



Ministry of JUSTICE

CREMATION REGULATIONS 2008 – YOUR RIGHT TO INSPECT THE MEDICAL CERTIFICATES

You have applied for cremation and that means that you have the right to inspect the medical forms about the death of the deceased. Inspection of the forms will take place before the cremation is authorised by the Medical Referee (that is the Doctor attached to the crematorium).

Part 4 of the application form deals with this right. Please read it carefully. The funeral director will have explained this right to you, but you might find it helpful to have something in writing as well.

There are two medical forms. One is completed by the Doctor who treated the deceased during his or her last illness, the other by a Doctor who did not and who is independent of the first Doctor. The second Doctor has to examine the deceased, and discuss the death with the first Doctor and at least one other person.

If you know the cause of death and have no problems with that cause you may decide that there is very little reason why you need to inspect these forms. However, if you do have doubts or were surprised that the death happened when it did, you may decide that you would like to inspect them.

You can nominate someone else to inspect the forms on your behalf. You might want to do this, for example, if you think someone else would be in a better position to go through the forms (perhaps because that person was present at the death and you were not).

If you already have serious concerns about the death and believe the case should be investigated by a Coroner, you should contact the Coroner's office right away. Your funeral director will be able to provide contact details and other assistance. Where the death is unnatural or violent, it should have already been referred to a Coroner by a Doctor or by the Police.

The forms will be available for inspection at the crematorium office for up to 48 hours after you are informed that they have been received there. It is important that you can be contacted during this period.

The Medical Referee may be able to give you advice on the cause of death, but he or she may charge a fee for this service. As the Referee is often also a working Doctor, you will need to take account of this when arranging the meeting.

If you want the funeral to be held within the next two or three days, it could be difficult to do this and also inspect the medical forms.