

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB DETAILS	
Job Title	Medical Examiner Officer
Reports to	Senior Medical Examiner Officer
Band	5 – Subject to formal matching
Department	Medical Examiner Office

JOB PURPOSE
- The Medical Examiner Officer (MEO) supports the Medical Examiner Service in delivering independent scrutiny of deaths in accordance with national guidance, statutory requirements. Working closely with Medical Examiners (ME), the post holder prepares and reviews cases, analyses healthcare records and facilitates the timely progression of deaths through the Medical Examiner process. - The post holder acts as a key point of contact for bereaved relatives, providing compassionate support, information and guidance, and ensuring that any concerns regarding the care provided to the deceased are appropriately identified and escalated. The role requires effective communication with a wide range of stakeholders, including healthcare professionals, HM Coroner's Office, registration services, bereavement teams and external agencies. - The Medical Examiner Officer contributes to patient safety, clinical governance and quality improvement by identifying concerns, supporting mortality review processes and maintaining accurate records and reporting systems. - The post holder has a significant impact on the experience of bereaved relatives by ensuring they receive a responsive, compassionate and professional service during a highly sensitive and emotionally challenging time.

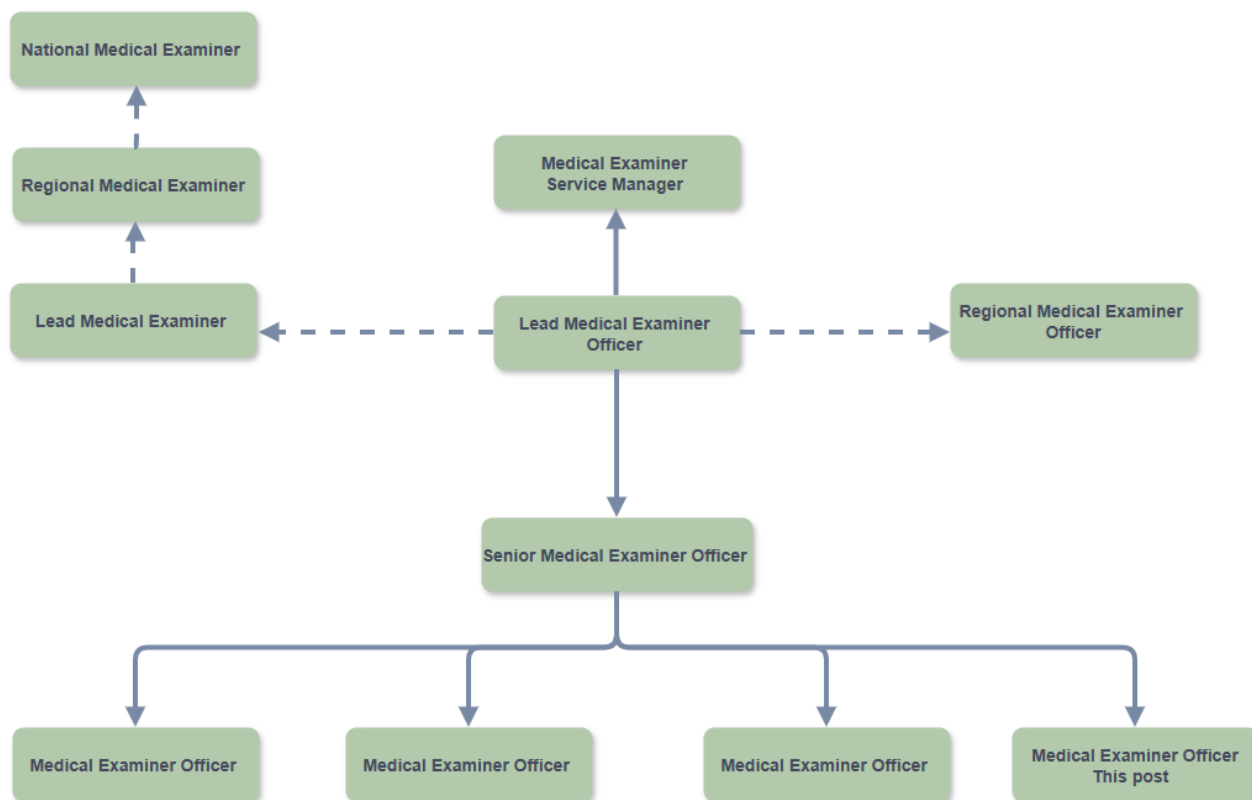
KEY RESULT AREAS/PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
- Support Medical Examiners (MEs) in the independent scrutiny of deaths by preparing and reviewing cases in accordance with national Medical Examiner guidance and local procedures. - Undertake initial screening and review of healthcare records and associated documentation to identify relevant clinical and circumstantial information required for Medical Examiner scrutiny. - Assist Medical Examiners in the oversight of the death certification process, ensuring all relevant information is available to support informed decision-making. - Identify cases that may require referral to HM Coroner and, where delegated, facilitate or undertake referrals in accordance with agreed procedures. - Support Medical Examiners in discussions regarding the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) and ensure documentation is progressed accurately and efficiently. - Recognise omissions, inconsistencies, discrepancies or concerns arising from case review and escalate these appropriately to the Medical Examiner. - Act as a key point of contact for bereaved relatives and carers throughout the Medical Examiner process. - Maintain professionalism, confidentiality and respect at all times when dealing with highly sensitive personal information and discussions relating to death and dying.

KEY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS
The post holder is required to deal effectively with staff of all levels throughout the Trust as and when they encounter on a day-to-day basis. In addition, the post holder will deal with the wider healthcare community, external organisations and the public. This will include verbal, written and electronic media.

Of particular importance are working relationships with:

Internal to the Trust	External to the Trust
• Medical Examiners • Hospital Doctors of all levels • Senior Nursing staff and other ward staff • Safety and Risk Team • PALs Team • Trust Mortality Lead • End of Life Teams • Divisional Governance Managers • Clinical Governance leads • Bereavement Team • Mortuary	• The Bereaved, carers and executors / solicitors • National Medical Examiner • Regional Medical Examiner and Officer • HM Coroner and Officers • GP's and Practice Staff • Hospice Staff • Registrars of Birth Marriages and Deaths • Funeral Directors

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



FREEDOM TO ACT

- Works within established policies, procedures, national Medical Examiner guidance, and relevant legislation.
- Required to work independently on a day-to-day basis, managing a caseload of deaths referred to the Medical Examiner service and identifying issues that require escalation.
- Work is managed rather than supervised, with performance reviewed through regular meetings, appraisal, and adherence to national standards, local policies, and service objectives. Refers complex, sensitive, unusual, or contentious matters to the Medical Examiner, Lead Medical Examiner Officer where appropriate.

- The post holder works independently within established procedures, exercising judgement, prioritising a varied workload and contributing to the delivery and ongoing development of a responsive, high-quality Medical Examiner Service

COMMUNICATION/RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

- Communicate effectively, compassionately and sensitively with bereaved relatives, carers and other stakeholders, frequently discussing complex and sensitive matters relating to death, bereavement and the Medical Examiner scrutiny process.
- Use judgement and empathy to adapt communication styles to meet individual needs, levels of understanding and emotional circumstances. Recognise and respond appropriately to sensitive, challenging or emotionally distressing situations, using tact, diplomacy and empathy. Address inappropriate behaviour or communication in a professional manner and escalate concerns to the Lead Medical Examiner Officer, Lead Medical Examiner.
- Manage challenging or contentious conversations in a professional and supportive manner, ensuring clear, accurate and timely information is provided.
- Develop and maintain effective verbal, non-verbal and written communication with members of the multidisciplinary team and a wide range of internal and external stakeholders, including Medical Examiners, clinicians, nursing staff, Bereavement Services, Mortuary staff, HM Coroner's Office, registration services and funeral directors.
- Provide accurate advice, guidance and information regarding Medical Examiner processes, death certification requirements and associated procedures to bereaved families, healthcare professionals and other service users, ensuring information is communicated in a clear, timely and professional manner.
- Establish and maintain positive working relationships with colleagues across the Medical Examiner Service and wider organisation, contributing to an open, supportive and collaborative team culture.

ANALYTICAL/JUDGEMENTAL SKILLS

- Analyse information from multiple sources, including healthcare records, discussions with clinicians, bereaved relatives and external agencies, to ensure accurate preparation of cases for Medical Examiner scrutiny.
- Exercise judgement when assessing whether deaths meet criteria for referral to HM Coroner, identifying issues requiring further clarification and escalating concerns appropriately.
- Review and interpret complex clinical and administrative information, identifying omissions, inconsistencies and discrepancies which may impact the completion of scrutiny, death certification or statutory processes.
- Recognise actual or potential patient safety concerns, clinical governance issues and themes emerging from case reviews, escalating these through the appropriate channels in accordance with local and national guidance.
- Assess concerns raised by bereaved relatives, determining the appropriate course of action and ensuring issues are investigated or escalated in a timely manner.
- Provides advice and guidance to staff on Medical Examiner processes and administrative requirements.
- Use initiative to resolve routine operational problems and to obtain information from clinical teams to support the Medical Examiner scrutiny process.
- Provide informal advice and guidance to colleagues within the Medical Examiner Service and wider organisation on matters relating to the scrutiny process, death certification and service procedures.
- Use judgement to identify incomplete, inaccurate or inconsistent information and take appropriate action to obtain clarification or corrections from relevant sources.

PLANNING/ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS

- Plan, prioritise, and organise a caseload of deaths referred to the Medical Examiner Service, managing competing demands and ensuring statutory, organisational, and service deadlines are met within a fast-paced environment.
- Organise and prepare cases for Medical Examiner scrutiny by gathering and reviewing relevant documentation, liaising with clinical teams and ensuring all required information is available in a timely manner.

- Coordinate communication with bereaved relatives, Medical Examiners, clinicians, bereavement services, HM Coroner's Office, registration services and other stakeholders to facilitate the efficient progression of cases.
- Adapt plans and priorities in response to fluctuating workloads, urgent referrals and unforeseen issues while maintaining service quality and compliance with national Medical Examiner guidance.
- Coordinate and monitor the progress of cases through the Medical Examiner process, identifying potential delays and taking proactive action to minimise disruption to bereaved families and service stakeholders.
- Exercises judgement in prioritising workload, planning daily activities, and responding to queries from bereaved families, healthcare professionals, and external agencies.
- Work closely with Medical Examiners, Medical Examiner Officers and other professionals to ensure effective coordination of information and timely progression of cases.
- Prioritise and manage a diverse caseload, balancing competing demands and responding to changing service pressures while meeting required timescales.

PATIENT/CLIENT CARE

- Provide information and guidance to relatives and carers regarding death certification processes, registration procedures and relevant support services.
- Support the Medical Examiner in ensuring that the views and concerns of bereaved families are heard and considered as part of the scrutiny process.
- Ensure service users receive accurate, timely and appropriate information, responding to enquiries and resolving routine issues within own level of authority.
- Recognise where individuals may require additional support and signpost them to appropriate services and sources of information.
- Report actual or potential risks, incidents and governance concerns in accordance with Trust policies, contributing to a culture of continuous service improvement and patient safety.

POLICY/SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

- Implement and adhere to national policies and standard operating procedures relating to the Medical Examiner Service, death certification and associated processes.
- Contribute to the development, review and improvement of local working practices and procedures, identifying opportunities to improve service effectiveness, efficiency and the experience of bereaved families.
- Assist in the implementation of new policies, guidance, service developments and system changes, ensuring changes are embedded into day-to-day practice.
- Participate in team discussions and projects aimed at developing and improving Medical Examiner processes and service delivery.
- Promote best practice and support colleagues in the consistent application of policies, procedures and national Medical Examiner standards.
- Identify trends, recurring themes and areas for service improvement from information gathered during the scrutiny process and communicate these to senior colleagues as appropriate.
- Support the planning and organisation of service developments, audits, training activities and the implementation of new procedures as directed by the Lead Medical Examiner Officer or Medical Examiner.
- Contribute to service improvement initiatives by identifying opportunities to enhance processes, workflow efficiency and the overall effectiveness of the Medical Examiner Service.

FINANCIAL/PHYSICAL RESOURCES

- The post holder is responsible for the safe and efficient use of office equipment, IT systems and information resources. There is no direct budgetary responsibility

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Demonstrate own duties and work practices to new or less experienced staff, providing day-to-day guidance and support as required.

- Contribute to the induction and orientation of new Medical Examiner Officers ensuring they are familiar with departmental processes, systems and procedures.
- Support colleagues in developing knowledge and understanding of Medical Examiner processes, national guidance and local policies.
- Support Medical Examiners and lead / senior Medical Examiner Officer's in the delivery of training and awareness sessions for healthcare professionals and administrative staff regarding the Medical Examiner Service and associated procedures.
- Support the development of a positive team culture by promoting effective communication, collaborative working and mutual respect.
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour in a professional manner and escalate concerns regarding conduct, performance or wellbeing to the Lead Medical Examiner Officer or appropriate manager in accordance with Trust policies.
- The post holder has no direct line management responsibility but provides advice to students, new starters and other staff accessing the Medical Examiner Service. The post holder contributes to workforce development through the sharing of knowledge, skills and best practice.
- Support and encourage colleagues to develop confidence and professionalism in communication skills, sharing knowledge and best practice where appropriate.
- Keep up to date with developments in Medical Examiner practice, relevant legislation, national guidance and best practice, incorporating learning into day-to-day activities.

INFORMATION RESOURCES

- Maintain accurate and timely electronic records, case-tracking systems, databases and reports relating to the Medical Examiner Service, ensuring the integrity, security and confidentiality of highly sensitive information.
- Contribute to the maintenance of accurate records, databases and reporting systems to support service monitoring, governance and continuous improvement.
- Collate, validate and analyse information from patient records, clinical documentation, healthcare professionals and bereaved relatives to support case progression, audit, governance, performance monitoring and service improvement activities.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Participate in audits, service evaluations and quality improvement initiatives within the Medical Examiner Service, ensuring accurate collection and recording of relevant information.
- Assist in the gathering, analysis and presentation of data to support service monitoring, performance reporting, governance requirements and continuous improvement activities.
- Participate in the investigation and review of incidents, concerns and complaints relevant to the Medical Examiner Service, contributing information as required.
- Support audits, quality improvement initiatives and service evaluations by collecting, maintaining and analysing information relevant to the Medical Examiner Service.

PHYSICAL SKILLS

- The post holder requires standard keyboard skills.

PHYSICAL EFFORT

- The role requires frequent sitting. Physical effort is generally light but includes sustained keyboard use over extended periods.

MENTAL EFFORT

- Frequent requirement for concentration when reviewing complex healthcare records, analysing clinical and non-clinical information, and preparing cases for Medical Examiner scrutiny.
- Regularly works with highly sensitive and confidential information, requiring a high degree of accuracy and attention to detail when identifying discrepancies, omissions, concerns and required actions.
- Regularly switches between different tasks and complex cases throughout the working day, requiring continual reprioritisation and adaptation to changing service demands.

EMOTIONAL EFFORT

- Frequently provides support and information to bereaved relatives and carers, communicating with empathy and sensitivity during periods of grief and distress.
- Regularly deals with highly sensitive and potentially distressing information relating to death, dying, bereavement, serious incidents and patient safety concerns.
- Uses emotional resilience and professionalism when handling difficult, sensitive or occasionally contentious conversations with bereaved families and other stakeholders.
- Works in an environment where exposure to themes of death and bereavement is a daily occurrence and where discussions regarding the circumstances of death form a routine part of the role.
- Provides support to colleagues and contributes to a supportive team culture when dealing with the emotional demands associated with Medical Examiner work.
- Required to work in environments where there may be exposure to unpleasant sights, including viewing information relating to traumatic, unexpected or complex deaths.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- The role involves frequent use of display screen equipment and electronic information systems for prolonged periods and the manipulation of clinical and administrative records.
- Works predominantly in an office environment using computer systems and electronic patient records for prolonged periods.
- Occasional exposure to unpleasant working conditions when visiting mortuary facilities, wards, clinical departments or areas where deceased patients are cared for.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Take part in regular performance appraisal.

Undertake any training required in order to maintain competency including mandatory training, e.g. Manual Handling

Contribute to and work within a safe working environment

You are expected to comply with Trust Infection Control Policies and conduct him/herself at all times in such a manner as to minimise the risk of healthcare associated infection

As an employee of the Trust, it is a contractual duty that you abide by any relevant code of professional conduct and/or practice applicable to you. A breach of this requirement may result in action being taken against you (in accordance with the Trust's disciplinary policy) up to and including dismissal.

You must also take responsibility for your workplace health and wellbeing:

- When required, gain support from Occupational Health, Human Resources or other sources.
- Familiarise yourself with the health and wellbeing support available from policies and/or Occupational Health.
- Follow the Trust's health and wellbeing vision of healthy body, healthy mind, healthy you.
- Undertake a Display Screen Equipment assessment (DSE) if appropriate to role.

GENERAL

This is a description of the job as it is now. We periodically examine employees' job descriptions and update them to ensure that they reflect the job as it is then being performed, or to incorporate any changes being proposed. This procedure is conducted by the manager in consultation with the jobholder. You will, therefore, be expected to participate fully in such discussions. We aim to reach agreement on reasonable changes, but if agreement is not possible, we reserve the right to insist on changes to your job description after consultation with you.

Everyone within the Trust has a responsibility for, and is committed to, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults, children and young people and for ensuring that they are protected from harm, ensuring that the Trusts Child Protection and Safeguarding Adult policies and procedures are promoted and adhered to by all members of staff.

At the Royal Devon, we are committed to reducing our carbon emissions and minimising the impact of healthcare on the environment, as outlined in our Green Plan available on our website. We actively promote sustainable practices and encourage colleagues to explore and implement greener ways of working within their roles.

Subject to matching

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title	Medical Examiner Officer
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Requirements	Essential	Desirable
QUALIFICATION/ SPECIAL TRAINING		
Degree level qualification in a relevant subject area, or equivalent knowledge and experience gained through working in a related field.	E	
Completion of the Medical Examiner Officer e-Learning for Healthcare training programme, or willingness to complete the required modules within an agreed timeframe.	E	
Evidence of continued professional development relevant to the role.	E	
Bereavement Care Training.		D
Training in conflict resolution, mediation or handling difficult conversations.		D
KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS		
Excellent communication skills with the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders, including bereaved relatives, clinicians and external agencies.	E	
Good working knowledge of medical terminology to support discussions relating to causes of death, clinical care and scrutiny processes.	E	
Knowledge of the Medical Examiner system, its purpose and role within healthcare governance and patient safety.	E	
Knowledge of the legal and statutory requirements relating to death certification and associated processes.	E	
Ability to analyse and interpret complex healthcare records and information from a variety of sources.	E	
Work effectively across professional boundaries, developing and maintaining collaborative relationships with staff at all levels and contributing positively within a multidisciplinary team in a changing environment.	E	
Strong organisational skills with the ability to manage competing priorities and meet deadlines.	E	
Competent in the use of Microsoft Office applications and electronic patient record systems.	E	
Ability to exercise sound judgement and escalate concerns appropriately	E	
Professional and courteous approach when dealing with all stakeholders	E	
Knowledge of the Coroners and Justice Act and Medical Examiner Regulations.		D
Knowledge of patient safety, clinical governance and mortality review processes.		D
Knowledge of Datix or other incident reporting systems.		D
Knowledge of faith, cultural and religious practices relating to death and bereavement.		D
Working knowledge of healthcare systems and NHS structures.		D
EXPERIENCE		
Highly developed empathy, emotional intelligence and self-awareness skills, with the ability to support bereaved families experiencing distress or barriers to understanding.	E	
Demonstrable experience of working within a healthcare, public sector or closely related environment.	E	
Experience of working with people in sensitive, complex or emotionally challenging situations.	E	

• Experience of communicating with a wide range of people, including those who may be distressed or anxious.	E	
• Experience of working as part of a multidisciplinary team	E	
• Evidence of excellent verbal and written communication skills.	E	
• Experience of managing conflicting priorities and working to deadlines.	E	
• Experience within Bereavement Services, Medical Examiner Services or Mortuary Services.		D
• Experience of supporting service improvement and change initiatives.		D
• Experience of end-of-life care services or supporting bereaved families.		D
• Experience of patient safety, governance, complaints or incident management processes.		D
• PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES		
• Patient-centred and compassionate approach	E	
• Approachable, supportive and non-judgemental manner	E	
• Ability to remain calm and professional when working in challenging and emotive situations.	E	
• Meticulous approach to accuracy and attention to detail.	E	
• Ability to prioritise workload and meet deadlines.	E	
• Resilient and able to work effectively under pressure.	E	
• Adaptable and flexible approach to work.	E	
• Ability to maintain confidentiality and handle sensitive information appropriately.	E	
• Demonstrates initiative and a proactive approach to problem solving.		D
• Interest in service development and quality improvement.		D
• OTHER REQUIREMENTS		
• Demonstrates a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of work.	E	
• Ability to travel between sites as required.	E	

WORKING CONDITIONS/HAZARDS		FREQUENCY (Rare/ Occasional/ Moderate/ Frequent)			
		R	O	M	F
Hazards/ Risks requiring Immunisation Screening					
Laboratory specimens	N				
Contact with patients	N				
Exposure Prone Procedures	N				
Blood/body fluids	N				
Hazard/Risks requiring Respiratory Health Surveillance					
Solvents (e.g. toluene, xylene, white spirit, acetone, formaldehyde and ethyl acetate)	N				
Respiratory sensitisers (e.g isocyanates)	N				
Chlorine based cleaning solutions (e.g. Chlorclean, Actichlor, Tristel)	N				
Animals	N				
Cytotoxic drugs	N				
Risks requiring Other Health Surveillance					
Radiation (>6mSv)	N				
Laser (Class 3R, 3B, 4)	N				
Dusty environment (>4mg/m3)	N				
Noise (over 80dBA)	N				
Hand held vibration tools (=>2.5 m/s2)	N				
Other General Hazards/ Risks					
VDU use (> 1 hour daily)	Y				F
Heavy manual handling (>10kg)	N				
Driving	N				
Food handling	N				
Night working	N				
Electrical work	N				
Physical Effort	N				
Mental Effort	Y				F
Emotional Effort	Y				F
Working in isolation	Y		O		
Challenging behaviour	Y	R			