



**Yukon
Coroner's
Service**

Fact Sheet Medical Practitioners

The updated *Coroners Act* has resulted in changes that will effect medical practitioners. Duty to report requirements as well as investigatory powers for nurses have been updated to reflect best practices across Canadian jurisdictions.

Duty to Report

If a person appears to have died under the following circumstances, the chief coroner, an investigating coroner or a peace officer must be notified:

- as a result of violence, negligence, malpractice, misconduct or an accident;
- as a result of self-inflicted injury;
- suddenly and unexpectedly when the person appeared to be in good health;
- from a cause other than disease or sickness;
- from disease or sickness that was not being treated by a medical practitioner;
- in circumstances following which the body is not available; or
- any other circumstances that warrant an investigation.

This notification must happen as soon as the individual has reason to believe that the death happened in the Yukon.

Child Deaths Duty to Report

Medical practitioners and nurses must now notify the chief coroner of the death of a child in the following circumstances:

- where the medical practitioner or nurse was last in attendance during the last illness of the child; or
- if the death occurs without the attendance of a medical practitioner or nurse, where the medical practitioner or nurse examines the body of the child.

① See sections 13 to 16 of the *Coroners Act* and section 4 of the *Coroners Act* regulations for further information on reporting duties.

Investigatory Powers for Nurses

The chief coroner or an investigating coroner may now give nurses the powers of an investigating coroner under subsection 29 (3) of the Act and section 5 of the regulations.

This would only occur in very rare circumstances, and allows a nurse who has been delegated investigatory power to:

- enter and inspect a place where the investigating coroner believes there is a body or from where a body was removed;
- enter and inspect a place where the nurse believes the deceased was before their death; or;
- seize anything the investigating coroner believes is relevant to the investigation.



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