

CLASSIFICATION OF COVID-19 DEATH FOR NATIONAL COVID-19 DEATH STATISTICS MINISTRY OF HEALTH MALAYSIA (Updated on 14 March 2022)

1. Introduction

The first case of COVID-19 death in Malaysia was recorded on 17 March 2020. At that time, the criteria used for COVID-19 deaths that were announced at the national level and being included in the National COVID-19 Death Statistics was the death of a person with laboratory confirmation (i.e. RT-PCR) of COVID-19 infection, irrespective of clinical signs and symptoms.

Effective November 1, 2020, in line with the COVID-19 Death Classification Guidelines issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) on April 16, 2020, COVID-19 deaths in Malaysia are classified as "Death Due to COVID-19" or "Death with COVID-19".¹

2. Purpose

Accurate classification of COVID-19 death is important to ensure that COVID-19 death statistics in Malaysia comply with WHO Guidelines as applied by other countries internationally.

The criteria for the classification of COVID-19 death have been developed and established as a result of discussions and consensuses from Infectious Diseases Specialists and Forensic Specialists in the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) together with the National Committee of COVID-19 Mortality Review.²

3. Definition of Term

3.1 Inpatient

- Refers to a patient who stays in hospital while under treatment or reaches the hospital alive

3.2 Brought-in-dead (BID)

- Refers to a patient who was brought into hospital without any recordable vital signs suggesting life as verified by the attending physician

4. Classification of "Death Due to COVID-19"**4.1 Criteria for Inpatient:**

- 4.1.1 COVID-19 positive case that has been confirmed through laboratory tests (RTPCR/ RTK/ confirmatory test which has been recognized by the State);
- 4.1.2 Death resulting from clinically compatible disease;
- 4.1.3 No clear alternative cause of death that is not related to COVID-19 infection (examples: death due to trauma, road traffic accident, suicide, etc.);
- 4.1.4 No period of complete recovery from COVID-19 between illness and death;
- 4.1.5 Even with pre-existing disease (e.g., cancer), it is death due to COVID-19 if the reason for the severe course is due to COVID-19 infection; and
- 4.1.6 Death of a positive case within 30 days from a positive result.

4.2 Criteria for Brought-in-dead (BID):

- 4.2.1 If a postmortem is conducted, the classification of COVID-19 death shall be in accordance with the autopsy death report (Gold Standard).
- 4.2.2 If the autopsy is not performed, death due to COVID-19 must meet the following criteria:
 - a. COVID-19 positive case that has been confirmed through laboratory test (RTPCR/ Gene Expert/ confirmatory test which has been recognized by the State) with CT value (if the CT value is available);
 - b. Has an epidemiological chain (according to the Epidemiology Link criteria for COVID-19 cases);
 - c. Supportive Clinical History (if available);
 - d. Supportive radiological investigation (where applicable) (examples: chest x-ray, postmortem CT scan, etc.), which shows signs of COVID-19 infection (reported by qualified personnel) can be used depending on the local and current situations; and
 - e. Death of a positive case within 30 days from a positive result.

5. Classification of "Death with COVID-19"

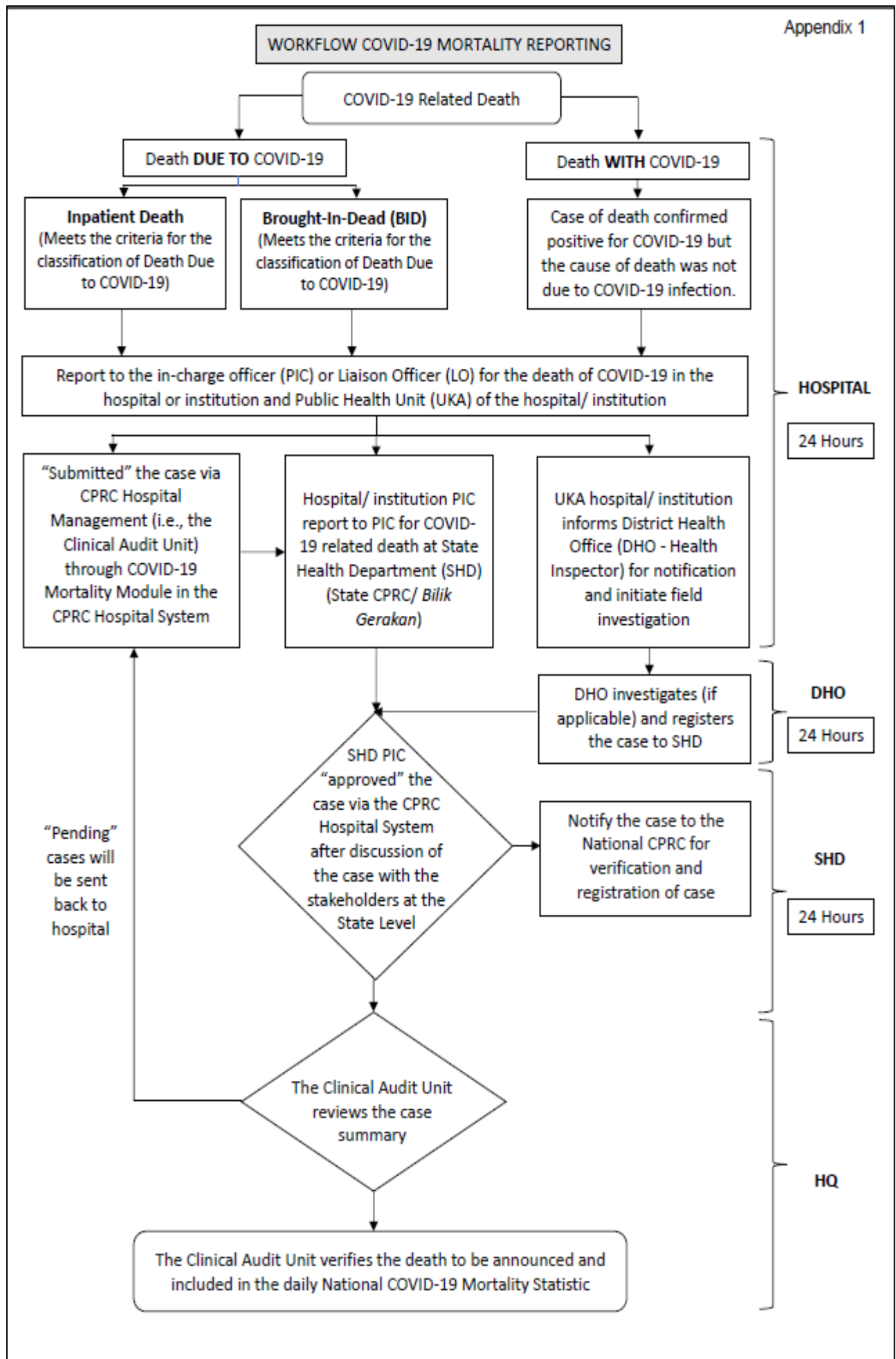
COVID-19 related death that does NOT meet the criteria in paragraph 4 would be classified as "Death with COVID-19" instead of "Death Due to COVID-19". These deaths are NOT included in the National COVID-19 Mortality Statistics.

5. Management and Reporting of COVID-19 Related Death

Management of COVID-19 Related Death at Public Hospitals is shown in Appendix 1, whereas the Management of COVID-19 Related Death at The Private Healthcare Facility is as in Appendix 2.

References:

1. Guidelines for Certification and Classification (Coding) of Covid-19 as Cause of Death, World Health Organization (WHO), April 2020.
2. *Pindaan Kriteria Klasifikasi Kematian COVID-19 (Death Due to COVID-19) Serta Pelaporan Kematian Berkaitan COVID-19 Bagi Fasiliti Kesihatan Rawatan COVID-19 di Malaysia; ruj: KKM.600-29/4/156 (1), 11 Mac 2022.*



**MANAGEMENT OF COVID-19 RELATED DEATH
AT THE PRIVATE HEALTHCARE FACILITY**

Appendix 2

