

**LEHIGH VALLEY HOSPITAL  
LEHIGH VALLEY HOSPITAL – MUHLENBERG  
Graduate Medical Education**

**GME Policy - Autopsy**

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**I. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Medical Staff to encourage the seeking of autopsy permission in every inpatient death that occurs in the hospital. All deaths must be reviewed and autopsies performed on all appropriate cases. No autopsies shall be performed without written consent of the next of kin or the legally authorized agent. Findings of autopsies are to be used as a source of clinical information in quality assessment, improvement activities, education and research activities. To facilitate use of autopsy findings in quality assessment activities, the chairperson receives a copy of each autopsy report for use in morbidity-mortality conferences and any other department-wide quality assessment activities.

**II. SCOPE**

All ACGME, AOA, and CODA approved postgraduate training programs at Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN).

**III. DEFINITIONS**

Graduate Trainee - Any postgraduate M.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.M.D., physician in training, whether or not in an ACGME training program.

Chairperson - Department Chair

**IV. PROCEDURE**

Defer to each specific residency program requirements for autopsy standard(s).

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
Graduate trainee is responsible for notifying or discussing with the family or next of kin permission to perform autopsy unless mandated under law.	Graduate Trainee
Graduate trainee must put his/her name and pager number on the permit itself in order to be notified when autopsies are being done on their patients. Also, if a graduate trainee wants a copy of the autopsy report, s/he will need to contact forensic pathology (x8144) with details of where to send the report. Finalized reports are usually available within 30-60 days.	Graduate Trainee

Graduate trainee will be notified when autopsies are being done on their patients, and they will also receive a copy of the written report.	Pathology
Graduate trainees should be present at autopsies or should review the gross pathological specimens at the time the autopsies are performed on their patients and should review the autopsy reports.	Program Director Graduate Trainee  Pathologist
Formal teaching sessions with reviews of autopsy, biopsy and/or surgical pathology cases should be regularly scheduled.	Program Director Graduate Trainee
Autopsies can be an essential part of a graduate trainee’s education. It is essential for the involved graduate trainees to attend when possible.	Program Director Graduate Trainee
The graduate trainee should make an effort to secure permission for an autopsy on unexpected expiration on the teaching service.	Program Director Graduate Trainee
When appropriate, develop a program policy regarding obtaining autopsies, attendance at autopsies, review of reports and formal teaching sessions.	Program Director

**Approved by the Graduate Medical Education Committee**

<b>Approved by:</b> Brian Costello (Physician), Thomas Whalen (Evp & Chief Med Officer)	<b>Approval Date:</b> 09/25/2017
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