# Validity of Diagnostic Evidence for Deceased Cases in Hospitals[1]

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**Objective**   To determine the validity of the diagnostic evidence for deceased cases in hospitals.   **Methods**   All information collected from medical records of the deceased cases in tertiary care health facilities was input into our database. Four diagnosis levels were determined based on level of diagnostic evidence: level I was based on autopsy, pathology or operative exploration, level II on physical and laboratory tests plus expert clinical judgment, level III on expert clinical judgment, level IV on postmortem assumptions. After the diagnostic evidence of each deceased case was reviewed by a panel of three experts, the diagnostic level of each diagnosis was determined.   **Results**   Among the 2102 medical cases for verbal autopsy study, only 26 (1.24%) afforded diagnostic evidence for level III. Among the level III evidence-based cases of death, the major causes of death were cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, and gastroenterological diseases. According to some special symptoms and medical histories, these cases could be diagnosed by comprehensive clinical judgment. Only one case met the criteria for level IV.   **Conclusion**   Level I diagnostic evidence is hard to attain in China because of the traditional concept and economic restriction. The causes for 2101 deaths can be validated by level II or III diagnostic evidence.

**Key words**: Validity; Diagnosis criteria; Diagnostic evidence; Laboratory examination

## INTRODUCTION

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