



COVID-19 Alert No. 5

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New Video Guidance for Certification of COVID-19 Deaths

To supplement the published guidance on filling out death certificates for deaths related to COVID-19, the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) has released a short video on the NCHS YouTube channel. The video runs a little over 3 minutes and can be accessed directly at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oL3VMwieAms>.

A link to the video will also be added to the NCHS Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Death Data and Reporting Guidance page at <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/covid-19.htm>

Updated COVID-19 Coding Rules

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) is updating how it will be coding the term “COVID” without an indication of the specific strain reported on the death certificate. Previously, “COVID” was treated as a generic abbreviation for Coronavirus Disease and was coded B34.2 (Coronavirus infection, unspecified site). Since NCHS’ original coding rules were issued, “COVID” has become an accepted shorthand for the more precise “COVID-19.” In response, to this change NCHS is changing its coding rules and will now be coding “COVID” to U07.1 (COVID-19). NCHS will also be reviewing and recoding as necessary all 2020 deaths previously coded B34.2.

Other more general terms (e.g. “Coronavirus”) without an indication of the specific strain will continue to be coded to B34.2. NCHS will query the jurisdiction about B34.2 deaths. If the jurisdiction indicates that COVID-19 caused or contributed to the death the coding will be changed to U07.1.

Steven Schwartz, PhD

Director – Division of Vital Statistics
National Center for Health Statistics
3311 Toledo Rd | Hyattsville, MD 20782