

Medical Examiner Southampton (MES)
Hosted by University Hospital Southampton (UHS)
Preparation for Statutory System April 2023

27 February 2023

**To all Practice Managers and General Practitioners:
Southampton City and Hampshire**

Dear Colleagues,

Community Roll Out of The Medical Examiner System

The Medical Examiner system will become a national statutory requirement by April 2023 when all **non-coronial** deaths will need to have independent and proportionate scrutiny. The national proposed changes are primarily in place to safeguard the public as well as ensure robust reporting of all deaths and subsequent certification.

Medical Examiners (ME) are Hospital Clinicians and General Practitioners, who are employed by UHS and are supported by Medical Examiner Officers (MEO) providing scrutiny of all deaths, hospital and community in the 5 days prior to registration.

The ME provides proportionate scrutiny to arrive at an independent conclusion. If they then agree with the proposed cause of death made by you as the attending GP, there is no further need for discussion. However, if there any queries then a brief discussion may be needed (see attached flow chart).

Our ME can offer advice around the complexities of death certification, which we realise can be very difficult for practitioners to navigate.

Although we are mindful that currently you are under immense service pressures, we are asking all of you to consider starting the process of referring/discussing all community and care home deaths with Medical Examiner Southampton (MES).

The process is currently running across the Solent based GP practices, Southampton City North PCN and a few practices across Southampton West. Feedback so far has allowed us to adapt in an endeavour to make the process more efficient. We have and will continue to work with the LMC to ensure this is the case.

The ME will need access to a certain level of patient information and proposed cause of death to provide proportionate scrutiny of the case. We have worked to create an Ardens template to collect this information easily from the GP record. This will need to be sent across via email from an administrator's account.

Ardens templates: System 1 and EMIS Web

System 1 Practices

Please use the Ardens Template for death documentation and attach the last 3 months clinical information to allow proportionate scrutiny. Individual primary care practices can also request smartcard details for the ME/MEOs which will also allow MES to directly access the patients notes once notified of a death.

EMIS WEB Practices

Please use the Ardens Template for death documentation. You can find the template by going into 'Documents' then 'Add Letter' and search for 'Medical Examiner'. Please add the last 3 months of consultations manually whilst populating the letter template.

In time, MES will have direct access to System 1 and read only access to EMIS WEB. This is currently under negotiations at the ICS level, so please bear with us as we use the existing system.

It may be helpful to read this letter alongside the guidance from the LMC about death certification. ["Wessex LMCs: Death certification \(MCCD\) process from 25th March 2022 following expiry of the Coronavirus Act temporary provisions"](#)

MES - Meet the team

CMO UHS and Responsible Officer for MES

- Paul Grundy

Director of UHS Charities, Patient Experience

- Ellis Banfield

Head of Patient and Family Relations

- Debbie Watson

Medical Examiner Officer (MEO)

- Clare McCormick
- Megan Newman
- Sarah Rudman
- Tracy Sainsbury

Regional Team

- **Regional ME**
Zoe Helmsley, Consultant Geriatrician, Portsmouth
- **Regional MEO**
Amanda Martin, Portsmouth

Registrar of Births and Deaths

- Nicky Maynard

Crematorium Registrar

- Mike Baker

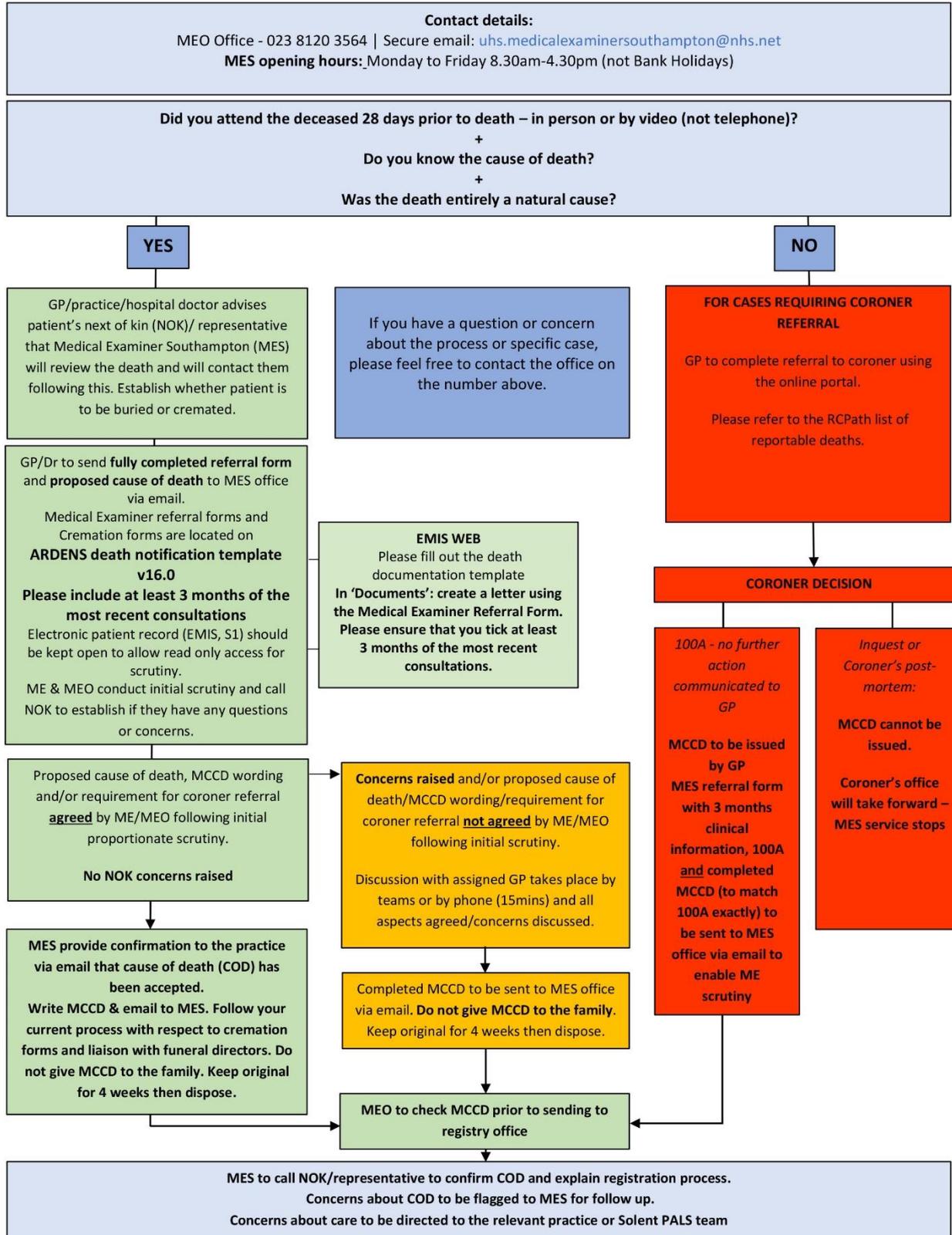
- **Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton Senior Coroner:**
 - Mr Christopher Wilkinson
- **Lead Medical Examiners**
 - Harnish Patel, Consultant Geriatrician
 - Paul Wharton, GP Lordshill Health Centre

Medical Examiners

- Sarah Bell, GP, Living Well Practice
- Lucy Dennison Specialty Doctor Geriatrics
- Laura Edwards, GP,
- Jonathan Fennell Consultant Intensivist
- Bryan Green Consultant Histopathologist
- Suvitesh Luthra Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon
- Nick Maskery, Consultant Emergency Care
- Tom Pierce, Consultant Intensivist, CICU
- John Pappachan, Consultant Intensivist, PICU
- Sarah Robinson Consultant Emergency Care
- David Sparkes Consultant Intensivist
- Robert Wheeler Consultant Paediatric Surgeon
- Philip White, GP Urgent Care

Community MES referral Ver. 6 [230223]

Medical Examiner Southampton (MES)
Community Death Reporting: Southampton City, Solent NHS Trust & Hampshire GP Practices



Proposed actions:

Although the statutory deadline is not until April we would suggest that an early start would allow time for everyone to bring in the system slowly. We therefore request that all practices:

- 1) Locate the Ardens template Death Notification Templet v16 and respective referral forms
- 2) Begin to discuss start dates within your individual practices and/or PCN and
- 3) Inform our service via a quick email when you intend to start referring in

Helpful step by step tips for both the primary care team and care home staff advising family members or next of kin:

- Inform them that the cause of death (COD), if known, will need to be communicated to MES together with a copy of the patient notes by the responsible GP
- If COD agreed by ME/MEO, the MCCD can then be issued by the GP, electronically sent to MES who will give it a final check and send it electronically to the registrar's office.
- The family/NOK then make an appointment online with the registry office to complete registration. This process can take up to 48 hours.
- The MCCD will not be given to the family/NOK by the GP practice. The GP practice will retain the paper copy of the MCCD for 4 weeks and will then be destroyed*.
- If cause of death not known/or for certain cases e.g., recent falls or treatment associated deaths, then the case will need to be referred to the coroner who will provide subsequent liaison. This process can take up to 5 days.
- If the coroner agrees to the proposed cause of death by the GP, they will issue a form 100a which allows the GP to write the MCCD and send to MES. This process can take up to 5 days.

**Stipulated by the National General Registry Office*

We realise this will involve some changes both for admin teams and clinicians. We intend to be supportive and mindful of the challenges the NHS is facing at this time and particularly that you are as General Practice on the frontline.

Thank you for your collective consideration and thank you for all the work you do, we appreciate these are tough times. Please do ask the team if you have any questions.

You can read more about the Medical Examiner system here:

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

Dr Harnish Patel



On behalf of MES

Harnish.patel@uhs.nhs.uk

Mr Paul Grundy



CMO, University Hospital Southampton

Cc

For reference: Royal College of Pathologists Cause of Death List