

2. Aim of study and method

Aim of the study

The aim of this study was to assess the quality of coronial autopsy reports, and indirectly the quality of autopsies, requested by coroners under the England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man coronial systems.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- To assess the quality of coronial autopsy reports in conjunction with the written information relating to the death as presented to pathologists by coroners;
- To obtain a baseline overview of the standard to which coronial autopsy reports are currently being reported, and indirectly, the standard to which they are being performed;
- To assess how issues raised by a death are being addressed in the coronial autopsy;
- To highlight the variations in practices and explore reasons for these variations (e.g.: coroners' requests and expectations; pathologists' workloads; mortuary facilities);
- To evaluate the correctness of pathologists' Office of National Statistics (ONS) cause of death formulations in terms of structure and content;
- To make recommendations regarding quality of autopsy reports.