

Medical Examiners

Who are Medical Examiners?

Medical Examiners are senior doctors who independently review all deaths, both children and adults. They are not involved in the care of the patient who has died. They are based in hospitals, but they review all deaths which occur within a specific geographical area. Medical Examiners have been routinely reviewing adult deaths since 2019, and their roles are now being expanded to include all child deaths.

Professional Responsibilities

Medical Examiners review the cause of death and overall accuracy of Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. They do this by:

- Conducting a proportionate review of medical records
- Speaking to the doctor who treated the patient.
- They may also discuss the cause of death with the parent or next of kin.

Following their review they may:

- Advise on whether the law requires the coroner, if not already involved, to be informed
- Identify situations where services or care could have been improved and then feedback suggestions for potential future improvements to healthcare services.

How and when will they contact me?

Medical Examiners may contact parents by telephone a few days after bereavement. They will obtain your contact details from the medical records. If you would prefer someone else in the family to talk, you can tell the Medical Examiner.

What will they ask me and what can I say?

They will talk to about what is written on the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death, ask if this is what you expected to be written and if you need any explanation. They will ask about whether you have any comments, good or bad, on the healthcare provided to your child. Your comments will be fed back to the healthcare providers if the Medical Examiner thinks it is appropriate to do so. If you have raised specific questions about the illnesses or treatment of your child that the Medical Examiner cannot answer, they may signpost you to alternative services.

The Royal Marsden Children's Outreach and Symptom Care Team can be contacted for support and if you have any further questions about this process.

Telephone: 020 8661 3625

(Monday – Friday 9am, 5pm)

