



# Forensic Medicine Short Course

## The Principles and Practice of a Medico-Legal Death Investigation System

### Course Convenor & Facilitator



**Prof Stephen Cordner**  
Professor of Forensic Pathology, Monash University

Head, National & International Programs, VIFM.

### Location

Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine in Melbourne.  
65 Kavanagh Street,  
Southbank VIC 3006

### How to Register

For more information or to register, please contact:

[short.courses@vifm.org](mailto:short.courses@vifm.org)

There is no on-site parking available. Please visit our website to find nearby parking and accommodation: <https://www.vifm.org/contact>

**17-21 June 2019**

### Course Description

This four and a half day workshop on the principles and practice of running a death investigation system is aimed at forensic and related professionals. The key intellectual component of a death investigation system is the medico legal death investigation (MLDI) service. Around the world, the MLDI service sits in systems run variously by coroners or other judicial officers, prosecutors, medical examiners, police or combinations of these.

The workshop is an opportunity to reflect on whether our death investigation systems are meeting contemporary needs and expectations. One of the few jurisdictions in recent decades to comprehensively modernize its death investigation system is Victoria, Australia. As part of its overhaul, Victoria has thought about and grappled with the fundamentals. The workshop does NOT hold the Victorian system out as some sort of blue print applicable generally.

Participants will improve their understanding of, and be able to articulate the issues arising when considering, the principles and operation of a death investigation system. Understanding is at the heart of maximizing the benefits available from a well functioning system. The issues manifest themselves in practical management problems arising frequently. Anticipating these problems and having a framework to deal with them is the second part of successfully operating a medico legal death investigation system.

All sessions in this short course are led or facilitated by Professor Stephen Cordner, with the assistance of other VIFM and Monash University staff.

### Who this workshop is for:

- Forensic pathologists and trainees
- Fellows and trainees in the Forensic Science stream of the RCPA Faculty of Science
- Department of Justice or Health administrators responsible for coroners or forensic pathology services; coroners court managers
- Managers or senior scientists in forensic toxicology, forensic molecular biology, mortuary operations
- Forensic anthropologists, odontologists
- Senior homicide squad detectives and senior police

### Cost:

Registration fee is \$2,250 (incl. GST) Includes course manual, morning and afternoon tea, lunch, and certificate of attendance.

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Note: Registrations will be limited to 15 participants and will close as soon as we have 15 registrations. RCPA CPD points can be claimed as hours in the Group Activities category when you submit your CPD next year. This course will be cancelled if there are fewer than 6 registrations.

## Day 1 - Monday, 17 June

Registration and coffee

Orientation to the VIFM and its facility

Welcome: Prof. Noel Woodford - Director, VIFM

Overview of the program

The different death investigation systems around the world

Purposes, services, principles - an interactive exercise

Selecting an issue for presentation on Day 5

## Day 2 - Tuesday, 18 June

Revisit / Review / Revise day one

Corporate / Institutional arrangements for medico-legal death investigation

Death Certification

Tissue issues: Law, ethics and practice

Human Identification: Whose responsibility and how?

## Day 3 - Wednesday, 19 June (HALF-DAY)

Revisit / Review / Revise day two

Quality management system

Providing Expert Evidence - the soft underbelly of the MLDI

Afternoon: Free

## Day 4 - Thursday, 20 June

Revisit / Review / Revise day three

Managing the doctors and scientists

Managing interactions with families, police and the courts

Managing a DVI - the pitfalls

DINNER

## Day 5 - Friday, 21 June

Revisit / Review / Revise day four

Managing information: Law, ethics and practice

Preventing accidents and injury

An interactive day: Scenario presentations

- 15-20 minute oral presentations to the workshop

## Notes

1. Morning Tea, lunch, afternoon tea and end of the day refreshments will be provided.

2. Depending on other activities happening at VIFM, there may be some scope for participants to attend VIFM meetings (e.g. Forensic Pathology case discussions, Clinical Forensic Case discussions, Pathologist - Coroner meeting re initial investigations) or VIFM operations e.g. mortuary; evidence presentation in course.

