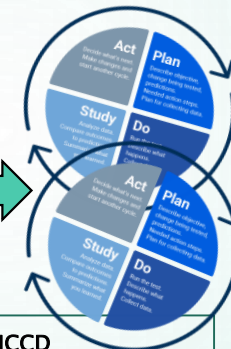


INTRODUCTION

Delays in the completion of Medical certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) can cause distress for the bereaved family, often delaying registration, funeral arrangements and legal processes. Death in Scotland should be registered within 8 days¹ from date of death. This Quality Improvement Project aimed to reduce delays incurred in the completion and issue of Medical Certification of Death in Ward 102 at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.



METHODS

Data collected for time of death to time of MCCD completion in patient death referred for Procurator fiscal (PF) review and Non-Procurator fiscal (non-PF) requirement, provided a baseline timeline for improvement.

Process mapping identified tracking, communication and documentation after death as improvement focus areas. Two Interventions were tested using the Model for Improvement

- PSDA 1 – Introduction of a process after death tracker
- PSDA 2 – Development of Step-by-Step guide and prompt for MDT daily huddle

RESULTS

Fig 1. Non-PF cases: Time between death & MCCD (hours) Nov 2024 – April 2025

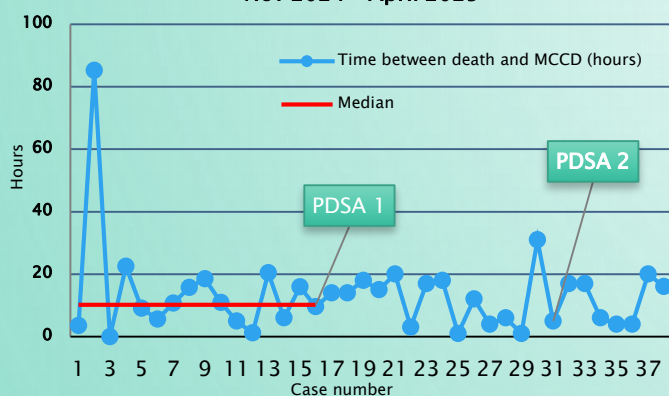


Fig 2. PF cases: Time between death & MCCD (Nov 2024 – April 2025)

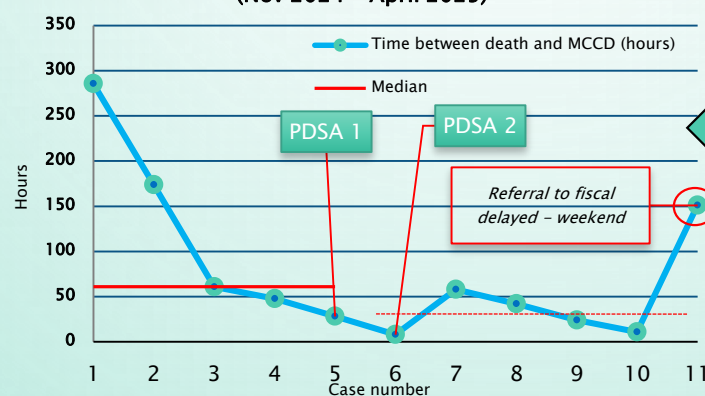


Fig 3. Documentation of cause of death on Trakcare % (20th Nov 2024 – 3rd April 2025)

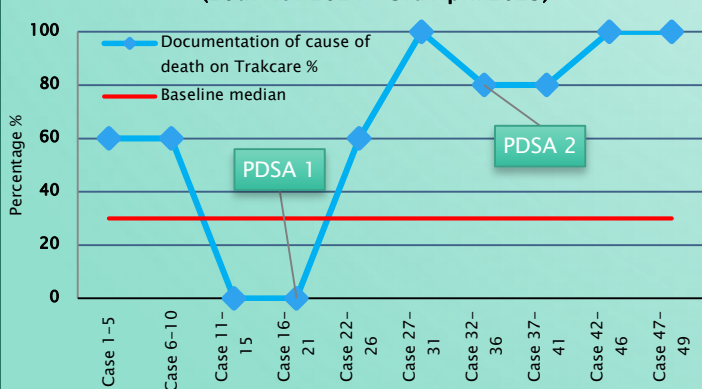
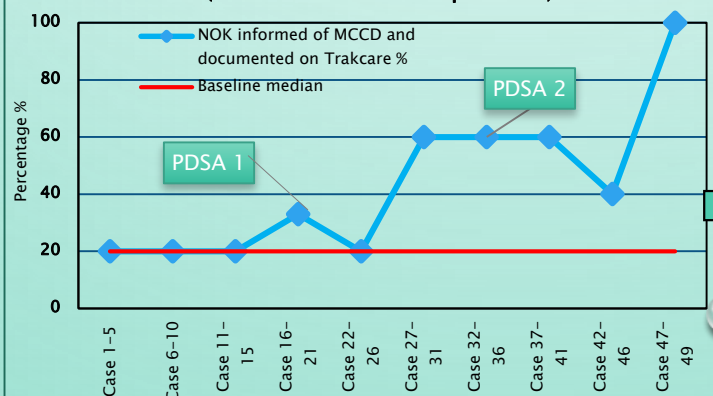


Fig 4. NOK informed of MCCD & documented on Trakcare % (20th Nov 2024 – 3rd April 2025)

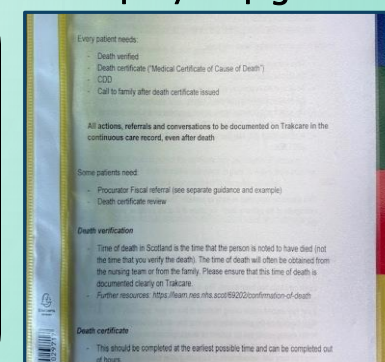


1. Process After death tracker

POST DEATH PROCESS TRACKER									
Date	Name	CHI	Cons	PF Date	PF Result	MCCD	CCD	Family Updated Death	Notes

All post-death actions are to be documented on TRAK care continuous care record. If certificate needs re-issued for any reason, please re-enter details above.

2. Step-by-Step guide



CONCLUSION

Using our **After death tracker** and **step by step guide** the geriatric medical team have reduced delays in completing the MCCD, updating electronic patient records and improved communications relating to post death processes with the deceased's next of kin.

- The median time taken to certify death in cases referred to the PF has reduced by 28hrs from the baseline median (Fig 2.)
- Qualitative feedback of staff used in our word cloud, echoes improvements to communications & processes, enhancing patient, carer and staff experience.



¹ NHS Education Scotland. Registration of Death. Accessed 23 Sept 2025. URL: <https://www.sad.scot.nhs.uk/after-death/registration-of-death-and-advance-registration-of-death/>
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