

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE MEDICAL EXAMINER SERVICE

Important Information for Families Following a Bereavement in the Community

Who are Medical Examiners and Medical Examiner Officers?

A National System of Medical Examiners (MEs) and Medical Examiner Officers (MEOs) has been rolled out across England and Wales to provide support for bereaved families and help improve patient care. Medical Examiners are senior doctors from a range of specialities including general practice, who provide an independent review of deaths. They are supported by a team of Medical Examiner Officers. All staff are trained by the Royal College of Pathologists.

The Medical Examiner will only review cases where they have not been involved in the patient's care. Medical Examiners and Medical Examiner Officers look at the relevant medical records and discuss the causes of death with the doctor completing the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (*sometimes referred to as the MCCD or death certificate*).

Why are you being contacted?

To offer you an opportunity to have an open and honest conversation with someone who was not involved in providing care to the person who has died. It could be as simple as helping you understand more about the treatment and causes of death, or to explain the medical terminology used. This is your opportunity to ask questions and raise any concerns you may have.

What will happen if any concerns are raised?

The Medical Examiner and their team are available to listen to your questions, concerns and if possible, provide answers.

If during the review of the notes and the discussion with you anything requires further investigation, this will be fed back to the relevant teams. This can help provide better care for other patients and families in the future. They will also forward any positive feedback.

What if you do not wish to speak to the Medical Examiner or their team?

We understand this can be a difficult time for many people. Speaking to someone is completely your choice. The Medical Examiner team are trained professionals who can guide and help you during this time. If you prefer them to speak with someone else in your family this is acceptable, and the Medical Examiner team will be very understanding of your wishes.

Will the service delay the funeral arrangements?

Medical Examiners make every effort to avoid any delays and working with families to enable death registration in a timely manner. Each case will be dealt with individually and when necessary, the team will support families with a request for the urgent release of their relative.

Medical Examiners are an independent service led by NHS England, hosted by Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust.

Please get in contact with us by e-mail or telephone.

Email: bht.buckinghamshirermedicalexaminerofficers@nhs.net

Telephone: 01296 831919

You can also find further information about Medical Examiners on the internet at:

[NHS England »The national medical examiner system](#)