

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST CONSULTATION PROTOCOL

A Code of practice and performance standards for forensic pathologists dealing with suspicious deaths in Scotland has been published by the Royal College of Pathologists and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. The Code is supplemented by the following consultation commitments on the part of forensic pathologists:

- Pathologists instructed by the Crown should be available, if required, to consult with the pathologist instructed by the defence to ensure that the latter is content that all appropriate examination has been undertaken by the Crown;
- That, if available, the Crown pathology report should be made available to the pathologist instructed by the defence to inform this consultation. A draft report may similarly be made available provided it contains all significant facts.
- That the Crown examination photographs should be made available to the pathologist instructed by the defence to similarly inform the consultation.
- That the pathologist instructed by the defence should consider whether or not a further physical post mortem examination is required or whether, following consultation with the Crown pathologist, a physical examination is of limited value and the pathologist instructed by the defence can provide an expert opinion based upon the available records and samples from the first post mortem examination.