

and deaths. . .

**Reporting Deaths to the Coroner
Changes to the Reporting Criteria in Cheshire**

The Chief Coroner has issued guidance to Coroners regarding the criteria that should be applied when deaths are reported to Coroners.

For many years my predecessor in this post issued a booklet titled *Practice Directions for Doctors*. It contained a list headed Reportable Deaths in Cheshire. The list includes 23 discrete categories of reportable death, whereas the Chief Coroner's Guidance has 12.

From Monday 3 July I intend to adopt the Chief Coroner's Guidance. This will bring Cheshire into line with most other coroner areas in England and Wales.

Please inform your colleagues and staff that unless the death falls into one of the categories listed below it does not need to be reported to the Coroner:

- The cause of death is unknown
- The deceased was not seen by the certifying doctor either after death or within 14 days before death
- The death was violent or suspicious
- The death was unnatural
- The death may be due to an accident (whenever it occurred)
- The death may be due to self-neglect or neglect by others
- The death may be due to an industrial disease or related to the deceased's employment
- The death may be due to an abortion
- The death occurred during an operation or before recovery from the effects of an anaesthetic
- The death may be a suicide
- The death occurred during or shortly after detention in police or prison custody
- The death occurred while the deceased was subject to compulsory detention under the Mental Health Act
- For any other concerning feature

Certain deaths which were previously reportable no longer require to be reported. For example: a death due to cancer where the only reason for reporting is a biopsy in the last 12 months; or a natural cause of death where the deceased suffered a fracture in the last 12 months and the fracture has had no bearing on the death; or where the death occurred within 24 hours of admission to hospital and the death is being reported only for that reason. These are examples; there are others.

There will be a period of transition as we all get used to the new reporting criteria but it will soon settle.

Your help in passing this message is appreciated.

Yours faithfully

A G Moore
Senior Coroner for Cheshire