



**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services**

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Michael F. Easley, Governor
Dempsey Benton, Secretary

Michael Moseley, Director

September 20, 2007

TO: LME Directors
LME QA/QI Directors

FROM: Mike Moseley

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Moseley".

RE: Change in the DHHS Incident and Death Reporting Process Regarding Deaths
Due to Unknown Causes

After review, the Division has found that many consumer deaths reported as due to unknown causes are, in fact, accidental deaths or suicides and need to be treated as Level III incidents. Reporting deaths from unknown causes as Level II incidents does not prompt the necessary review or follow-up that is warranted in such instances. To ensure prompt local and state attention to these serious events, the Division is changing the policy regarding response to deaths from unknown causes.

Effective October 1, 2007, all MH/DD/SAS consumer deaths from Unknown Causes are to be considered and processed as Level III incidents. These Level III incidents shall be reported to the home and host LME(s) and to the Division's Quality Management Team. Level III deaths from Unknown Causes are not to be reported to the Division of Health Service Regulation (formerly the Division of Facility Services).

Any documentation, such as a Medical Examiner's report, autopsy report, death certificate, or police report, that may shed light on the cause or circumstances of a death that comes in after an incident has been reported shall be submitted to the host LME and the Division's Quality Management Team upon receipt. If this documentation indicates that the death is not a Level III incident, the provider shall notify the host LME and Division's Quality Management Team through an amended incident report (*DHHS Incident and Death Report*, Form QM 02 Effective October, 2004-Rev. 03/08/06).

If you have any questions, please contact the Quality Management Team at 919-733-0696 or at contactdmhquality@ncmail.net.

cc: Secretary Dempsey Benton
Dan Stewart
Executive Leadership Team
Management Leadership Team
State Facility Directors
Yvonne Copeland
Patrice Roesler
MH Commission Chair
The Coalition Chair
SCFAC Chair

Sharnese Ransome
Kory Goldsmith
Andrea Poole
Kaye Holder
Debbie Crane
Mark Van Sciver
Brad Deen
Stephanie Alexander
LME Incident Coordinators

