

## Infectivity of SARS-CoV-2 postmortem

This has still to be determined but appears to have a similar distribution to that in the living.

## Incubation period

The incubation period is estimated to be between 1 and 14 days, with a median of 5 to 7 days. Viable virus is relatively short lived; infectiousness peaks around 1 day before symptom onset and declines within 7 days. The pooled mean incubation period is 9.6 days in children.

<https://bestpractice.bmj.com/topics/en-gb/3000201/aetiology>

## Duty of care

The certifying doctor owes a duty of care to the family and funeral director. If there is any doubt regarding infectivity postmortem then the hazard box on the MCCD (DH1) should be ticked.

## Deaths not related to COVID-19 disease although testing positive for the virus within 28 days of the death

In circumstances where a death occurs within 28 days of a positive COVID-19 test, but the death has not been directly caused by COVID-19 or COVID-19 has not contributed to the death, notification of the positive test is not required on the MCCD. However, the relevant hazard box/es need to be completed as 'Y' (Yes) if a hazard is present, even if it has not caused or contributed to the death.

## CMO Guidance

*“if you have any doubts about whether to notify a condition, on the grounds of its seriousness or potential to affect others, you should discuss the condition with the local Health Protection Team or another senior colleague”.*

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/medical-certificates-of-cause-of-death-guidance-on-completion/>