

NOSOLOGY (Cause of Death information)

It is **very important** that the cause of death be listed in **sequential order** in the "due to" position with the underlying cause listed on the last line used in item 27a.

The **interval (approximate, between onset and death)** is also important. Since this calls for the best estimate of an approximate time interval by the certifier, there is seldom any reason it should not be completed. It is important in selecting the appropriate underlying cause of death.

EXAMPLES:

**Grand mal seizure
Second degree suffocation**

This entry is obviously reversed and the correct underlying cause is the grand mal seizure. However, some causes can be reversed and still make sense; if intervals are given, we can adjust for that in coding, otherwise, the wrong cause of death is coded.

FOR INSTANCE:

The following example is reported in reverse order, but since intervals are given, it can still be coded correctly.

**Arteriosclerosis 20 years
Hypertension 10 years**

From the positioning alone (without intervals indicated), **hypertension** would have been selected as the **underlying cause of death**. In this instance, **either condition could cause the other condition**, so the intervals are very important.

GENERAL

There may be some confusion about item #23 Time of Death. Some may be using this as the time **pronounced** dead because the following item #24 is Date Pronounced Dead. But item #23 is the actual time of death as closely as possible.