

## Coroners' Inquests – Statement template

Ref: Better to have statement free standing and cover letter

Date: Place at end of statement

Report for: e.g. Statement for Her Majesty's Coroner in the Inquest Touching the Death of [Joe Blogs]

Dear

Patient's Name: (dob: )

Patient's Address:

Paragraph (1)

Your full name, your work address, your current post, and level (For example – core trainee year 2) at the time of the incident in question, and details of your qualifications.

Paragraph (2)

Set out details of where you work/worked, either unit or team, and explain the nature of the ward/team and the patient group that you worked with. If it is a ward please set out its size and the type of patients on the ward – including whether under Section or not and whether any specialist services are provided.

Paragraph (3)

Set out details of your role as a junior doctor on the ward/team, including for e.g., whether you participate in multidisciplinary team planning, case assessments, or equivalent. If you were under supervision, state by whom.

Paragraph (4)

Set out that you are writing the statement at the request of HM Coroner for example “*I am writing this statement at the request of HM Coroner and do so with close reference to the medical records, my memory of events, where that applies, and usual practice.*” It is **not** advisable to write the statement from memory without the patient's record. Indicate the time period that you were involved in the care provided. You may, if you wish, express your condolences to the family of the deceased at this time or, if you prefer, at the conclusion to your statement.

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### Paragraph (5)

Set out date and times [in full using the 24hr clock, e.g. 1300hrs on 27.06.11 – not 1 on 27/6] and details of your earliest contact with the patient with close reference to the medical records. If you use an abbreviation, on the first occasion this should be defined fully with abbreviation between parentheses. The abbreviation can then be used in the statement thereafter.

### Paragraph (6)

The statement should commence with the **History of the presentation**, which should be clearly set out with dates and times referenced from the notes in chronological order. When you refer to the patient do so in a professional manner, using his/her title and surname. The same should apply to any reference to family members. It may be appropriate to refer to children by their forename alone.

### Paragraph (7)

Then should follow any relevant past medical history, allergies and medication history. Explain medical terms and describe what medications were prescribed or being taken the first time they are mentioned in the text of the statement.

### Paragraph (8)

This should be followed by your examination and clinical findings, relevant clinical investigations informing the decision making (including normal ranges and an explanation about whether they were normal or not) and your clinical management plan. This should be understandable to an educated lay person.

### Paragraph (9)

Next should follow the progress on the ward, noting key ward round decisions. Where you have undertaken a procedure, you should refer to this in the first person (*I did this ...*). Say what your involvement was – what you did, what you heard, what you saw (other witnesses can explain their own involvement), include details of your subsequent contact with the patient, your interaction with them, and/or relevant others. If you made a decision jointly, set this out e.g. “..... *and I agreed that I should do this .....*”and state with whom the decision was made. Identify other members of staff by their full name and job title, if you can.

### Paragraph (10)

You should state the last date and time you saw the patient and the patient's condition at that time.

### Paragraph (11)

If the patient died after you last saw them, you should state when died with reference to the medical records and whether the case was discussed with the Medical Examiner advising the Trust.

### Paragraph (12)

The last paragraph should be a 'Statement of Truth' – i.e. *“I believe that, to the best of my knowledge, the facts in this statement are true.”*

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### Paragraph (13)

Below this statement should be your handwritten signature, and below that your typewritten name, degrees and below that your designation. On the right-hand side should be the date of your statement. A statement should be factual, and you should avoid providing an opinion

### Summary

1. When referring to others use their name (never simply a surname) and job title. If protocols or standard procedures are relevant, you can refer to these in your statement – and attach a copy if you have one. Any attachments should be marked as an exhibit (e.g. with your initials and a number) and referred to in the statement.
2. As far as possible be clear when you have witnessed events, or if you have been given information, and set out the source of it.

If you refer to specific information in the records and/or a report of some kind then please identify this by date. Sometimes it is helpful to have a transcript of those notes incorporated into your statement. Sometimes a diagram/illustration will help you explain - these can also be incorporated into your statement.