

Information for GPs/Private Hospital/Hospice: Medical Examiner office at Barts Health

The statutory implementation of the medical examiner system will be enacted under legislation by the 9th of September 2024. It will then be a statutory requirement for all deaths within our jurisdiction of Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Newham, and the City of London (Square Mile) not accepted for coronial investigation to be reviewed by a medical examiner before a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) is written.

GPs/Private Hospital/Hospice notified of deaths which occur at addresses in Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Newham, and the City of London (Square Mile), which do not meet the requirements for coronial referral, will need to refer these deaths to the Medical Examiner office hosted by Barts Health NHS Trust.

The medical examiner service is not accountable to the hospital trust but is accountable to their professional regulatory body and the regional and national medical examiner.

What medical examiners do	<p>Medical examiners provide independent scrutiny of deaths in cases not meeting the statutory criteria for coronial referral.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A proportionate review of medical records. - Interaction with the doctor completing the MCCD. - Explain the cause of death to the next of kin, establishing if they have any questions or concerns with the care before death.
Benefits to GPs/Private Hospital/Hospice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supportive death certification process. - Fewer rejected MCCDs by registrar of births and deaths. - Improves accuracy of information provided on MCCDs. - Bereaved feel reassured that a death has been independently reviewed. <p>Here is a video: Dr Jonathan Cope, GP and lead ME in Plymouth, and Dr Robert Coleman, GP and lead ME in Suffolk speak about medical examiners from a GP's point of view.</p>
Who are the medical examiner office team?	<p>The team comprises of hospital specialists and GPs/Private Hospital/Hospice medical examiners, who have undergone training by the Royal College of Pathologists and work part time in the role.</p> <p>Examiners are supported by trained medical examiner officers.</p>
How and when do I contact the medical examiner office?	<p>Email address for referrals and queries: bartshealth.bhtmecommunity@nhs.net (Monday to Friday 08.00 – 16.00, Saturdays, Sundays, and bank holidays 08.00 – 11.00).</p> <p>Telephone number: 07840 847690 (Monday to Friday 08:00 – 16:00 only), healthcare professional use only</p>
Can we share your contact details to NOK?	<p>The above mobile number is for healthcare professional use only</p> <p>We contact the family routinely following review by the Medical Examiner and confirmation of the COD with the GP/Dr</p>

	<p>Our office numbers can be shared with any NOK for any urgent communication required (Monday to Friday 08:00 – 16:00 only):</p> <p>020 8539 5522 Ext 4399 or 4398</p> <p>020 3465 6470</p>
How to make a referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the referral template located on EMIS/SystmOne - The template and referral are on Resource Publisher, the template is called (RP) Medical Examiners Template NEL CEG v1 and the referral is called Medical Examiners GP Referral Form CEG v1 - Enter the name in the search box when you click 'Run Template' - Include last 3 months medical records (this should automatically attach) - For Private Hospitals/Hospice/Other use the word referral document (included in info pack email) - Send securely to bartshealth.bhtmecommunity@nhs.net
Is there prioritisation of faith deaths?	<p>The medical examiner office is sensitive to the requirements of all faiths and religions, the service will endeavour to complete timely scrutiny of all faith deaths. Please indicate 'urgent' on the referral and include in the subject line of the email</p>
What should I do if I want to write a death certificate outside your office hours?	<p>Any referrals sent outside office hours will be dealt with the next day. Faith deaths are prioritised for processing as soon as office hours commence.</p>
When do you review deaths?	<p>We currently only review deaths when our office is open.</p>
If I have referred a death to the coroner, should I also refer this death to the ME office?	<p>No, if the cause of death falls under the Notification of Death regulations, then it should be referred to the coroner as soon as possible. Notification of Deaths Regulations 2019 guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Only refer the death to one or the other.</p>
I do not know if a case needs to be referred to a coroner, or if I can issue a MCCD?	<p>We are available to give advice on these cases so please contact the office to discuss any queries you have.</p>
How long does the medical examiner process take?	<p>We aim for the review to be completed as soon as possible from receiving the referral.</p> <p>The medical examiner will review the medical records and the proposed cause of death on the referral form; if the medical examiner does make any suggestions regarding the cause of death, it is up to the GP/Dr completing the death certificate whether they would like to accept them.</p> <p>The GP/Dr will need to respond to the medical examiner review and together agree a cause of death. Once this is agreed the medical examiner or officer will speak with the next of kin.</p> <p>If the case is straightforward and the medical examiner agrees with the cause of death proposed by the GP/Dr, an email will be sent confirming agreement (no need for further discussion unless requested by GP/Dr).</p>
Who sends the MCCD to the register office?	<p>GP practices/Private Hospitals/Hospices are responsible for sending the agreed MCCD once the medical examiner office has confirmed via email that it can be released.</p> <p>It would be good practice to copy the medical examiner office into the email, this would let the registry office know that the death had been involved in the case.</p>
What should I do if I am the only Dr that can issue a death	<p>Ensure that this is made clear in the referral form and indicate in the covering email - refer the death to us as soon as possible.</p>

certificate but am due to be out of the UK in two days?	
---	--

Medical Examiner Office (Barts Health)