

## Information regarding the Somerset Medical Examiner Service

If you have been given this letter, you have experienced the death of someone close to you. On behalf of Somerset Medical Examiner Service, we would like to extend our sincere condolences.

Somerset NHS Foundation Trust and Yeovil District Hospital are now hosting the Somerset Medical Examiners Service (SMES), which is a nationally mandated system for reviewing deaths that occur in hospital and in our community. The Medical Examiner is a senior doctor working within the Trust, who is independent and not involved in the person's care. With the assistance of trained Medical Examiner Officers and, in collaboration with the doctor over-seeing your loved one's care, they aim to review all deaths not under the coroner's jurisdiction, to establish a cause of death prior to the issuing of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD).

Following the death of your loved one, the SMES will be informed by the doctor who will be completing the MCCD. The duty Medical Examiner will review your loved ones records and they, or one of their officers, will then contact you. This will be a routine call which will give you the opportunity to discuss the care and treatment your loved one has received and share any feedback you may have. The Medical Examiner Officers are also able to answer any questions you may have on further practical steps you need to follow in the days to come.

This is a new step in the certification of deaths which will ensure the accuracy of the cause of death and highlight any cause for concern regarding care which has been provided. Whilst we endeavor to review each case as soon as possible, some unavoidable delays may occur. In some cases the Medical Examiner or the responsible doctor may need to speak to the Coroner before the MCCD can be issued and you will be informed if this is the case.