

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post Title: Senior Medical Examiner Officer

Department: Medical Examiner's Office

Responsible to: Head of Bereavement

Professional Accountability – Lead Medical Examiner

Accountable to: Associate Director of Quality & Governance

Grade: Band 6

Hours: 37.5

Job Summary:

To support medical examiners in their role in scrutinising the circumstances and causes of death. To be a point of contact and source of advice for relatives of deceased patients, healthcare professionals and coroner and registration services.

To contribute to the integration and implementation of systems and processes relating to the Medical Examiners role and the national learning from deaths strategy.

Ensuring internal and external qualitative and quantitative key performance indicators are managed and achieved and that medical and administrative staff involved in the process are appropriately trained and supported to fulfil their responsibilities relating to the Medical Examiner and learning from death agenda.

To act in an expert role to support the roll out of the ME service to General Practice and the community and to ensure that medical and administrative staff involved in the process are appropriately trained in mortality processes and systems, and supported to fulfil their responsibilities relating to the Medical Examiner and learning from death agenda.

Key Result Areas & Performance:

- Provide leadership to the medical examiner officers.
- Responsible for the day to day management of the medical examiner officers including work allocation, performance/attendance issues, participating in recruitment, appraisal and personal development planning and aid them in their responsibility for overseeing the death certification process.
- As an integral part of the ME service, to provide support to the Lead Medical Examiner.
- Implement systems and processes that will ensure compliance with the reporting and governance requirements as directed by the National Medical Examiner's office.
- To assist in developing protocol guidelines and policy as directed by the National Medical Examiner

- Plan, evaluate and implement a preliminary review of medical records to enable scrutiny by the Medical Examiner. Refer patients to the Coroner for further investigation on approval by the Medical Examiner.
- To act as a source of expertise advice knowledge for relatives and health care professionals involved in the process the Medical Examiner.
- Keep the bereaved informed and act as intermediary between them and clinicians to establish and resolve any concerns relating to a patient's death.
- To 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 in the organisation.
- To establish the circumstances of individual patient deaths by performing a preliminary review of medical records to identify clinical and circumstantial information, sourcing additional details where required, for scrutiny by the medical examiner.
- To assist in highlighting cases for assessment by the Structured Judgement Review team (SJR), Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP), Clinical Governance teams and the Learning Disability Review Teams (LeDeR).
- To refer patients to the coroner for further investigation on approval by the medical examiner
- Maintain an awareness of the diverse needs of users of the medical examiner system to ensure equality to any particular group defined by sex, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or disability.
- Work with internal and external stakeholders to ensure statutory requirements are maintained.
- Ensure accurate input of information to and maintenance of required database and information systems.
- The post holder is expected to be able to work on his/her own initiative. judgment is required involving matters and concerns which are complex that will require consideration of the options available
- Develop, maintain and prepare reports to be submitted to the national Medical Examiner. Assist in the preparation of reports for the Mortality Surveillance Group, the Patient Safety Committee and the Trust Quality and Safety Committee. This will involve extracting, analysing and presenting information from databases and IT systems.
- Participate in audit and quality improvement activity as required.
- Challenge, influence and work with relevant teams to ensure the continual improvement of standards.
- Be responsible for investigating both formal and informal complaints at the appropriate level, ensuring they are dealt with sensitively, determining and implementing any action that is required.
- Lead the completion and review of departmental policies and standard operating procedures ensuring these comply with all statutory and organisational requirements

Work Force

- Responsible for day to day management of staff, including work allocation, performance monitoring and sickness absence management in accordance with Trust Policies and Procedures
- To be responsible for the PDR's of the team cross site and their day to day support and management.
- Responsible for the management of the department's annual leave and sickness using the e-rostering system.
- Work with all staff to provide a culture that is developmental, flexible and supportive for all, facilitating effective multidisciplinary relationships.

Information Technology

- Apply high standards of confidentiality across all aspects of work in accordance with Trust policies and procedure.
- Ensure all printed communications comply with the agreed Trust house style guidelines.
- Develop and maintain computer skills with particular emphasis on Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook.

Financial

- Assist with the managing of the department's budget.
- Monitor and maintain stock of stationary and resources, acting as authorised requisitioner to ensure that stocks are replenished.

Most challenging part of the role

- 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.

Physical/Mental Effort and Working Conditions

- There is significant emotional effort associated with dealing with bereaved families.
- To use a computer for prolonged periods of time daily.
- Frequent requirement for concentration, work pattern is predictable.

Internal relationships

- Hospital doctors
- Medical Examiners
- Medical director
- Bereavement officers
- Service managers, nurses, clinical governance leads, patient safety leads

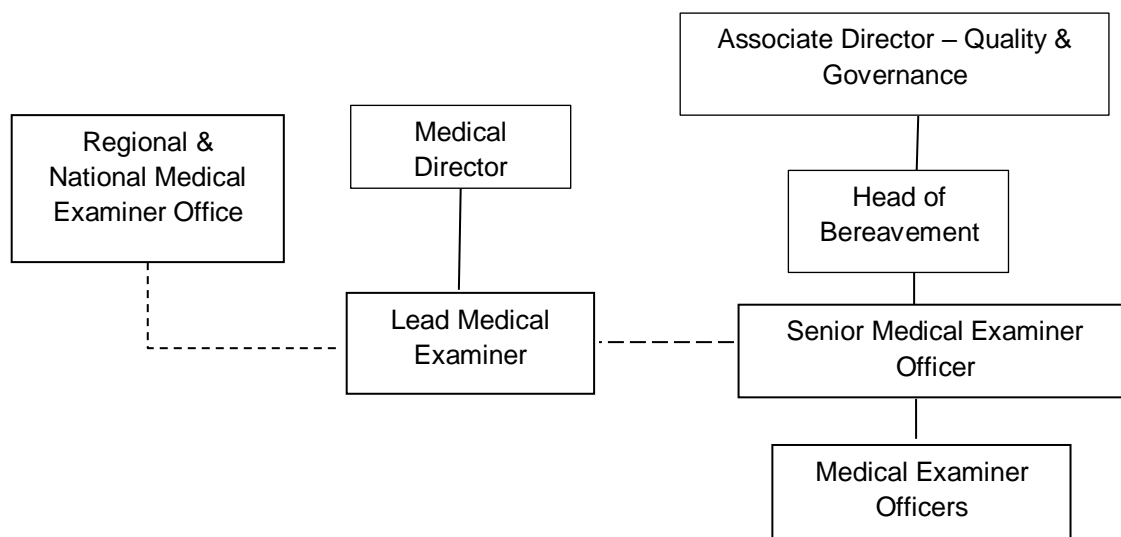
External relationships

- HM Coroner and officers
- Spiritual/Faith community leads
- Registrars of births and deaths
- GPs and practice staff
- Bereaved relatives, carers and executors/solicitors.
- Funeral Directors
- National Medical Examiner
- Regional leads for ME system

General

- The post holder will be required to manage conflicting demands, prioritise tasks and deal with queries as they arise.
- Identify relatives' concerns and escalate them appropriately.
- To maintain a safe environment with due regard of the Trusts health and safety and risk management policies/procedures
- Comply with secure handling of patient identifiable data.

Structure Chart



General Information

Review of this job description

This job description is intended as an outline indicator of general areas of activity and will be amended in the light of the changing needs of the organisation. To be reviewed in conjunction with the post holder on a regular basis.

Confidentiality

The post holder must ensure that personal information for patients, members of staff and all other individuals is accurate, up-to-date, kept secure and confidential at all times in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the Caldicott principles and the common law duty of confidentiality. The post holder must follow the record keeping guidelines established by the Trust to ensure compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Data Protection Act

All staff who contributes to patients' care records are expected to be familiar with, and adhere to, the Trust's Standards of Records Keeping Policy. Staff should be aware that patients' care records throughout the Trust will be subject to regular audit.

All staff who have access to patients' care records have a responsibility to ensure that these are maintained efficiently and that confidentiality is protected in line with the Trust's Code of Confidentiality Policy.

All staff has an obligation to ensure that care records are maintained efficiently and that confidentiality is protected. Staff are also subject to this obligation both on an implied basis and also on the basis that, on accepting their job description, they agree to maintain both patient / client and staff confidentiality.

In addition, all health professionals are advised to compile records on the assumption that they are accessible to patients in line with the Data Protection Act.

Systems and IT skills requirements

All Trust staff needs to have the essential IT skills in order to use the Trust Clinical Information System as well as other required IT related applications in their jobs. Initial and on-going IT applications and IT skills training will be provided to underpin this requirement.

Health & safety

All staff must comply with all Trust Health & Safety Policies and Procedures. Staff must be aware of the responsibilities placed on them under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), and to ensure that agreed safety procedures are carried out to maintain a safe environment for employees, patients and visitors.

Professional registration

- i) If you are employed in an area of work which requires membership of a professional body in order to practice (e.g. Nursing & Midwifery Council for nurses), it is a condition precedent of your employment to maintain membership of such a professional body. It is also your responsibility to comply with the relevant body's code of practice. Your manager will be able to advise you on which, if any, professional body of which you must be a member.
- ii) You are required to advise the Trust if your professional body in any way limits or changes the terms of your registration.
- iii) Failure to remain registered or to comply with the relevant code of practice may result in temporary downgrading, suspension from duty and/or disciplinary action, which may result in the termination of your employment.
- iv) If you are required to have registration with a particular professional body or to have specific qualifications you must notify your manager on appointment of such fact and provide him or her with documentary evidence of them before your employment commences or, at the latest, on your first day of employment. Furthermore throughout your employment with the Trust, you are required on demand by your manager to provide him or her with documentary evidence of your registration with any particular professional body or in respect of any required qualifications.

Risk management

All Trust employees are accountable, through the terms and conditions of their employment, professional regulations, clinical governance and statutory health and safety regulations, and are responsible for reporting incidents, being aware of the risk management strategy and emergency procedures and attendance at training as required.

All staff has a responsibility to manage risk within their sphere of responsibility. It is a statutory duty to take reasonable care of their own safety and the safety of others who may be affected by acts or omissions.

All managers throughout the organisation have a responsibility to ensure that policies and procedures are followed, that staff receives appropriate training that a local risk register is developed and monitored on a quarterly basis and any changes reported to the Patient Safety Committee and Integrated Governance Committee.

Managers are responsible for implementing and monitoring any identified risk management control measures within their designated area/s and scope of responsibility. In situations where significant risks have been identified and where local control measures are considered to be potentially inadequate, managers are responsible for bringing these risks to the attention of the Patient Safety Committee and Integrated Governance Committee if resolution has not been satisfactorily achieved.

Infection Control

All Trust staff are responsible for protecting themselves and others against infection risks. All staff regardless of whether clinical or not are expected to comply with current infection control policies and procedures and to report any problems with regard to this to their managers. All staff undertaking patient care activities must attend infection control training and updates as required by the Trust.

Financial Regulations

All staff are responsible for the security of the property of the Trust, avoiding loss or damage of property, and being economical and efficient in the use of resources. Staff should conform to the requirements of the Standing Orders, Standing Financial Instructions or other financial procedures including the Code of Conduct and Accountability and the Fraud and Corruption Policy.

Safeguarding Children

All staff must be familiar with and adhere to Trust child protection procedures and guidelines.

General

- The post holder may be required to work at any of the Trust's sites in line with the service needs.
- The post holder must at all times carry out his/her responsibilities with due regard to the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- This job description describes responsibilities, as they are currently required. It is anticipated duties will change over time and the job description may need to be reviewed in the future.
- All staff has a responsibility to participate in the Trust's Performance Appraisal Scheme and to contribute to their own development and the development of any staff that they are responsible for appraising.

Valuing Diversity

It is the aim of the Trust to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, marital/partnership status, race, religion,

age, creed, colour, ethnic origin, disability, part time working status and real or suspected HIV/AIDS status and is not placed at a disadvantage by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable. To this end the Trust has a Single Equality Scheme and it is for each employee to contribute to its success.

No smoking policy

There is a smoke free policy in operation in the Trust. In accordance with this policy smoking is positively discouraged and is not permitted anywhere within the buildings, on the premises or grounds.

Designated smoking areas or smoking rooms are not permitted. Support is provided for staff members who wish to stop smoking.

Waste disposal

All staff must ensure that waste produced within the Trust is segregated and disposed of in such ways that control risk to health, or safety of staff and the public alike in accordance with relevant legislation and procedures contained within the Trust policy

Role Model the Trust Values

We want to make sure that we serve local people in Lewisham, Greenwich and beyond as effectively as possible. As well as continuing to attract and support good staff, we need to make sure that the culture in the organisation – or rather “the way we do things” – is right. Our values are:

- We treat everyone with respect and compassion
- We work as a team to improve quality
- We take responsibility for our actions
- We work together for patients and colleagues
- We learn, develop and share knowledge

PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications and Training	<p>Educated to Bachelor's degree level or equivalent working knowledge in related field; or evidence of study/equivalent practical experience at an advanced level; this might include nursing and/or other clinical experience.</p> <p>A commitment to life-long learning and undertaking personal development opportunities.</p> <p>The ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders, including the recently bereaved.</p> <p>Experience of day-to-day operational/process management of a customer-facing service where users may have unpredictable and emotionally charged needs.</p> <p>Completed e-learning MEO core training modules prior to starting in the post</p> <p>Formal MEO training provided by the Royal College of Pathologists</p>	
Experience	<p>Experience of working with people in sensitive and emotional situations.</p> <p>Experience of working in a healthcare setting with multi-disciplinary teams across organisational boundaries.</p> <p>Understanding of medical terminology that enables informed discussions about causes/circumstances of death with bereaved families, clinicians, coroner and registration service staff.</p>	<p>Experience of facilitating groups</p> <p>Leadership and influencing change</p>
Knowledge	<p>Specialist knowledge of various faith groups' funeral wishes/practices to enable</p>	<p>Presentation Skills</p>

	<p>respectful compliance with tight and specific timescales and procedures.</p> <p>Knowledge of the Coroner & Justice Act 2009 reference to the ME system. Full understanding of the ME system operational remit.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of the statutory process around death certification legal frameworks and how the ME system aligns with other related organisations and NHS initiatives.</p>	
Personal Qualities	<p>Ability to lead and work as part of a team and organise fluctuating workload around competing priorities.</p> <p>Strong interpersonal skills demonstrating the ability to communicate in difficult and emotional situations with empathy and professionalism with all stakeholders.</p> <p>Highly evolved empathetic and self-awareness skills to deal with bereaved families who may have barriers to understanding.</p> <p>Ability to work in a highly pressurised, unpredictable environment where bereavement care is central to the service delivery.</p> <p>Proactive and self-motivated.</p> <p>Approachable and supportive to all levels of staff and bereaved families in a non-judgmental and discreet manner.</p> <p>Professional appearance, manner and awareness of impact of own behaviour on others.</p> <p>Ability to maintain a calm manner in a range of challenging and emotive circumstances.</p>	

	Competent in the use of IT software systems and handling sensitive personal identifiable data.	
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Occupational Health	Does this post require EPP clearance?	Yes/No
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Post Holder's name/s:

Post Holders' Signature/s:Date:

Manager's Name:

Manager's Signature:Date: