

Appendix 3 - Dealing with a Maternal Death that Occurs Suddenly and Unexpectedly within the Community Setting

The procedure to follow when dealing with a maternal death that occurs suddenly and unexpectedly within the community setting including a death that occurs within a Midwifery Led Unit (MLU).

Note: In those instances where a death has been expected / reported incidentally to the community midwife then the following guidance need not be followed but the Head of Midwifery should still be informed.

1. The operational lead midwife for community / midwifery manager on call will provide initial advice and guidance for managing the death and will support completion of the above checklist where relevant.
2. In the event that paramedics have been called and are unsuccessful in their attempts at resuscitation, the deceased should not be moved unless transfer to hospital of the woman is recommended by the paramedics. The police should be notified of the death and the area secured until they arrive. The woman's maternity records and any records completed by the midwife during the resuscitation should be secured.
3. Dependant on the situation an additional on-call midwife should be called to the incident and be allocated to care for the relatives and provide initial support and guidance.
4. If the cause of death is unknown, the GP on call at the time of death is responsible for reporting the death to the coroner. This contact number is available through the main hospital switchboard.