



WASHINGTON CHAPTER
ADVANCING EMERGENCY CARE

American College of
Emergency Physicians



WA-ACEP Policy

Electronic Death Registration System

Whereas patients occasionally die in Emergency Departments (EDs); and

Whereas many patients dying in EDs have a Primary Care Provider (PCP) who has cared for and is familiar with their medical history; and

Whereas ED providers may not always have the patient familiarity and/or knowledge and insight into the cause of death for a patient dying in the ED; and

Whereas ED providers will expedite the completion of a certificate of death for patients who die in the ED who do not have a PCP and when the cause of death is clearly evident.

Now therefore be it resolved that WA-ACEP supports focusing initial efforts on requests for death certificate signing to be sent to a patient's PCP if/when they exist. WA-ACEP supports ED providers signing death certificates for patients that have died in their ED and that have no local PCP, with the understanding that the cause of death will be described if/when it is obvious to the involved parties, and when not it will likely be identified as "undetermined natural causes" and/or a similar description.

Adopted the 20th day of November, 2013 by WA-ACEP Board of Directors.