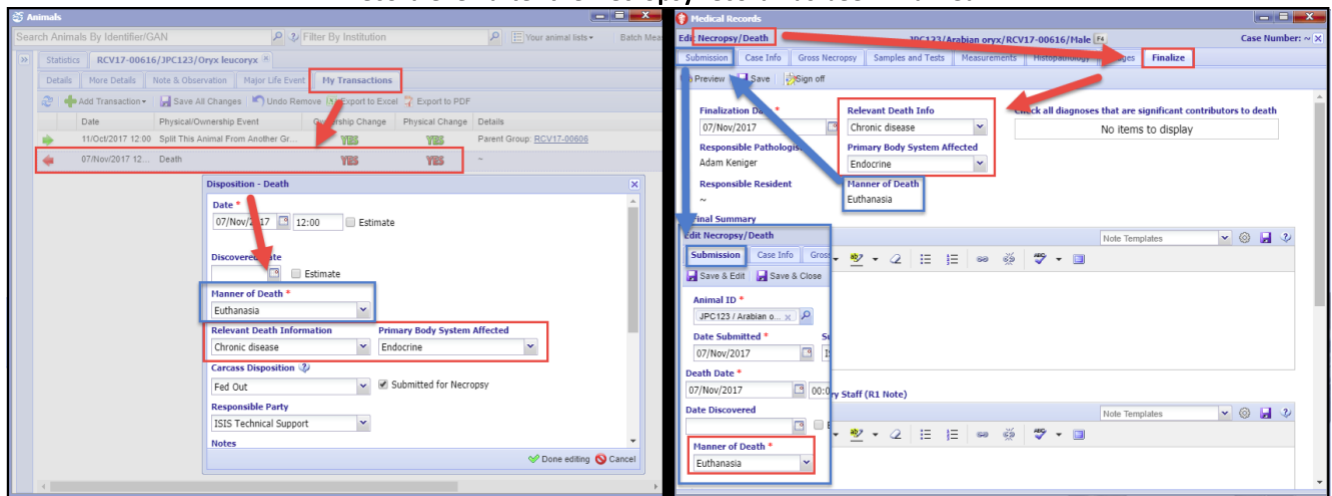# Relevant Death Information (RDI)

RDI entries should only be checked when **relevant** to the death of the animal. Issues not contributing to the death should not be selected.

Contact Species360 Support

NOTE: Relevant Death Information, Primary Body System and Manner of Death are 'shared data' between the Husbandry Death Record and the Medical Necropsy Record. The last entry will display on both sides of the animal's record even after the Necropsy record has been finalized.

| **Husbandry Record** | **Medical Record** |

The Relevant Death Information (RDI) data field is meant to capture the issue(s) that most significantly contribute to the death of an animal or group of animals; RDI is not meant to capture every lesion found during a necropsy or every medical problem known to exist prior to death. The RDI options are specifically designed to group the causes of death into broad categories. The RDI analysis tool (Medical Resources > Morbidity & Mortality Analysis) provides users with a graphical view of their institutional RDI records, summarizing the available information at a taxonomic level and over a specified time span.

When RDI records are pertinent to the cause of death, the institutional RDI analysis graph offers insight into the major reasons for death within the selected taxonomic grouping. The analysis tool provides medical and husbandry personnel with easy access to a summary of RDI data and a chance to assess the major factors and problems facing any taxonomic group at their institution. Review and evaluation of the existing RDI records may identify key factors contributing to mortality within the

collection and provide an opportunity to consider changes to animal management protocols or medical practices that might alter the existing pattern.

However, if staff use the RDI field to capture every necropsy finding or medical issue, rather than just the relevant death information, then the RDI records become worthless. The significant causes of death are now hidden within a large number of irrelevant issues and there is no ability to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant data. The end result is that ZIMS users no longer have the opportunity to assess the factors that significantly contribute to mortality within their collection.

Example:
Animal A has chronic arthritis and lameness, but quality of life is still acceptable when a severe bacterial pneumonia results in the death of the animal.

Animal B has chronic arthritis and lameness, and eventually quality of life (poor appetite, weight loss, little mobility) is judged to be unacceptable and the animal is humanely euthanized.

RDI records:
Should both animals have chronic arthritis (Non-infectious disease > Degenerative; Chronic) as part of their RDI data?

While it is true that both animals had this medical issue, it is not a significant contributor to the death of animal A. The RDI for animal A should be "Infectious disease > bacterial" (bacterial pneumonia); chronic arthritis is just an incidental issue at the time of death. Using the RDI field to indicate that this animal also had arthritis only obscures the true cause of death for this animal (infectious disease).

In the case of animal B, the chronic arthritis is likely to be the most relevant death information. Unless a necropsy identifies an undiagnosed medical problem that would have also contributed to the quality of life issues, the arthritis remains the most important factor in the decision to euthanize this animal and the RDI should reflect this disease process.

Revised 7 August 2019