

National Medical Examiner update

December 2019

Welcome

With regional medical examiner officers for all seven regions in England and the lead medical examiner officer for Wales now appointed, our national and regional infrastructure is almost complete and should be fully up and running by February 2020. I'm sure most host organisations have already had contact with their regional team or the NWSSP in Wales.

We have also appointed a finance analyst to develop the requirements for reimbursement in England of agreed costs not covered by fees from cremation form 5.

The regional medical examiners, the Lead Medical Examiner for Wales and the regional medical examiner officers will all meet for the first time in early December in London to discuss progress. I am very pleased that so many acute providers have already implemented medical examiner systems or have advanced plans for doing so.

Following consultation with stakeholders, we are finalising some good practice guidelines for medical examiners and will publish these shortly.

The Royal College of Pathologists is planning a medical examiner conference on 16 June 2020, a further indication of the growing strength and maturity of the medical examiner community.

Dr Alan Fletcher, National Medical Examiner for England and Wales

What's included in this update

- National and regional infrastructure
- Good practice guidelines
- Funding the national medical examiner system
- Medical examiner and medical examiner officer training

National and regional infrastructure

The regional medical examiner officers have now all been appointed. Rebecca Protopsaltis (South West) and Margaret Butler (North West) are already in post and the others will all take up their roles by the end of February 2020. Daisy Shale has started as the lead medical examiner officer for Wales.

We have also appointed Renée Dekenah as our finance analyst to develop systems for reimbursing agreed medical examiner office costs in England.

Good practice guidelines

We are finalising good practice guidelines to help ensure medical examiners implement a consistent approach across England and Wales and host organisations follow the national model during the non-statutory period. These will combine learning from medical examiner offices that are up and running and information about principles and operational matters that addresses many of the questions host organisations are asking.

Funding the national medical examiner system

We confirmed in September 2019 that NHS England and NHS Improvement will reimburse host organisations for agreed costs not covered by income from cremation forms. In response to requests from several NHS trusts for more detail, we have outlined the information that will be required. We expect to provide host organisations in England with the necessary details in time to invoice in the new year for costs incurred in the first three-quarters of 2019/20. Similar invoicing arrangements for the same period will be in place between DHSC and the Welsh government. We continue to encourage communication via the funding national medical examiner mailbox.

As mentioned in our September 2019 letter to medical directors, funding is also available for the recruitment of medical examiners and medical examiner officers between April 2019 and 31 March 2020: up to £750 per individual recruited. So, if three medical examiners are recruited in 2019/20 to fill one FTE medical examiner role, the employing

organisation can claim £2,250 (3 X £750). Please have preliminary discussions regarding the mechanism for financial reimbursement with your regional medical examiner and email funding.nme@nhs.net

Medical examiner and medical examiner officer training

The numbers of colleagues taking advantage of the Royal College of Pathologists' medical examiner face-to-face training and the Health Education England e-learning hub continue to climb. Currently:

- 10,731 have registered for the medical examiner e-learning
- 630 have completed the 26 e-learning modules
- 413 have completed the face-to-face medical examiner training
- 179 have booked onto future courses
- 181 have become members of the Royal College of Pathologists.

Thirty-nine delegates attended the College's first face-to-face training day for medical examiner officers on 5 November 2019. Future dates are 17 March and 6 May 2020. Details of future training for both medical examiners and medical examiner officers can be found on [its website](#). Due to demand an extra date for medical examiner training (19 February 2020) has been added, and additional places added to the existing dates to increase capacity.

The College will notify anyone on the waiting list for the training as places become available.

The Royal College of Pathologists has also arranged a medical examiner conference on 16 June 2020.

Contact details

We encourage you to continue to raise queries with us and share your thoughts on the introduction of medical examiners.

In England

National Medical Examiner's office based at NHS England and NHS Improvement:

- for general enquiries: nme@nhs.net

- for enquiries about the National Medical Examiner’s diary: Helen Hill, helen.hill6@nhs.net
- for enquiries about implementation: Nick Day, nickday@nhs.net
- for funding enquiries: funding.nme@nhs.net

Regional medical examiners:

- East of England – Ellen Makings, ellen.makings1@nhs.net
- London – Mette Rodgers, metterodgers@nhs.net
- Midlands – Ben Lobo, benjamin.lobo@nhs.net
- North East & Yorkshire – Graham Cooper, graham.cooper11@nhs.net
- North West – Huw Twamley, huw.twamley@nhs.net
- South East – Zoe Hemsley, zoe.hemsley1@nhs.net
- South West – nme@nhs.net

In Wales

- for enquiries about implementation in Wales: Andrew Evans, Andrew.evans@nhs.wales.uk or Daisy Shale, Daisy.shale@wales.nhs.uk

Further information

Further information about the programme, including previous editions of this bulletin, can be found on the [national medical examiner](#) webpage.

NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership also has a webpage on the medical examiner system in Wales: www.nwssp.wales.nhs.uk/medical-examiner-service

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