

E-Physician Essentials

What is an E-Physician?

An E-Physician is a physician that has been approved by the Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics (ODH/VS) to electronically complete and sign/certify a death certificate in the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS).

How does this work?

The funeral home electronically creates a death record, enters the personal information, and selects a physician for the medical portion. At that point, you will log into EDRS and electronically enter the same information previously written on the paper certificate, then electronically sign/certify the record. This eliminates the need for a paper certificate. In addition, you can opt-in for e-mail notification which will alert you that you have a death record waiting.

“Our medical staff handles about 3,000 deaths per year. The new electronic death certificate system has helped us meet the needs of the survivors, the funeral homes, and the State more smoothly, easily, and quickly than we ever imagined possible. The training and support we got from the State made it so straightforward. We would never go back!”

-Charles F. von Gunten, MD, PhD, Vice President of Medical Affairs, Hospice & Palliative Medicine, OhioHealth

What are the benefits?

Electronic death certificate registration provides you the ability to complete a certificate from any location in which you can connect to the internet using a personal computer or a laptop. This negates the need for the funeral home staff to visit your office or fax/scan a certificate to you. In addition, the wait time for a death certificate to be available to the family is reduced from approximately twenty days to five. Electronic registration also makes the data more readily available for other public health initiatives.

What is the impact to my practice?

Once you are activated as an E-Physician, all of your death records will be electronic regardless of where the death occurred. At first, you can expect to see some paper records that were already in process on the date you were converted to electronic but those should be minimal. Although not required, you can elect to have an E-Physician Clerk associated with your account to help process your records. The E-Physician Clerk will see and can modify all death records associated with your account but cannot electronically sign/certify. For example, if you service a hospice and a hospital and your associated E-Physician Clerk works at the hospice they will see the records from the hospice and they will also be able to see all records associated with your name including the hospital.

How do I get more information or get started?

For more information or to get started, contact the Vital Statistics Helpdesk by e-mail at vs.helpdesk@odh.ohio.gov or speak with our physician liaison, Bart Smock, by phone at 614-644-5757. They can answer your questions and provide you with a demonstration video, user guides, and an E-Physician Sign-Up Form. Once you submit your form, we will evaluate and determine a convenient time for you to go live.

How do I get support once started?

Based on trends from current e-physicians, support is rarely needed once your laptop and/or computer is set up. Our application requires Citrix Receiver software be downloaded before you can access your account. Our bureau provides guides to setting up and using the software including a video walkthrough of completing the cause of death. However, if you still need assistance our Helpdesk is staffed Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and we pride ourselves on maintaining a short wait time for responding. In addition, our Stakeholder Support Unit Manager is available through e-mail at dan.burleson@odh.ohio.gov.



BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS E-Physician User Support Document

This form may be used to establish or change user account access to the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) as an E-Physician.

Choose One Action: Create a New User Modify a Current User Remove a User

Full Name & Title: _____
(The new, current, or previous user depending on form action)

E-Mail Address: _____ Click here to opt **out**
of email notifications

Phone Number: _____

Once your account is created, all death certificates assigned to you by the funeral home must be certified electronically. Please provide the address that you wish to auto-populate on all death certificates. You may provide only one address; therefore, we recommend that you use the address associated with your license number.

E-Physician Address: _____
Street City State Zip Code

Agreement: As a registered user of the system, you will be responsible for data entered into various electronic death records. By signing this document, I agree to abide by Ohio laws and regulations regarding the creation and submission of death certificates. Additionally, I agree that I will not divulge or share user authorizations and/or passwords concerning EDRS. I also agree to abide with all licensure regulations pertaining to my professional licensure. The information provided on this application is true to the best of my knowledge.

E-Physician License Number: _____

E-Physician Signature: _____
Signature Date

Please fax this completed form to the ODH Helpdesk at (614) 564-2420. You will receive a username and password via e-mail within approximately five business days. If you have any technical concerns, please call the ODH Helpdesk at (614) 466-2531, option 3.