



Londonwide LMCs

The professional voice of London general practice

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) - GPC guidance October 2014

The General Practitioners Committee (GPC) issued guidance on Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) in October 2014.

It should be noted that there is no statutory requirement for the Registrar of Births and Deaths to refer the deaths of those who are subject to a DoLS authorisation to the coroner. However, there is a common law duty which applies to everyone, to refer deaths to the coroner where there is reasonable cause to suspect that the person died a violent, unnatural or sudden death, the cause of which is unknown, or where the person died in prison or police custody.

In the event that a person in their care should die whilst subject to a DoLS authorisation, care homes and hospitals who are managing authorities need to know how to contact the relevant coroner's office.

If in doubt, it is always preferable to report the death.

The action taken by the coroner will vary and could include the commissioning of a post-mortem examination or the opening of an inquest (with or without a jury). Equally the coroner could decide that no further action is necessary.

Until the coroner has made a decision on whether to undertake a further investigation, a doctor should not issue a medical certificate of cause of death.

Safeguarding vulnerable adults – a tool kit for general practitioners (pdf) - GPC guidance October 2014.