



**health**

Department:  
Health  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## **DIRECTOR-GENERAL: HEALTH**

**To: Medical Doctors/ Clinician and Funeral Undertakers**

### **TESTING OF ALL PERSONS PASSING ON AT HOME OR OUT OF A HEALTH FACILITY**

The Minister of Health in his media briefing held on the 5<sup>th</sup> August 2020 announced that “as part of improving the records of COVID-19 related deaths in response to reports on excess deaths, we now require that all the sudden deaths and those that occur at home must have specimens taken for COVID-19 before a death certificate is issued”.

All persons who die at home must be tested for SARS Cov-2 by a Medical Doctor/ Clinician. The Medical Doctor/ Clinician that certifies the death and fills in the DHA Form 1663 form must also take the above mentioned samples. Testing must be done before the human remain(s) are released to the funeral undertaker. The Medical Doctor/ Clinician must indicate on the DHA 1663 form that SARS Cov-2 samples have been taken. The sampling process should not interfere with prescribed time frames set for keeping human remains during the state of disaster period. If post-mortem testing is indicated, the clinician should always advise that the body must be managed as if it were COVID-19 positive.

The Department has taken several activities to assess whether the plateau that is observed in some provinces is due to reduced testing numbers or if indeed less people are becoming infected with Coronavirus.

It is critical that everyone dealing with death registration and confirmation assist the Department of Health to correctly record the cause of death by undertaking the testing as indicated above so that the country can have proper records.

**DR SSS BUTHELEZI**  
**DIRECTOR-GENERAL: HEALTH**  
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