



The Role of Core Child Death Overview Panel Members

The following are some suggestions on the respective roles of core members of a Child Death Overview Panel. This is not intended to be a comprehensive or exclusive list. The membership of the Panel should be decided by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and may include other professionals not listed here. Panel members should be experienced and able to represent their agency. Additional core or ad-hoc members should be chosen to ensure all core functions of the Panel are appropriately met and that informed discussions can take place on all deaths being reviewed.

Public Health:

The public health representative can:

- Provide the Panel with information on epidemiological and health surveillance data.
- Assist the Panel in strategies for data collection and analysis
- Assist the Panel in evaluating patterns and trends in relation to child deaths and in learning lessons for preventive work
- Inform the Panel of public health initiatives to support child health
- Advise the Panel on the development and implementation of public health prevention activities and programmes.

Paediatrician:

The paediatrician can:

- Provide the Panel with information on the health of the child and other family members, including any general health issues, child development, and health services provided to the child or family
- Help the Panel interpret medical information relating to the child's death, including offering opinions on medical evidence; providing a medical explanation and interpretation of the circumstances surrounding a child's death
- Assist with interpreting the autopsy findings and results of medical investigations
- Advise the Panel on medical issues including child injuries and causes of child deaths, medical terminology, concepts and practices.
- Provide feedback and support to medical practitioners involved in individual case management
- Liaise with other health professionals and agencies

Children's Social Care:

The children's social care representative can:

- Provide the Panel with information on any social care involvement with the child and family, including any child protection procedures

- Provide the Panel with information on other children in the home and any previous reports of neglect or abuse
- Help the Panel to evaluate issues relating to the family and social environment and circumstances surrounding the death
- Advise the Panel on children's rights and welfare, and on appropriate legislation and guidance relating to children
- Identify cases that may require a further child protection investigation, or a Serious Case Review
- Liaise with other Local Authority services
- Provide feedback to social workers and other Local Authority staff involved in individual case management

Police:

The police representative can:

- Provide the Panel with information on the status of any criminal investigation;
- Provide the Panel with information on the criminal histories of family members and suspects.
- Identify cases that may require a further police investigation
- Provide the Panel with expertise on law enforcement practices including investigations, interviews and evidence collection
- Help the Panel evaluate any issues of public risk arising out of the review of individual deaths
- Liaise with other police departments, and the crown prosecution service
- Feedback to police officers involved in individual case management

Child Health Nurse:

The child health nurse representative can:

- Provide the Panel with information on the health of the child and other family members, including primary care services provided to the child and family
- Help the Panel to evaluate health issues relating to the circumstances of the child's death
- Advise the Panel on nursing practices that may have had a bearing on the child's health or well-being
- Assist the Panel in developing appropriate preventive strategies
- Liaise with other nursing and allied health professionals
- Provide feedback and support to nursing colleagues involved in individual case management

Midwifery:

The midwifery representative can:

- Provide the Panel with information relating to antenatal and perinatal care and support for the child and mother
- Advise the Panel on issues around antenatal and perinatal care
- Help the Panel to evaluate perinatal deaths
- Advise on any preventive strategies involving antenatal care or support
- Liaise with other midwifery and obstetric colleagues
- Provide feedback and support to midwifery and obstetric colleagues involved in individual case management

Bereavement Counsellor:

The bereavement representative can:

- Advise the Panel on ongoing bereavement support needs for the family or others involved
- Be an advocate for the family
- Assist the Panel in monitoring and evaluating the appropriateness of professional responses to child deaths
- Provide support to other Panel members ensuring appropriate member care
- Facilitate the provision of support to other professionals involved in individual case management

Lay representative:

The lay representative can:

- Provide a community perspective on the evaluation of individual child deaths and patterns of child deaths
- Be an advocate for children and families
- Assist the Panel in identifying system or process issues that may have impacted on a child's deaths
- Assist the Panel in developing appropriate preventive responses, including issues around public awareness, media involvement, and education.