autopsy examinations. At the time of autopsy, NP and/or OP swabs will be collected for COVID-19 screening on patients not previously tested (started 3.5.2020 by the approval of Dr. Staiger).

- Full PPE should be worn when wrapping a body (same as used when treating patient). Body should be double bagged per usual protocol. After patient has been placed in bags, wipe down outer bag with disinfectant wipes. At this point, contact precautions are sufficient. Once patient has been delivered to morgue, wipe down transport morgue cart with disinfectant wipes per usual protocol.

- Valley Medical Center & UWMC-NW should contact UWMC-MT AADS regarding requested autopsies per normal protocol.

Important Numbers

King County Medical Examiner 206.731.3232
Autopsy & After Death Services 206.598.4205
UWMC-MT & HMC

Autopsy & After Death Services Coordinator On-Call 206.598.4205
(24/7)
Through Hospital Paging
UWMC-MT: 206.598.6190
HMC: 206-744-3000