

## **Death Certificate Reforms and the Medical Examiner System from 09/09/2024**

### **OVERVIEW**

From 9 September 2024, all deaths not investigated by a coroner must be reviewed by NHS medical examiners.

As part of the reforms, a medical practitioner will be eligible to be an attending practitioner and complete an MCCD, if they have **attended the deceased in their lifetime, even if they did not see the patient in person after death.**

This represents a simplification of the current rules that enable medical practitioners to complete an MCCD, if they had attended the patient during their last illness but required referral of the case to a coroner if they had not done so within the 28 days prior to death or had not seen the patient after death.

**The requirement for a cremation form will cease on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024.**

**Do not use the current MCCD books from 00.01 on 9 September 2024 even if the person died before this date.** New MCCD books will be available in your practice for use from 9th September 2024. The new MCCD includes a question about medical devices and a section for the medical examiner to sign.

Medical Examiners provide independent scrutiny of the causes of death in cases not investigated by a coroner. They agree a cause of death with the Qualified Attending Physician (QAP) and refer any concerns about care to the appropriate body. In addition, they have a conversation with the bereaved to explain the cause of death and identify any questions or concerns about the care of a patient before they died. Medical Examiner Offices are also happy to discuss if a coronial referral is required.

### **WHAT THE PROCESS INVOLVES**

Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust hosts the local Medical Examiner Office.

When the practice is notified of a death, a referral is made to the ME Office through NHS e-referral Service, Advice and Guidance **or** secure NHS email:

[hyp-tr.medicalexaminers@nhs.net](mailto:hyp-tr.medicalexaminers@nhs.net).

The referral should contain a scanned copy of the completed MCCD and Ardens Medical Examiner template (or equivalent) including demographic details, last 3 months of records and next of kin<sup>1</sup>, (these can be auto-populated). See flowchart and guidance for additional information.

The Medical Examiner scrutinises the records and agrees with the proposed cause of death or suggests an alternative wording. Most communication is via Advice and Guidance or

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<sup>1</sup> The ME programme made application, S251, to the Secretary of State's Confidentiality Advisory Group for sharing of patient records and within this specifically noted that next of kin information would be shared with medical examiner offices. This has been approved.

email, very rarely is a telephone conversation required. The Medical Examiner Office sends an electronic version of the MCCD to the Registrar.

## **WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE**

Please make contact with your local ME Office if you have not already done so. They will explain in detail how the process works, answer any questions and establish the process for you to refer deceased patients to the office. Our intention is to make this as simple and straightforward as possible.

We aim to have a referral process in place for all GP practices and other non-acute settings before the September deadline.

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

### **HUTH Office**

Dr Fiona Thomson, Lead Medical Examiner	<a href="mailto:fiona.thomson13@nhs.net">fiona.thomson13@nhs.net</a>
Stuart Cutts, Lead Medical Examiner Officer	<a href="mailto:stuart.cutts2@nhs.net">stuart.cutts2@nhs.net</a>
Medical Examiner office	<a href="mailto:hyp-tr.medicalexaminers@nhs.net">hyp-tr.medicalexaminers@nhs.net</a>

### **HUTH Medical Examiner Office opening hours:**

Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm

Bank Holiday Mondays 9am to 12pm

### **Contact numbers:**

**HRI** - 01482 482157/ 01482 482158 (main site) **CHH** - 01482 482156