

CERTIFICATION OF DEATH (SCOTLAND) ACT 2011

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Other functions of medical reviewers

Section 20: Training and information functions

52. This section sets out additional functions of the medical reviewer and senior medical reviewer. These are: collating and analysing information relating to medical certificates of cause of death; providing guidance, training and direct support to doctors and other healthcare professionals; providing guidance and support to district registrars in relation to certificates; and liaising with other persons or organisations. The purpose of this is to improve the quality of medical certificates of cause of death and the administrative processes for dealing with the disposal of bodies.

Section 21: Duty to co-operate

53. The new system of scrutiny has to connect with agencies and systems in the NHS. The Common Services Agency, for example will provide statistical support services for the review system. This section provides that NHS Boards, the Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service and medical reviewers (including the senior medical reviewer) have a duty to co-operate with one another in connection with the review of medical certificates of cause of death, the information gathered and analysed and the administrative processes for the disposal of bodies.

Section 22: Guidance

54. This section requires medical reviewers (including the senior medical reviewer) to have regard to guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers in the exercise of their functions under the Act. Guidance can help to ensure consistency of approach, for example, in situations where medical reviewers (or the senior medical reviewer) may be exercising discretion.

Section 23: Annual report

55. This section requires the senior medical reviewer to prepare and publish an annual report for the Scottish Ministers on the activities of medical reviewers. The Scottish Ministers may by regulation make further provision for additional information to be included, for greater frequency of reporting, or to specify additional people who must receive copies.