

JOB DESCRIPTION

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| **JOB DETAILS** | |
| **Job Title** | Medical Examiner Officer |
| **Reports to** | Senior Medical Examiner Officer |
| **Band** | 5 |
| **Department** | Medical Examiner Office |

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| **JOB PURPOSE** |
| To participate in the implementation of the reforms of death certification and to aim to improve the processes of death certification and referrals to the Coroner.  To work with the senior medical examiner team to maintain the Medical Examiners Service.  To support Medical Examiners in their role in scrutinising the circumstances and causes of death and identify any immediate learning to feedback to individuals or teams.  To be a point of contact for relatives of deceased patients providing sympathetic assistance and supporting them through the procedures required, healthcare professionals and Coroner and registration services.  Provide administrative support to medical staff to enable and ensure the prompt completion of the paperwork necessary following the death of a patient.  Provide support and advice to all service users across the Trust on issues surrounding death (National, local and Trust policies) to enable them to fulfil their duties of care for the deceased patient.  The successful candidate will be working across both sites within the trust. |
| **KEY RESULT AREAS/PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| * Support Medical Examiners in their role in scrutinising the circumstances and causes of death and identify any immediate learning to be fed back to individuals or teams. * Contact and discuss the agreed cause of death and any concerns about care with bereaved relatives in a transparent, tactful and sympathetic manner. Respect the diverse needs of bereaved relatives considering gender, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability. * Have a working knowledge of medical conditions, treatments and medicines which may or may not have contributed to death, and be able to exercise clinical judgement in when to seek further advice from the Medical Examiner, senior or lead Medical Examiner Officer. * Be a point of contact and source of advice for relatives of deceased patients, healthcare professionals, and the coroner and registration services. Work closely with the bereavement team, PALS team and the End of Life Care team where a death may result in a complaint or concern. * Support Medical Examiners to identify cases where there are issues with the care provided that may need to be reported as an adverse incident or serious incident investigation to the Safety and Risk Team. * Have a working knowledge of various faith groups’ funeral wishes/practices to enable respectful compliance with tight and specific timescales and procedures. |
| **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 | |  |  | |  |  | |  |  | |

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| **ORGANISATIONAL CHART** |
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| **FREEDOM TO ACT** |
| * The post holder will be required to act autonomously within the appropriate clinical/professional guidelines and refer to the Medical Examiner or senior member of staff as needed. |
| **COMMUNICATION/RELATIONSHIP SKILLS** |
| * To have experience of a customer-facing service where users may have unpredictable, highly emotive and emotionally charged needs. * Excellent communication and interpersonal skills. * Highly evolved empathetic and self-awareness skills to deal with bereaved families who may have barriers to understanding information due to their grief or disability. * Ability to communicate sensitive and distressing information effectively to a variety of people where there may be barriers to understanding. * To have an understanding of medical terminology that enables discussions about causes/circumstances of death with bereaved families, clinicians, coroner and registration service staff. * Extend the reach of the service to support the Trust medical teams in their responsibilities to complete paperwork following a patient’s death. This may include attending wards. * Have a knowledge of the legislation for post mortems and be aware of consent post mortems and direct medical teams accordingly where required. * Provide support and advice to maternity staff following a neonatal death giving information and advice on documentation. * Ensure communication meets the needs of relatives taking into consideration the level of understanding, and any barriers that may impact on the individual receiving and understanding the information and the implications it may have. * Give consideration to the religious and cultural beliefs of the deceased and families. * Provide assistance to those providing a bereavement service in the wider community. * To attend Medical Examiner Officer Team meetings. * Act as an intermediary between the bereaved and clinicians to establish and resolve any concerns relating to a patient’s death. * Work with Medical Examiners to aid them in their responsibility for overseeing the death certification process for all deceased patients. * To assist the QAP with formulation of cause of death, from cases history and medical notes. * There is significant emotional effort associated with dealing with bereaved families. |
| **ANALYTICAL/JUDGEMENTAL SKILLS** |
| * The post holder will need to perform a preliminary review of the health care records to identify clinical and circumstantial information, seeking additional details where required, for scrutiny by the Medical Examiner. * Be able to juggle conflicting demands, prioritise tasks and deal with queries as they arise. * Identify relatives’ concerns and escalate them appropriately. |
| **PLANNING/ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS** |
| * Knowledge of the statutory process around death certification legal frameworks and how the medical examiner system aligns with other related organisations and NHS initiatives. * Hold and maintain securely: M.C.C.D. books, cremation forms, body release forms, patient case notes and any other confidential documentation. To maintain security and confidentiality in all matters relating to patient information. It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of their obligations in respect of the Data Protection Act 1998. * To maintain and improve professional skills and knowledge by attending appropriate courses, meetings and conferences as part of your continuing professional development. * Annually attend Appraisal with the Lead or Senior Medical Examiner.   . |
| **PATIENT/CLIENT CARE** |
| * Support Medical Examiners in their role in scrutinising the circumstances and causes of death and identify any immediate learning to be fed back to individuals or teams. * Be aware of medical conditions, treatments and medicines which may or may not have contributed to death, and be aware of when to escalate these. * Be a point of contact and source of advice for relatives of deceased patients, healthcare professionals, and the Coroner and registration services. Work closely with the Bereavement Support team, PALS and the End of Life Care team where a death may result in a complaint or concern and liaise with the Legal Service where an inquest is likely to be held. * Specialist knowledge of various faith groups’ funeral wishes/practices to enable respectful compliance with tight and specific timescales and procedures. * Identify relatives concerns and escalate them appropriately. |
| **POLICY/SERVICE DEVELOPMENT** |
| * Follow SOPs and policies at all times and propose changes as appropriate. * Maintain awareness of changes in Trust policies and procedures and attend statutory and essential training as required. |
| **FINANCIAL/PHYSICAL RESOURCES** |
| * Personal duty of care for ensuring the effective use of stock and equipment in line with the workload requirements. * Personal duty of care for ensuring that equipment is appropriately used, stored, and maintained. |
| **HUMAN RESOURCES** |
| * Provide training for staff to improve their knowledge of the Medical Examiner system and bereavement support process appropriate to role. * Work within Trust HR policies. * Deliver the training within the department as required. * Participate in education and training as associated with and appropriate to the role. * Continually update and maintain own self-development and awareness, identifying and utilising appropriate educational and study resources. * Participate in Trust mandatory training. |
| **INFORMATION RESOURCES** |
| * Full compliance with secure handling of patient identifiable data. * To support the design, testing and implementation of the new eMedical Examiner process. * To assist with maintaining robust electronic records (including My Care Datix MS Office calendar,) of all deaths and to align with current information systems in place. To optimise the way such data is collected and to ensure it is accurate and up to date. * Support and undertake the collation and analysis of a range of patient safety and clinical data identifying trends and areas of particular risk, as directed by Lead Medical Examiner Officer. |
| **RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT** |
| .   * Assist in providing documentation and quality data as required for audit or evaluation of the Medical Examiner System for internal and external purposes as appropriate. * Comply with the Trust’s requirements and undertake surveys as necessary to own work. |
| **PHYSICAL SKILLS** |
| * Keyboard Skills |
| **PHYSICAL EFFORT** |
| * Frequent use of a computer for prolonged periods of time. |
| **MENTAL EFFORT** |
| * Regular interaction with the bereaved relatives in person or over the telephone. The post holder must have the ability to demonstrate empathy and remain professional at all times. * The ability to work in a highly pressurised, unpredictable environment where bereavement care is central to the service delivery. * Need to work under pressure at busy times and multi-task in an organised manner, maintaining composure and a sympathetic approach to the bereaved. * Able to maintain accuracy of documentation and able to check the work of others whilst working under pressure and with constant interruption and changing priorities. |
| **EMOTIONAL EFFORT** |
| * There are significant emotional challenges associated with dealing with bereaved families * Excellent communication skills are required to deal empathetically with bereaved relatives. |
| **WORKING CONDITIONS** |
| * Office based role. * Due to the nature of the role and frequent interaction with the bereaved and nature of the conversations held it is possible that on occasions the bereaved may become angry, which may result in some challenging behaviour. * Working in isolation, following the Trust lone working policy. |
| **OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Take part in regular performance appraisal.  Working across all sites within the Trust.  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 (DES) 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. |

PERSON SPECIFICATION

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| **Job Title** | Senior Medical Examiner Officer |

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| **Requirements** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **QUALIFICATION/ SPECIAL TRAINING**   * 5 or more GCSE’s at C or above to include English, Maths and Science, or equivalent * Batchelor’s Degree or Evidence of Study with in the relevant subject area at a Higher Level or Equivalent working knowledge and / or experience in a related field * A commitment to the concept of lifelong learning and undertaking professional development opportunities * The ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders, including the recently bereaved. * Completion of MEO training on E-Learning for Health, or completion of core modules before commencement in role * Experience of working with people in sensitive and complex situations. * Advanced Communications Skills Training. | E  E  E  E  E  E | D |
| **KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS**   * Highly evolved empathetic and self-awareness skills to deal with bereaved families who may have barriers to understanding information due to their grief or disability * To have a working knowledge of medical terminology that enables informed discussions about cases/circumstances of death with bereaved families, clinicians, The Coroner, Registration Service Staff and Crematorium Referees * Knowledge of the statutory process around death certification legal frameworks and how the Medical Examiner System aligns with other related organisations and NHS initiatives. * Knowledge of the Coroner & Justice Act 2019 reference to the medical examiner system. Full understanding of the medical examiner system operational remit * The ability to work as part of a team in a highly pressurised, unpredictable environment where bereavement care is central to service delivery * Professionalism with all stake holders * Ability to work across professional boundaries with medical staff in different specialities * Competent with IT software systems including MS Outlook, word, PowerPoint, excel, my care Datix * Working knowledge of various faith groups’ funeral wishes/practices to enable respectful compliance with tight and specific timescales and procedures * Strong interpersonal skills demonstrating the ability to communicate in difficult and emotional situations with empathy and professionalism with all stake holders | E  E  E  E  E | D  D  D  D  D |
| **EXPERIENCE**   * Full understanding of the medical examiner system operational remit when incorporated within Bereavement Services or as a stand-alone office * Experience of multi-professional working * Evidence of excellent communications skills. * Ability to support and influence change. * Experience of end of life care or experience in dealing with bereaved relatives * Experience of working with people in sensitive and emotional situations * Minimum of 12 months experience working within a healthcare or public sector setting | E  E  E  E | D  D  D |
| **PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES**   * Patient-centred approach to work. * Approachable and supportive to all levels of staff and bereaved families in a non-judgement and discreet manner * Professional appearance, manner and awareness of impact of own behaviour on others * Ability to maintain a calm manner in a range of challenging and emotive circumstances * Persistent and meticulous approach to accuracy and detail * Able to plan and organise workload * Able to prioritise own work load and meet deadlines * Can remain calm and professional in a busy environment * Empathetic, but able to understand professional boundaries * An adaptable approach to work * Flexible approach to working hours * Commitment to continual development to include. relevant new systems, policies and procedures * Adheres to relevant Trust policies & procedures * Adheres to confidentiality & data protection requirements | E  E  E  E  E  E  E  E  E  E  E  E  E  E |  |
| **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**  The post holder must demonstrate a positive commitment to uphold diversity and equality policies approved by the Trust.  Ability to travel to other locations as required. | E  E |  |

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|  | | **FREQUENCY**  **(Rare/ Occasional/ Moderate/ Frequent)** | | | |
| **WORKING CONDITIONS/HAZARDS** | | **R** | **O** | **M** | **F** |
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| **Hazards/ Risks requiring Immunisation Screening** | |  |  |  |  |
| Laboratory specimens | N |  |  |  |  |
| Contact with patients | N |  |  |  |  |
| Exposure Prone Procedures | N |  |  |  |  |
| Blood/body fluids | N |  |  |  |  |
| Laboratory specimens | N |  |  |  |  |
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| **Hazard/Risks requiring Respiratory Health Surveillance** |  |  |  |  |  |
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| 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 |  |  |  |  |
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| **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 |  |  |  |  |
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| **Other General Hazards/ Risks** | |  |  |  |  |
| VDU use ( > 1 hour daily) | Y |  |  |  | F |
| Heavy manual handling (>10kg) | N |  |  |  |  |
| Driving | Y |  | O |  |  |
| 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 |  |  |  |