Date

Dear Colleagues

**Managing End of Life and Death during the Covid 19 Outbreak**

These are difficult times. All the staff at XXXXX Practice are working hard to support you and your clients.

The Government has enacted some emergency legislation and our Coroner in Kent has issued guidance about the interpreting of the existing rules.

It is not necessary for all end of life patients to be seen regularly. The Coroner has agreed that telephone or video consultations in the last 14 days of life can provide the information to provide a Medical Certificate of the Confirmation of Death (Death Certificate).

There is no legal requirement for a medically qualified person to pronounce life extinct. In order to reduce the risks to Doctors and Nurses can you consider making it your policy in expected deaths for a senior member of staff to determine that your client has passed on. This can be done by watching for 5 minutes and noting that no breaths are taken. There being no pulse in the neck (Carotid). If you can please shine a light in the eyes to see if there is a change in the size of the pupil. After death the pupils grow larger and do not change with light. This only applies to expected deaths.

Can you then inform us in the surgery (or ring the out of hours doctors) before you to instruct an undertaker. We will arrange for a death certificate to be completed.

The new rules allow for the death to be registered by a variety of people. This is normally a relative but could now be an undertaker or a member of your staff.

COVID-19 is accepted as a cause on a death certificate. Some of these deaths may occur in care homes.

By working together we hope to do the best we can for all our patients. Thank you for your co-operation.

Stay healthy

On behalf of XXXX practice