

UK Organization to Audit COVID-19 Deaths for Any Misattribution



The [COVID-19 Assembly](#), an organization in the United Kingdom, recently announced that it is gathering a team of experts to investigate all of the COVID-19 deaths in the country to ascertain if any may have been wrongly attributed.

With over 126,000 deaths in the United Kingdom and over a year into the pandemic, there is still confusion over whether people died of the disease or with the disease. Those concerned with COVID-19 deaths being unduly inflated argue there needs to be a differentiation between the two in determining the actual fatality rate of the CCP virus.

The [CCP \(Chinese Communist Party\) virus](#), also known as the novel coronavirus, causes the disease COVID-19.

The COVID-19 Assembly says there is "increasing speculation that the

official number of Covid deaths may be incorrect" as a result of how these deaths are defined and with the removal of existing procedures to registering deaths.

The UK government made changes to how deaths are certified and who may complete and sign a death certificate during the pandemic in passing the [Coronavirus Act 2020](#) in March of last year.

Prior to the pandemic, in England and Wales, a death that was due to a notifiable disease such as COVID-19 required an inquest to be held before officially registering it.

A notifiable disease is any infectious disease that must be reported to a health authority or the government.

After the act became law, an inquest by a coroner was no longer required when it was suspected that a death was caused by COVID-19.

"The Bill will modify the current legislation to disapply the requirement that coroners must conduct any inquest with a jury where they have reason to suspect the death caused by COVID-19," the explanatory notes ([pdf](#)) related to the act explained.

In addition, the act allows a doctor who has never seen the deceased to certify the cause of death on the death certificate.

"If it is impractical for the doctor, or if they are unable to do so another doctor can state the cause of death to the best of their knowledge and belief and this certificate can be delivered to the Registrar to enable the death to be registered. Paragraph 4 also allows a doctor to sign the MCCD [medical certificate of cause of death] of a deceased person who was not attended personally during their last illness by a doctor, if the doctor can state cause of death to the best of their knowledge and belief."

The COVID-19 Assembly says deaths used to be registered only after an

attending physician submitted a completed death certificate to the “local medical examiner who would scrutinize it and discuss the death with a family representative” for any concerns. And if none, “the examiner and the representative would sign the death certificate and the death would be officially registered.”

The COVID-19 Assembly was founded in September 2020 and the “COVID Deaths Audit will be overseen by pathologist Dr. Clare Craig and will involve a team of experienced researchers, health professionals, statisticians, data analysts and legal experts.”



A member of the public is swabbed at a drive-through CCP virus testing site in Wolverhampton, England on March 12, 2020. (Photo by Christopher Furlong/Getty Images)

Definition of COVID-19 Death

The Public Health England—a government agency responsible for promoting healthy living and protecting the public from disease and other

environmental health hazards—defined a COVID-19 death as:

“1) A death in a person with a laboratory-confirmed positive COVID-19 and either:

died within (equal to or less than) 60 days of the first specimen date
or

died more than 60 days after the first specimen date, only if COVID-19 is mentioned on the death certificate

2) A death in a person with a laboratory-confirmed positive COVID-19 test and died within (equal to or less than) 28 days of the first positive specimen date.”

While the Office of National Statistics tasked with collecting and publishing statistics on COVID-19 deaths in England “includes all deaths where COVID-19 is recorded on the death certificate, regardless of whether a laboratory result is available or not.”

Public Health England came under fire last summer after it made changes to how it counted fatalities, as concerns that its initial method was overstating them. The health agency changed a COVID-19 death from all deaths after a positive test to deaths within 28 days after a positive test.

Before the change was made, anyone who tested positive to COVID-19, recovered, and later died of a different illness would still be counted as a COVID-19 death. This led to claims that England’s COVID-19 deaths may have included individuals who had died of other causes and prompted Health Minister Matt Hancock to order “a review into how England” reported CCP virus deaths in July 2020, according to [Reuters](#).

Then in August, Hancock announced that the government health agency would be scrapped and replaced by a new body called the National Institute for Health Protection by merging the Public Health England with the National Health Service Test and Trace.

Concerns with CDC Guidance on Completing Death Certificates



The Center for Disease Control (CDC) headquarter is seen in Atlanta, Georgia on April 23, 2020. (Tami Chappell/Getty Images)

Early in the pandemic, a [Minnesota doctor](#) who is also a state Senator raised concerns that the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) guideline on completing COVID-19 death certificates may influence medical certifiers to attribute many deaths to the disease and thus inflate the number of deaths.

But some health experts say that COVID-19 deaths are likely under-reported as there were not enough tests to confirm deaths that occurred outside the hospital setting early in the pandemic.

A "presumed" COVID-19 death could be counted as part of the death toll without confirmation with a laboratory test.

"In cases where a definite diagnosis of COVID-19 cannot be made, but it

is suspected or likely (e.g., the circumstances are compelling within a reasonable degree of certainty), it is acceptable to report COVID-19 on a death certificate as 'probable' or 'presumed,'" according to the guidance ([pdf](#)).

The same doctor [alleged](#) that the COVID-19 deaths in the midwest state may have been inflated by 40 percent after he and his colleague at the state Senate reviewed 2,800 death certificates. They called for an audit of all COVID-19 death certificates in December 2020.

Officials at the Minnesota Department of Health said they are following the CDC's guideline on "how we are doing our death reporting from COVID-19" and said the allegation that car crash victims being counted as a COVID-19 death is false, [FOX9 News](#) reported.

In the United States, the attending physician is responsible for reporting the cause of death on the death certificate. However, if an "inquiry is required by a State Post-Mortem Examinations Act," the medical examiner or coroner will make that determination, as stated in the Physician's Handbook on Medical Certification of Death ([pdf](#)).

How medical examiners should respond to COVID-19, the National Association of Medical Examiners said it would not offer set guidance since the United States has no "uniform death investigation system" but instead have varieties of systems that are "governed by varying state laws."

The association also said that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) "now recommends that COVID-19 deaths not be autopsied."

OSHA didn't respond to a request from The Epoch Times for clarification on its recommendation.

“Autopsies will be performed when needed for legal purposes or when the cause of death cannot be determined by testing for COVID-19 alone,” the association said.

As of publishing time, the United States had over 545,000 deaths and more than 30 million COVID-19 cases. The CDC reports both probable and confirmed deaths and cases.

Republican Launches Primary Campaign Against Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp