



Londonwide LMCs

The professional voice of London general practice

Concerns about coroners issues

In response to concerns raised regarding GP relationships with the coroners' office, we recently requested examples of problems experienced by GPs and practice staff. Examples provided so far include:

coroners lack of consistency and the problems this is causing for GPs;

issues over cremation form completion/medical examiners;

inappropriate requests to confirm the fact of death;

lack of telephone access to coroners and coroners' officers;

long response times for replies to queries delaying the issuing of death certificates;

delays in issuing of death certificates creating problems with communities who's religious beliefs stipulate prompt burial after death;

ambiguity around expected deaths and the 14 day rule;

coroners emails going to old addresses or them not following requests to communicate urgent information by phone rather than email; and

lost coroners paperwork distressing bereaved families, particularly those who have had young die children.

If you have any further examples you wish to share, please send them to info@lmc.org.uk.

We appreciate that coroners are under great pressure from new systems and budget cuts. Our aim is to work with them to minimise the distress caused to bereaved families by the process of certifying and/or investigating deaths and free-up GP time which is currently being spent waiting with deceased patients.