

Death certification reforms: changes from 9 September 2024

All deaths in England and Wales will be reviewed independently, either by a medical examiner or a coroner.
Medical examiners have a right to access patient records (AHRA 1990) and are obliged to review all records they consider relevant.
No change to deaths that must be referred to a coroner under the Notification of Death Regulations 2019.

Area	Up to 8 September 2024	From 9 September 2024
Attending practitioner	Must have attended in the last illness and seen the patient in the 28 days before death or in person after death.	Must have attended the patient in their lifetime.
Attending practitioner	Sends medical certificate of cause of death (MCCD) to registrar.	Sends MCCD to the medical examiner and must make patient records available.
Registrar	Refers case to the coroner if required.	Refers case to the medical examiner if required.
Coroner	If decides not to investigate, sends form 100A to registrar.	If decides not to investigate, sends form CN1A to attending practitioner and medical examiner (attending practitioner then sends MCCD to medical examiner and makes patient records available).
Coroner	Notifies registrar if investigation discontinued (various local practices).	Sends form CN2 to registrar if investigation discontinued.
MCCD		New MCCD adds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional cause of death information (line 1d) • ethnicity of the deceased (where available) • whether the deceased was pregnant or recently pregnant • presence of medical devices • medical examiner signature/declaration.
Uncertified deaths	Death registered uncertified if no attending practitioner available.	Medical Examiner MCCD for exceptional circumstances if the cause of death is known and natural, attending practitioner not available in reasonable time, and coroner has issued form CN1B.
Informant – time limit for registering death	Within 5 days of death.	Within 5 days of registrar receiving MCCD from medical examiner.
Cremation/medical devices	Medical devices listed on form Cremation 4.	Form Cremation 4 discontinued. Medical devices listed on MCCD by attending practitioner.
Crematorium medical referee	Ensures cause of death established appropriately and coroner referral not required. Can request a post-mortem examination. Checks forms Cremation 1 and 4 for medical devices.	Does not check cause of death. Can no longer request a post-mortem examination. Checks forms Cremation 1 and 6 and form D from registrar for medical devices.

Produced in partnership with the National Medical Examiner.