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Background

There is a [statutory requirement](#) to review the deaths of all children under the age of 18, regardless of gestation or whether the death was expected or not. The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) is a multi-agency panel set up by the Child Death Review (CDR) partners to review the deaths of all children normally resident in their area. The statutory partners should make arrangements for the review of each death of a child normally resident in the area, **including if they die overseas**.

Cases are discussed anonymously at CDOP with the aim of trying to prevent similar deaths.

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Questions to consider

If you are involved with the family, have you offered support or signposted them to [bereavement services](#)?

Helpful resources:

[Link to Form A](#)

[When a child dies A guide for parents and carers](#)

[Statutory and operational guidance \(England\)](#) which sets out the child death review process in full.

To test our 'sharing learning process' when you receive this 7mb please Ctrl & Click [HERE](#) and complete this very short survey.

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Why it matters

If a child who is a British national, or a child who normally resides in England, **dies abroad**, the child's family should notify the local authorities and the UK Embassy, High Commission, or Consulate in the country where the child has died. In some circumstances this doesn't always happen - families might not know who to tell and it is a deeply distressing time for them.

CDOP can learn about such a death from a variety of sources (e.g., Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), media, coroner, the child's GP).

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Information

Any person or agency can notify CDOP of a child death. The family will often tell a trusted professional e.g., their child's teacher or GP. The notification Form A, found on the [Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership \(CSAP\)](#) website, allows users to notify CDOP of any child death, regardless of where the child died or whether the death was expected or not.

The notifying agency should inform CDOP within 24 hours of the child's death, or as soon as they become aware.

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CDOP is not always notified when a child dies overseas. When a child is buried or cremated the duties of the Coroner do not arise.

The local Coroner will only become involved where a child has died abroad, and the child's body is returned to England. This is why it is important to inform CDOP as soon as you become aware.

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Once CDOP is aware of the death they will seek advice from the FCO. There have been several cases where the FCO have not been notified by the Consulate in the country where the child has died, or this has been delayed. The FCO can provide support to British nationals in difficulties overseas and provides useful resources for what should happen in the event of a death overseas.

The FCO can be contacted on Coroner.LiaisonOfficer@fco.gov.uk or in an emergency 0207 008 1500

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What to do

When you become aware that a child has died abroad do not assume that somebody else will notify CDOP. Complete the [notification form](#) (FORM A) as soon after the death as possible. CDOP will notify the Child Health Information System (CHIS) who will ensure that further clinic appointments are not arranged for the child and close the child's care record.

