



ROYAL COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS AND
SURGEONS OF GLASGOW

CONSULTATION:	Death Certification: Medical Reviewer
ORIGINATING SOURCE:	Scottish Government
CONTRIBUTORS:	Dr Roderick Neilson, Consultant Haematologist
Submitted:	3 May 2013



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3rd May 2013

Sarah Dillon
Policy Officer
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Scottish Government
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Sent by email: sarah.dillon@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Dear Ms Dillon

Death Certification: Medical Reviewer

Thank you for inviting the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow to respond to the targeted consultation regarding the qualifications, training and experience required for the role of Medical Reviewer, under the pending provisions of the Certification of Death (Scotland) Act 2011

We would respond to the key questions as follows:

a) Would the long term role of a Medical Reviewer be best served by a general or prescriptive approach to required qualifications, training and experience?

The main issue here is the credibility of the MR in the eyes of the public and members of the profession. Accordingly they would have to be seen to be a doctor of some standing and have a specific skills set as regards death certification, indicating a degree of prescription. Certainly there are legal, moral and professional issues surrounding the role of a MR that can be developed by specific training, but anybody being considered for the role of MR should have a demonstrable skills set prior to application.

b) If a general approach is preferred, what key areas would you want to see included?

See above. A generalist approach is not necessarily the best way to identify and recruit individuals to fill this role. Again, the issue is one of credibility - the practitioner appointed to a MR post should have specific previous practicable experience of issues surrounding the law relating to death certification and medical law in general. This can be augmented by specific training after appointment.

c) What specific qualification requirements, if any, should be included and why?

There are already a number of qualifications available, the possession of which indicates specific training and experience in legal medicine. These include:

- i. FRCPATH in Histopathology if holder undertakes procurator fiscal post mortems
- ii. Member or Fellow of the Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine
- iii. Diploma in Medical Jurisprudence or Diploma in Forensic Medicine and Science from the Society of Apothecaries or equivalent
- iv. Master's degree in Medical Law.

Possession of any of these qualifications indicates specific training in medical law relevant to death certification.

d) What specific training requirements, if any, should be included and why?

In addition to the above, full training on the relevant legislation surrounding death certification.

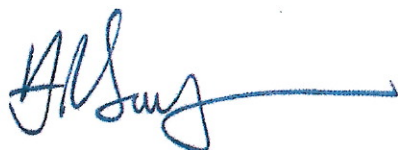
e) What specific experience requirements, if any, should be included and why?

Again, for credibility, the individual should be fully registered with the GMC and possess a licence to practice. It would also cause less dubiety if it was stated that any MR is required to have 5 years continuous full registration with the GMC.

f) What other specific requirements, if any, should be included and why?

Nil comment.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Scott', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Professor Hazel Scott
Honorary Secretary, RCPSG