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Notice to the Profession

Changes in Expedited Death Response hours

May 23, 2020

The Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) and Chief Coroner for Ontario (OCC) are adjusting the hours of response to the Expedited Death Response (EDR) in hospitals and long-term care (LTC) facilities.

As of **Monday, May 25, 2020**, funeral homes will no longer be expected to attend at hospitals or LTC facilities after 8 p.m. to receive decedents into their care.

The OCC Team will be changing its hours of operation from 24 hours a day to 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week. In addition, the time frame for hospitals and LTC facilities to submit reports with funeral home information to the OCC Team will be changed from within one hour of death to within up to 12 hours. This will give both families and hospital staff more time to decide upon and contact a funeral home.

All other aspects of the EDR process remain the same.

What is changing:

1. The Office of the Chief Coroner (OCC) Team is operational from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week (formerly 24/7).
2. Communications to the OCC Team either by email to occteam@ontario.ca or voice mail at the toll free 1 (833) 915-0868 or Toronto 647-792-0440 will be promptly responded to during operating hours .

3. The time frame for families to select and contact a funeral home is being relaxed. While it is encouraged that this decision be made as soon as possible, families will have up to 12 hours of the death to decide (instead of within an hour of death).
4. Unless exceptional circumstances*, funeral homes will not be expected to attend the hospital after 8 p.m. (*You should discuss with your local LTC how you can assist them with deaths that may occur overnight in their facility.)

What is not changing:

- The EDR process, with exception of the time frames, remains the same.
- The OCC Team will still arrange for death certification once a funeral home is selected.
- The process of preparing the deceased for transfer remains the same.
- The process of releasing the deceased to the funeral home remains the same.

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