

## Useful Contacts

Croydon ME Office

🕒 Mon-Fri 9am – 5pm

✉ ch-tr.meo-community@nhs.net

☎ 0208 401 3719 / 3646 ext 4847

Croydon Registrar

🕒 Mon-Fri 9:30am – 4pm

✉ Register.office@croydon.gov.uk

☎ 0208 726 6300

South London Coroner

🕒 Mon-Fri 9am – 5pm

✉ admin.coroner@croydon.gov.uk

☎ 0208 313 1883 (Mon-Fri 9am-12pm, 1pm-3pm)

# Croydon Medical Examiner Office

## OUR SINCEREST CONDOLENCES FOR YOUR LOSS

A quick guide to the Medical Examiner Service in the Community



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### Tell Us Once

<https://www.gov.uk/after-a-death/organisations-you-need-to-contact-and-tell-us-once>

Tell Us Once is a service that lets you report a death to most government organisations in one go. The registrar can explain the Tell Us Once service when you register the death. They can either:

- complete the Tell Us Once service with you
- give you a unique reference number so you can use the service yourself online or by phone.

### The Coroner Office Information Guide

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-coroner-services-and-coroner-investigations-a-short-guide>

### Understanding Probate

<https://www.gov.uk/applying-for-probate>

### Possible help with funeral cost

<https://www.gov.uk/funeral-payments>



## Medical Examiner System

### How can the MCCD be issued quickly.

If the referring GP is made aware of a reason for a quick release (i.e. faith deaths that requires a burial in 24 hours, child deaths etc), this will be added to the referral form. The ME office will prioritise this scrutinising the medical records.

### How to give feedback

All feedbacks can be sent to the Medical Examiner email. [ch-tr.meo-community@nhs.net](mailto:ch-tr.meo-community@nhs.net). This will be collected and sent to the National Medical Examiner Service.

From 9 September 2024 all deaths in any health setting that are not investigated by a coroner will be reviewed by NHS Medical Examiners. The changes, which form part of the Department of Health's Death Certification Reforms, were announced by the government on 15 April 2024, and came into force on 9 September 2024.

From September 9th 2024, all deaths in the community that are not required to be referred to the coroner (sometimes referred to as *non-coronial deaths*) will be scrutinized by a medical examiner.

The introduction of the medical examiner system is designed to:

- Provide bereaved families with greater transparency and opportunities to raise concerns
- Improve the quality/accuracy of medical certification of cause of death
- Ensure referrals to coroners are appropriate
- Support local learning/improvement by identifying matters in need of clinical governance and related processes
- Provide the public with greater safeguards through improved and consistent scrutiny of all non-coronial deaths, and support healthcare providers to improve care through better learning
- Align with related systems such as the Learning from Deaths Framework and Universal Mortality Reviews.





## The Medical Examiner (ME)

Medical Examiners are senior medical doctors, who are trained in the legal and clinical elements of death certification processes. They provide independent, balanced scrutiny of deaths.

The role of the medical examiner includes:

- Reviewing the medical records.
- Liaising with the doctor who treated the patient in their final illness.
- Agreeing the proposed cause of death with the attending doctor and the overall accuracy of the medical certificate cause of death.
- Acting as a medical advice resource for the local coroner.
- Ensuring any concerns about the care of the patient are acted on appropriately

How independent will the Medical Examiner be if they are employed by the NHS?

In England, medical examiners are employed by NHS trusts and have a separate reporting line to the Regional Lead Medical Examiner. Those who work in medical roles within the NHS are accustomed to having different roles and different lines of accountability and to making this work, and it is expected that employing organizations will respect this distinction. Appraisal and revalidation processes will support independence.

## FAQ

I live far away and cannot attend Croydon to register.  
In this even, contact Croydon Registrar and ask about registering by declaration at your local registrar.

How long will this take.

We aim to complete scrutinise cases as soon as the Medical Examiner Office is notified. Our aim is to respond to the GP practice the same day and at the latest the next working day.

Who else can register?

Legal representation such as lawyers, executors, a nominated representative. This information required can be found on <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/>, Services: Births, deaths, marriages and citizenship

Who will be spoken to?


The ME office aims to speak to the NOK. This also include the executors and lawyers. If you are calling on behalf of the NOK you must have gain permission.

Passing away on the weekend

The aim is to scrutinize cases as soon as the Medical Examiner Office is notified. There is provision to escalate and priorities urgent cases.



## Coroner Office



Coroners serve as independent judicial officials who specialize in investigating and clarifying specific types of deaths. Their office is tasked with gathering evidence, interviewing witnesses, and establishing the cause and manner of death. When a case is brought to the coroner's attention, the process of death certification, including registration and funeral arrangements, is temporarily halted. It will only resume based on the coroner's direction. As the next of kin, you will be contacted and kept updated throughout the investigation.

Coroner's Outcome: The outcome from the coroner is based on the findings of the investigation.

**Form CN1A:** This form indicates that no further investigation is necessary, and the case will be sent back to the GP and Medical Examiner's Office, following the procedures outlined in [The Community Process](#).


**Inquest:** This typically means the case will proceed to court, which can happen with or without a post-mortem examination. The Coroner Officer will provide you with details about this process.

**Post Mortem:** This is usually conducted when the cause of death is unclear or unknown. It involves a thorough internal examination of the body. The Coroner Officer will inform you about the timing of this examination and will provide you with the report afterward.

## The Medical Examiner Officer (MEO)


Medical examiner officers are a vital part of the medical examiner service in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. MEOs come from a range of backgrounds, i.e. nursing, coronial and bereavement.

The role of the medical examiner officer includes:

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- Being the first point of contact for bereaved families regarding the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD).
  - Office consistency
  - Manages cases from initial notification through to completion of the MCCD.
  - To act as an intermediary between the bereaved and clinicians to establish and resolve any concerns relating to a patient's death.
  - Offer professional support to the ME in their responsibility of the scrutiny process for all deceased patients in the organization.
  - To liaise with Coroner's Officers and the Registrars
  - To establish the circumstances of individual patient deaths by performing a preliminary review of medical records for scrutiny by the medical examiner.
  - Liaising with the doctors who treated the patient.
  - Advising on the wording of the MCCD.



## The Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD)



The MCCD enables the deceased's family to register the death. The MCCD can be written by any GP that has seen the patient at least once in the patient lifetime. This also include consultation using video technology (not telephone/audio).

The MCCD is sent to the Croydon Register Office by the Medical Examiner Office. Deaths are required by law to be registered within 5 days from the MCCD being written. The NOK will be called and informed when to book to register.


After registering the death, the NOK gets a "Death Certificate' with the cause of death previously discussed. The NOK will be also given a "green form" which is for the funeral director to use to collect the deceased.

### Register Office

The Medical Examiner office send the MCCD to the registrar office along with the NOK details. The Registrar also contract the ME office for any queries regarding the MCCD.

The Registry Office will not accept any MCCD that has not been sent via the Medical Examiner Office.

## The Community Process



Once a person have passed away in the community and the GP had been made aware. The GP will completed a Medical Examiner referral form with the decease relevant medical records and send it to Medical Examiner Office based in Croydon University Hospital.

After the Medical Examiner scrutiny of the referral has been satisfactorily completed and the cause of death is agreed, the Medical Examiner/Officer will notify the GP Practice to complete the MCCD.

The GP practice then send the MCCD to the ME Office to be counter signed by the Medical Examiner. The Medical Examiner Officer will then email the MCCD to the Registry Office.

The Medical Examiner/Officer will speak with the NOK to enquire if they have any concerns regarding the care provided to the deceased and discuss the MCCD. They will ensure you will understand the medical terminology being used and give you an opportunity to ask any questions that you may have about the cause of death. Often the NOK is contacted at 2 different stages, to discuss the cause of death and when families can register the death.

There will be the provision to issue the MCCD (where appropriate) promptly in circumstances where it is required.