Perinatal death reporting in Queensland

Fetal death

Signs of life detected at birth? (however brief)

No

Stillbirth

Birth weight ≥ 400g and birth ≥ 20 weeks

• Consider RBDM and PDCU reporting requirements

Discuss with Coroner if:

• There is doubt about presence of signs of life

In-utero death diagnosed AND
birth occurs at < 20 weeks
and/or birth weight < 400 g

Miscarriage

• Not registered with RBDM
• Not reportable to PDCU

In-utero death diagnosed at < 20 weeks
AND
birth occurs at ≥ 20 weeks*

Miscarriage

• Registration not required
with RBDM
• Report to PDCU

In-utero death diagnosed AND
birth occurs at ≥ 20 weeks
and/or birth weight ≥ 400 g

Stillbirth

• Register with RBDM
• Report to PDCU

Yes

Signs of life:

• Beating of the heart or
• Pulsation of the umbilical cord or
• Definite movement of voluntary muscles (chest wall)

Neonatal Death

All gestations and birth weight

• Cause of death certification (Form 9) required

Discuss with Coroner if:

• Death is unexpected outcome of healthcare or
• Cause of death cannot be certified

• Burial/cremation not required
• Parents may wish to make memorial arrangements
• Consider provision of local memory certificates
• Parents may apply for an Early Pregnancy Loss certificate from RBDM

• Burial/cremation required

Undertake clinical review or RCA (as indicated) for stillbirths:

• Unexpected without known major congenital anomalies and > 28 weeks
• All stillbirths after 36 weeks gestation
• Unexpected intrapartum event and > 24 weeks
• Other maternal, family or clinician concern about clinical decisions

*Apply clinical judgment when it is not known whether intrauterine fetal death occurred before or after 20 weeks gestation. Delivery of acardiac twin or of a fetus papyraceous when the timing of intra-uterine demise is uncertain or extraction of a dead fetus at maternal autopsy are situations undefined in the legislation. In the absence of a clear legal path it is optional to notify RBDM but it is a requirement to report to PDCU.

RBDM: The funeral director will submit the Death Registration Application (Form 8) electronically after a Cause of Death Certificate (Form 9) and Perinatal Supplement (Form 9a) have been issued or a coronial autopsy has been performed. Parents experiencing a miscarriage may apply for an Early Pregnancy Loss Recognition Certificate.

PDCU: Notification is by maternity staff electronically or using Perinatal Data Collection Form (MR63D)

Queensland Clinical Guidelines: Stillbirth, Flowchart version: F18.24-3-V6-R23

Abbreviations: ≥: greater than or equal to; RBDM: Registrar of Births Deaths and Marriages; RCA: Root cause analysis;
PDCU: Perinatal Data Collection Unit