

Introduction to the Medical Examiner Service by the Chief Medical Officer for Wales



The UK Government has confirmed plans for a two stage approach to the introduction of medical examiners. Initially a non-statutory medical examiner arrangement will be introduced from April 2019 in England and Wales. Medical Examiner offices will generally be hosted by NHS acute provider organisations in England and the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) in Wales.

The non-statutory medical examiner arrangement will mean the current death certification process will run concurrently with the medical examiner system. Specifically trained medical examiners and their staff will work within the standards and guidelines set by the National Medical Examiner for England and Wales who will provide professional and strategic leadership.

It is anticipated that the roll-out of the service will commence initially within acute hospitals but work is underway on a solution for medical examiners to scrutinise all non-coronial deaths including deaths in the community.

The UK Government has agreed that until the required legislation is introduced, the running costs of the system will be funded through a combination of the existing fee paid for the Confirmatory Medical Certificate for Cremation (Cremation Form 5) and top-up funding provided by the government. Medical Examiners will take on responsibility for the confirmatory function of Cremation Form 5.

NWSSP has been commissioned through its Partnership Committee (made of Executive representatives acting on behalf of all Health Boards in Wales) to lead on the implementation of the new arrangements and will take on responsibility for developing a service model for NHS Wales. This will introduce an additional layer of independence to the medical examiner role in Wales.

Mirroring arrangements in England, NWSSP will also shortly recruit a Lead ME and Medical Examiner Officer (MEO) for Wales to provide a separate line of professional accountability. The recruitment of locally, hospital based MEs and MEOs will follow.

The Royal College of Pathologists will be the host college for medical examiners and will be the main conduit of information in relation to the development of the medical examiner service and will run the required training programmes.

For all detail on the proposed implementation arrangements, model job descriptions, pre-appointment training and information on who can apply, to be a medical examiner or a medical examiner officer, the [Royal College of Pathologists' website](#).

Face to face training events run by the Royal College are now open for application on the website. The 26 core e-learning modules must be completed before attending a face-to-face training.

*Chief Medical Officer for Wales
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