

The Medical Examiner Process Following a Death

The Medical Examiner system is a national system to scrutinise all deaths that has gradually been introduced across the country. It started in Hospitals and is now moving out to Hospices and the Community.

Since 2019, some senior NHS doctors have received specialist training to spend some of their time working as Medical Examiners (ME) and are supported by, and work closely with, Medical Examiner Officers (MEOs) who are other specially trained staff. ME scrutiny makes an independent assessment about what caused deaths, and additionally confirms that referral to the Coroner is not required. If, at the time of death, it is immediately recognised by the Doctor that the case should be referred to the Coroner – such as unexpected or traumatic deaths – the ME office is unlikely to be involved unless requested by the GP or subsequently by the Coroner.

Medical Examiners look at the relevant medical records and discuss the causes of death with the Doctor filling in the official form (its official name is the *Medical Certificate of Cause of Death or MCCD*).

Following the discussion between the Medical Examiner and the Doctor completing the MCCD, you as the nominated next of kin will receive a telephone call from the Medical Examiner's Office, either from the ME or MEO. This gives you the opportunity to discuss your thoughts, ask questions and raise any concerns should you have them. They can explain what the medical language means and make it easier to understand.

If any issues with care are identified at this point that require further investigation, the Medical Examiners can refer on to someone who can do this.

Further to the conversation with the Medical Examiner's office all relevant paperwork will be forwarded to the Registrars office from whom you will receive a telephone call offering you an appointment to complete the death registration. You can expect the whole process to be completed 5 days after death.

You will not routinely receive a call from the GP.