

Death Registration and Notification Initiatives

Death Notification Community of Practice

August 2021

1. Introduction

This evergreen document is a tool for participants in the Death Notification Community of Practice to share information on initiatives and changes related to Death Registration and Notification. Participants will be invited to update the document on a regular basis, and it can be used to debrief management teams as well as Joint Councils, as needed.

As a priority of the Joint Councils, improving death registration and notification (DRN) is predominately supported by the Death Notification Community of Practice (DNCoP), comprised of representatives from provincial and territorial Vital Statistics Agencies and implicated federal departments and agencies.

The Joint Council's Death Notification Community of Practice, which evolved from the Death Notification Working Group, is an information-sharing forum that provides an opportunity for multiple jurisdictions to discuss and exchange information in support of the development and continuous improvement of death registration and notification in Canada. As a Community of Practice, it enables collaboration, innovation and strategic alignment while allowing flexibility.

2. Action Items:

1. The Death Notification Community of Practice will report back at a future meeting on the work/pilots that the federal and provincial partners are undertaking on death notification (Item #2B, from June 22, 2020 Joint Council Meeting): *Evergreen document on death registration and notification initiatives.*
2. Vital Statistics Agencies will undertake an environmental scan to analyse the electronic data exchanges between provinces and territories, starting with current practices to exchange death data. *A sub-working group of the DNCoP will be established.*
3. A federal environmental scan of the business needs related to death data will identify potential death data consumers and their needs, use cases, standards and considerations to support the prioritization and development of future initiatives. *The federal engagement strategy is being finalized for distribution of the questionnaire.*

3. Ongoing Initiatives

3.1. Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)

Key Contact: Bill Danielsen

3.1.1. National Routing System (NRS) – Expansion and Improvements			
Description	ESDC establishes agreements and point-to-point connections with Vital Statistics Agencies to receive death notices and validate birth certificate information.		
Expected Outcomes	ESDC receives death notices and validates birth certificate information for certain SIN-enabled programs.		
Current Status	Service Canada is connected with all provincial VSAs and advancing work to connect with NT. ESDC does not receive death data from YT, NT, and NU due to legislative restrictions.		
Start Date		Planned End Date	N/A

3.1.2. Funding for Electronic Death Registration Initiatives			
Description	ESDC has secured funding for three years (FY 2020-2023) to support the Vital Statistics Agencies in the implementation of electronic death registration (EDR).		
Expected Outcomes	Improving the timeliness and accuracy of death registration will benefit all stakeholders receiving death notices for the administration of benefits and services.		
Current Status	<p>ESDC is currently working with all provinces except MB toward the implementation of EDR through a number of bilateral and multilateral partnerships, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NL is leading the full implementation of EDR – to be completed by end of FY 2021-22. - QC is developing a pilot project by the end of October 2021, with the goal to full implementation by the end of December 2021. - ON is developing an MVP by the end of March 2022, with the goal to fully implementing EDR by 2023. - SK, NB, NS, and PE are collaborating to complete the planning, analysis, and conceptual design phases of EDR. It is expected that each province will complete this work to have a work plan, costs, and timeline for implementation by December 10, 2021. - In addition to working with the consortium, NB is also expected to fully implement EDR with its funeral home directors by February 10, 2022. <p>MB and the Territories have been engaged to assess their readiness to implement EDR. ISAs are required with all the Territories before EDR can be funded.</p>		
Start Date	FY 2020-21	Planned End Date	FY 2022-23

3.2. Statistics Canada (StatCan)

Key Contact: Valérie Gaston

3.2.1. National Routing System (NRS) – Expansion and Improvements			
Description	Statistics Canada establishes agreements and point-to-point connections with Vital Statistics Agencies to receive death notices.		
Expected Outcomes	Statistics Canada receives death notices.		
Current Status	Statistics Canada is connected with all provincial VSAs and is advancing work to connect with the territories.		
Start Date		Planned End Date	N/A

3.2.2. Identification of simple data entry errors during electronic death registration			
Description	Statistics Canada has leveraged work by the United States to identify simple data entry errors when medical practitioners complete electronic registration.		
Expected Outcomes	Improve data accuracy, simplify and facilitate the process for data correction, ultimately improving the timeliness and accuracy of death data received by StatCan.		
Current Status			
Start Date		Planned End Date	N/A

3.3. Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)

Key Contact: Peter Murphy

3.3.1. National Routing System (NRS) – Expansion and Improvements			
Description	CRA has agreements and point-to-point connections with most of the provincial/territorial VSAs and is working to onboard them all.		
Expected Outcomes	CRA receives death notices from provincial/territorial Vital Statistics Agencies.		
Current Status	CRA receives death data from all provinces and territories except SK, YT and NU. MOU with SK excluded death data; CRA and SK are working towards an update. YT and NU have legislative restrictions.		
Start Date	To be provided by CRA	Planned End Date	N/A

3.4. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

Key Contact: Natalie Tarkpea

3.4.1 Identity Linkages Project			
Description	IRCC is establishing agreements and connectivity with Vital Statistics Agencies via the Government of Canada Service Bus, operated by Public Service and Procurement Canada to receive death notices and validate birth certificate information.		
Expected Outcomes	Improves program integrity by facilitating the detection of the use of altered, counterfeit, lost or stolen birth certificates, as well as the assumption of a deceased identity.		
Current Status	IRCC is planning to launch the exchanges with the first province, Alberta, in late 2021.		
Start Date	Planned for late 2021	Planned End Date	N/A

3.5. Newfoundland and Labrador (NL)

Key Contact: Christine Martin

3.5.1. Electronic Death Registration			
Description	The project is expected to be completed February 2022, and will enable NL to share death data, with an objective of sharing 90% of death notification records within 15 calendar days. Receiving timely and accurate death information is essential to prevent overpayment of benefits, reduce opportunities for fraud, and improve service delivery.		
Expected Outcomes	Improved timeliness and accuracy of death data registration in NL.		
Current Status	The project continues to track under budget and within scope. The vendor is complying with revised schedule and remains on track for August configuration. The majority of work has been completed for the STATCAN interface. Work started now on the interface development with the Health NL.		
Start Date	June 2020	Planned End Date	February 2022

3.6 Prince Edward Island (PE)

Key Contact: Jo-Anne Larsen

3.6.1 Electronic Death Registration			
Description	PEI is working with consortium of Vitalware (Axiell) (SK, NB, NS) towards common goal of electronic death registration.		
Expected Outcomes	Improved timeliness and accuracy of death data registration in PEI.		
Current Status	PEI is in the planning and design phase, and has had two very successful meetings with medical practitioners/coroners and the funeral directors to identify/confirm current state and develop a gap analysis. Both groups are currently reviewing the compilation of current state and desired future state and follow up meetings are to be scheduled by the end of August.		
Start Date		Planned End Date	

3.7 Nova Scotia (NS)

Key Contact: Krista Dewey

3.7.1 Electronic Death Registration			
Description	NS working with consortium of Vitalware (Axiell) towards common goal of electronic death registration.		
Expected Outcomes	Improved timeliness and accuracy of death data registration in NS.		
Current Status	NS has made great progress looking at the current state, identifying pain points and opportunities. E.g. bundling electronic notices for so that client could self-identify to push death data to different places to notify of death and apply for survivor benefits.		
Start Date		Planned End Date	N/A

3.8 New Brunswick (NB)

Key Contact: Sterling Brown

3.8.1 Electronic Death Registration			
Description	NB working with consortium of Vitalware (Axiell) towards common goal of electronic death registration. NB had started a two phase EDR project prior to the Service Canada initiative. The first phase is with the funeral directors and second with the medical practitioners.		
Expected Outcomes	Improved timeliness and accuracy of death data registration in NB.		
Current Status	NB has had workshops with funeral directors and they started meeting with medical practitioners (plan to be done by October 31, 2021). Axiell is currently working on sprint 3 of 8 in the application development for first phase with the funeral directors. NB plans to complete the second phase with medical practitioners as soon as possible after the first phase is implemented.		
Start Date		Planned End Date	N/A

3.9 Québec (QC)

Key Contact: Jonathan Boisvert

3.9.1 Electronic Death Registration			
Description			
Expected Outcomes	Improved timeliness and accuracy of death data registration in QC.		
Current Status	Quebec received federal funds.		
Start Date	Expected to launch end of October 2021	Planned End Date	N/A

3.10 Ontario (ON)

Key Contact: Alexandra Schmidt

3.10.1 Electronic Death Registration			
Description	ON plans to pilot with a small number of hospitals and funeral homes in the first year. (Death certificates will be completed, signed and sent electronically but then have to be manually entered in their system.) The aim is to have a full end-to-end electronic process available across the province the following year.		
Expected Outcomes	Improved timeliness and accuracy of death data registration in ON.		
Current Status			
Start Date		Planned End Date	Minimum viable product by December 31, 2021

3.11 Manitoba (MB)

Key Contact: Pam Lorentz

3.11.1 TBD			
Description			
Expected Outcomes			
Current Status			
Start Date		Planned End Date	

3.12 Saskatchewan (SK)

Key Contact: Charene Kozak

3.12.1 Electronic Death Registration			
Description	SK working with consortium of Vitalware (Axiell) towards common goal of electronic death registration. Legal changes are required for SK to share death data with each new department, e.g. CRA.		
Expected Outcomes	Improved timeliness and accuracy of death data registration in SK and notification to eligible federal partners.		
Current Status	Phase I: SK has mapped out current state and desired future state with stakeholders and is developing a project plan to achieve the future state. Phase II: Design/develop/implement project plan.		
Start Date	Phase I: Spring 2021 Phase II: Late 2021/early 2022	Planned End Date	Phase I: Project plan developed by late 2021 Phase II: Late 2022/early 2023

3.13 Alberta (AB)

Key Contact: Eileen Joly

3.13.1 Identity Linkages Project			
Description	Alberta is completing work with IRCC to share Alberta death notifications and validate birth certificate information through Public Service and Procurement Canada's messaging service following the National Routing System Data Exchange Standards.		
Expected Outcomes	Electronic birth certificate validations with IRCC and Alberta electronically sends death notices to IRCC.		
Current Status	Memorandum of Understanding was signed. System integrated testing is being completed with implementation expected on November 30, 2021.		
Start Date	Planned for late 2021	Planned End Date	N/A

3.13.2 Electronic Death Registration			
Description	Improving Alberta's death registration process.		
Expected Outcomes	Improved timeliness and accuracy of death data registration in AB by eliminating paper medical certificates of death.		
Current Status	AB is finalizing funding to move from the data-entry of paper Medical Certificate of Death forms to the submission of electronic medical certificate of death information that will be electronically matched to death registration information from funeral homes.		
Start Date	To be provided by AB	Planned End Date	N/A

3.14 British Columbia (BC)

Key Contact: Jack Shewchuk

3.14.1 Electronic Death Registration			
Description			
Expected Outcomes	Improved timeliness and accuracy of death data registration in BC.		
Current Status	BC is working on establishing a link with Coroners offices to obtain electronic notice of death. BC is also looking at electronic bundling of death data with automated send to those who subscribe.		
Start Date		Planned End Date	

3.14.2 Identity Linkages Project			
Description	BC is preparing to negotiate an agreement and establish connectivity with IRCC to share death notices and validate birth certificate information.		
Expected Outcomes	<i>To be provided from BC perspective.</i>		
Current Status	BC has started developing an Information Sharing Agreement with IRCC.		
Start Date		Planned End Date	

3.15 Northwest Territories (NT)

Key Contact: Jenetta Day

3.15.1 Electronic Death Registration			
Description			
Expected Outcomes	To improve the timeliness and accuracy of death data in NT.		
Current Status	NT has challenges since there are only two official funeral homes and people often do their own burials. Also, the Death Registration Statement does not have a separate cause of death section. To be timely, NT is registering deaths with scanned electronic versions of the Death Registration Statements received by funeral homes and municipality offices, while awaiting the originals to arrive via mail. NT is working on an information sharing agreement with Service Canada to allow NT to share death data with ESDC until it can be submitted through the National Routing System (NRS).		
Start Date	TBD	Planned End Date	

3.16 Nunavut (NU)

Key Contact: Anna-Marie Headley

3.16.1 TBD			
Description			
Expected Outcomes			
Current Status			
Start Date		Planned End Date	

3.17 Yukon (YT)

Key Contact: Karen Carrière

3.17.1 TBD			
Description			
Expected Outcomes			
Current Status			
Start Date		Planned End Date	