**Need to Complete a Medical Certification of Death? Helpful Tools Below!**

This is the official **CDC handbook** (2003 is the most recent!)   Physicians’’ Handbook on Medical Certification of Death **https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/misc/hb\_cod.pdf**

 This is the link to the Maricopa website with more resources and CME info**.  Maricopa County Medical Certifier Resources**

**www.medicalcertifier.org**

**Pocket Reference Guide for Cause of Death Certification in Arizona**

**http://www.maricopa.gov/Publichealth/Programs/Vitals/MedCert/pdf/Training/COD-reference-guide.pdf**

**​**

**​**

**Tips from Dr. Hsu:**

**​**There are cases that the Medical Examiner is supposed to always sign

We did not realize that any traumatic event that leads to a patient’s death even many years later should be signed off my the ME office

So with Dr Stimson, near drowning victims who are on a ventilator for their entire lives and develop ventilator related pneumonia and die would have the certificate signed by the medical examiner’s office.   Also someone who fractured a leg and dies after with that as a possible contributing factor also should be signed by them.

 If we do not know the cause of death put Unknown on the first line and beneath that the potential contributors, such as hypertension and diabetes.  The recorder’s office may call us back but it is acceptable.

1. If a patient is 70 or older we don’t know the reason for death then we can write Natural causes, unspecified as the top reason
2. If a 69 year patient is found dead with no obvious reasons it may be reasonable to write Presumed Coronary Artery disease at the top
3. There are 2 separate offices that deal with death certificates, the Medical Examiner and Maricopa County Dept of Public Health
4. If there is any question we can always call the Medical Examiner at 602-506-1138
5. We can change what we write later upon further reflection by requesting a change form
6. What we put down on the form can cause unintended consequences(life insurance)