

South Tees Medical Examiner Service

Changes in paperwork and process after your loved one has died.

Why is the process changing?

The death certification system in England and Wales has been the same for over 50 years. The government is making changes so that all deaths are reviewed by either a Medical Examiner or a Coroner.

The South Tees Medical Examiner Service is an independent service, hosted by South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The office is located at the James Cook University Hospital and is available to support bereaved people through the first few days after a death, whether the death occurred in hospital or in the community.

Who is the Medical Examiner?

Medical Examiners are senior medical doctors who have completed extra training. Most work in the Medical Examiner Service in addition to their other clinical duties.

What does the Medical Examiner Service do?

When a death occurs, a Medical Examiner will read the recent medical notes and discuss with medical staff involved in the final illness, with the aim of:

- Reviewing the care that was provided during the last illness.
- Providing an opportunity for bereaved people to give feedback.
- Making sure that the cause of the death on the death certificate is accurate.
- Deciding whether there should be further investigation by the coroner.

What this means for you:

The Medical Examiner Service is informed of deaths by the hospital or GP practice. If you are the person listed as 'next of kin':

- You will be contacted by the Medical Examiner team shortly after the death.
- You will be given the opportunity to discuss the cause of death, and the care provided during the last illness.
- You will also be asked about the funeral arrangements. This information is required to ensure the correct paperwork is issued.
- You will be informed whether the death needs to be referred to the coroner for further investigation.
- The Medical Examiner Service will let you know how to arrange to register the death.

The South Tees Medical Examiner Service is open from 08:00 - 16:00 hours Monday to Friday.

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