


**GUAM MEMORIAL HOSPITAL AUTHORITY
ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL**

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| APPROVED BY:  Peter John D. Camacho, MPH Hospital Administrator/CEO | RESPONSIBILITY: Medical Staff | EFFECTIVE DATE: April 12, 2018 | POLICY NO.: A-MS600 | PAGE: 1 of 2 |
| TITLE: DETERMINATION OF DEATH | | | | |
| LAST REVIEWED/REVISED: 09/2017 | | | | |
| ENDORSED: MEC 09/2017, EMC 10/2017, JCPAC 12/2017, BOT 03/2018 | | | | |

PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for the determination of death.

POLICY

I. DEFINITION OF DEATH

Death may be declared in an individual who has sustained either:

- irreversible cessation of circulatory and respiratory functions; or
- irreversible cessation of all functions of the entire brain including the brainstem; or
- the essential requirements of this definition, whether applied to the cardiorespiratory system or brain, are both cessation of function and irreversibility.

II. DETERMINATION OF DEATH

- A. A person may be pronounced dead by a physician who determines that there is irreversible cessation of circulatory and respiratory functions.
- B. A person may be also determined dead if it is determined that there is irreversible cessation of all functions of the entire brain including the brainstem by an attending physician and confirmed independently by a consulting physician.
- C. If it is determined by the Subcommittee the original report does not contain credible evidence of impairment, the Subcommittee may dismiss the complaint.

III. NEUROLOGICAL CRITERIA FOR THE ESTABLISHING DEATH – CESSATION OF BRAIN FUNCTION:

The following clinical conditions must be met:

- Cerebral function must be absent;
- brainstem functions must be absent.

IV. IRREVERSIBILITY OF LOSS OF BRAIN FUNCTION

- A. The cause of coma should be established and sufficient to account for the loss of brain function. Examples might include documented structural disease (massive intracranial hemorrhage or head trauma), or an irreversible systemic metabolic cause, such as, severe anoxia resulting from cardiopulmonary arrest.
- B. Reversible condition (specifically hypothermia, [core temperatures less than 32°C] and drug intoxication must be excluded. If sufficient cause for coma cannot be established, excluding these reversible conditions, further laboratory testing for drug intoxication may be required as well as a more extended period of observation.
- C. Loss of all brain function should persist for a period of twenty-four (24) hours.
- D. An EEG confirmation of neocortical death is optional.

REFERENCE:

Policy No. 6301-II E-5, Pronouncement of Death by Registered Nurse, of the Nursing Services Manual made effective September 28, 2012.

RESCISSION:

Policy No. 6170-1, Determination of Death, of the GMHA Administrative Manual made effective June 17, 1992.