

Important Changes to Death Certification in Scotland

The Death Certification changes within Scotland are moving quickly towards the implementation date of April 2014. The Institute is working closely with the Scottish Government to make this transition easy, not only for the benefit of our members working within the bereavement industry but also the bereaved who, will be affected by these significant changes. The role of the Medical Referee will cease to exist and will no longer be required to sign paperwork at the crematorium.

The Institute is currently working with Scottish Government and others as part of a Funeral Industry Sub-Group to develop cross border protocols in regard to Scottish interests, which includes the removal of cremation forms, implant notification and the notification of communicable diseases in a joint exercise involving the sub group, Department of Health and the Ministry of Justice.

Important changes that will affect members:

All deaths, whether for burial or cremation, will be dealt with by completion of a single revised Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) from April 2014.

- Cremation forms will no longer be required. The revised MCCD form will contain all relevant information to allow cremation to progress.
- Details of pacemakers / hazardous implants and public health alerts will be entered on the new updated MCCD form.
- There will be no Medical Referees attached to Crematoria.
- A new post of Medical Reviewer, employed by Healthcare Improvement Scotland, (HIS), will be created to review the accuracy of completed MCCD forms.
- A random selection of MCCD's (25% of total) will be reviewed at a basic level.
- A further 1-2% of MCCD's will be reviewed in depth, including a review of medical records.
- The guidance on deaths to be reported to the Procurator Fiscal is mainly unchanged, but will be updated.

We will continue to keep members up to date with these changes via E-newsletter and the Institute website.