

SERVICE STANDARD 23A**Mortuary Services****PREAMBLE**

Mortuary Services shall be provided within the Facility. Where there is no resident Forensic Medicine Specialist, the Mortuary Services comes under the purview of the Person In Charge (PIC) of the Facility. The Mortuary Services shall include but are not limited to provision of:

- a) Body reception.
- b) Body Storage.
- c) Body preparation area.
- d) Area for body viewing and bereavement.
- e) Autopsy Suite (where applicable).

TOPIC 23A.1: ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT**STANDARD 23A.1.1**

The Mortuary Services are organised and administered to provide quality services appropriate to the level services provided by the Facility.

CRITERIA FOR COMPLIANCE:

23A.1.1.1 There are documented purposes which may be termed Vision and Mission statements, Goals and Objectives that suit the scope of the Mortuary Services. When compiling the purposes, consideration shall be given to the following:

- a) They are what the services want to achieve.
- b) They support and contribute to the goals of the Facility.
- c) They are written and consistent with professional standards, guidelines and relevant legislation.
- d) They are monitored, reviewed and revised as required accordingly.

23A.1.1.2 There is an organisation chart which:

- a) provides a clear representation of the structure, function and reporting relationships of the services;
- b) is available to all staff;

c) is revised when there is a major change in:

- i) organisation;
- ii) functions;
- iii) reporting relationships;
- iv) goals and objectives;
- v) staffing patterns.

23A.1.1.3 There are written objectives that reflect the role of the Facility to guide the activities of the Mortuary Services, and they are readily available and include the following:

- a) carry out professional activities in accordance with the ethical standards of the professions involved;
- b) provide ready access to laboratory results, date sequence of events, professional opinion and advice;
- c) contribution to the provision of high quality care by assisting with the review and evaluation of mortuary practice within the Facility;
- d) communication with medical, nursing, police, and other relevant individuals on matters related to the services provided;
- e) provision of services on a 24-hour basis.

23A.1.1.4 There are written and dated specific job descriptions for all categories of staff that include:

- a) qualifications , training, experience and certification required for the position;
- b) lines of authority;
- c) accountability, functions, and responsibilities;
- d) a review when required and when there is a major change in:
 - i) nature and scope of work;
 - ii) duties and responsibilities;
 - iii) general and specific accountabilities;
 - iv) qualifications required;
 - v) staffing patterns;
 - vi) Statutory Regulations.

23A.1.1.5 Staff meetings are held regularly to discuss issues related to the provision of Mortuary Services and also staff are informed of the activities and outcomes of relevant committees. Records of meetings are kept.

- 23A.1.1.6 Confidential personnel records inclusive of personal health card, immunisation and incident at work are maintained for every staff.
- 23A.1.1.7 The Head of Mortuary Services is involved in the planning, management, and justification of the budget and resources utilisation of the services.
- 23A.1.1.8 The Head of the Mortuary Services is involved in the appointment and/OR assignment of staff.
- 23A.1.1.9 The Head of the Mortuary Services shall ensure that the staff of the Mortuary Services complete and forward incident reports to the Person In Charge (PIC) of the Facility.
- 23A.1.1.10 Incidents reported monthly have had Root Cause Analysis done and action taken to prevent recurrence.
- 23A.1.1.11 There is cooperation from the Mortuary Services staff together with other relevant staff in contributing to matters relating to mortuary activities.
- 23A.1.1.12 Appropriate statistics and records shall be maintained and used for managing the services.

TOPIC 23A.2: HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT**STANDARD 23A.2.1**

The Mortuary Services are supervised by a suitably qualified, trained and experienced health professional staff and assisted by relevant categories of staff.

CRITERIA FOR COMPLIANCE:

- 23A.2.1.1 The direction and staffing of the services are provided by individuals qualified by education, training, and experience and certification to meet the demands of the position and to achieve the objectives of the services.
- a) There is a healthcare staff on regular duty in the Mortuary Services.
 - b) There is evidence that the healthcare staff does practise regularly and is experienced in the speciality.
 - c) The Head of Mortuary Services participates in continuing medical education activities.
- 23A.2.1.2 The authority, responsibilities and accountabilities of the Head of Mortuary Services are clearly delineated and documented in a letter of appointment.
- 23A.2.1.3 There are sufficient number of trained staff to ensure satisfactory operations and quality of the services.
- 23A.2.1.4 There is a structured orientation programme to introduce new staff to the forensic services and relevant aspects of the Facility to prepare them for their roles and responsibilities. This include but not limited to:
- a) rules and regulations, especially those related to health hazards and safety precautions.
 - b) all relevant current manuals.
 - c) requirement for immunisation against relevant high-risk diseases.
- 23A.2.1.5 Staff are closely supervised and given appropriate instruction to carry out their duties.
- 23A.2.1.6 Staff receive written evaluation of their performance at the completion of the probationary period and annually thereafter, or as defined by the Facility.
- 23A.2.1.7 There is evidence of a staff development plan that provides the knowledge and skills required for staff to maintain competency in their current positions as the demands on the positions evolve.

- 23A.2.1.8 There are continuing education activities for staff to pursue professional interests and to prepare for current and future changes in practice. There is evidence that staff education and development needs have been appraised and identified.
- 23A.2.1.9 The Mortuary Services shall provide continuing education activities for other health professional staff and relevant agencies to keep them informed of advances in mortuary medicine and related fields.

TOPIC 23A.3: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**STANDARD 23A.3.1**

There are documented and dated policies and procedures that reflect current knowledge and principles of mortuary practice. They are consistent with statutory requirements and the objectives of the Mortuary Services.

CRITERIA FOR COMPLIANCE:

- 23A.3.1.1 There are written policies and procedures for each service and they are consistent with the overall policies of the Facility.
- 23A.3.1.2 Policies and procedures are developed in collaboration with relevant staff, medical staff, Management, and other internal and external service providers.
- 23A.3.1.3 Policies and procedures shall be reviewed at least once every three years and revised as required, signed and dated accordingly.
- 23A.3.1.4 New and revised policies and procedures are communicated to all staff.
- 23A.3.1.5 There is evidence of compliance with policies and procedures.
- 23A.3.1.6 Copies of relevant regulations and statutory requirements are accessible to staff.
- 23A.3.1.7 Where postmortem is performed, there shall be policies and procedures relating to medicolegal postmortem examination including but not limited to:
- a) persons (police or magistrate) who are authorised to order for a postmortem examination;
 - b) written orders (e.g. Polis 61 order) for a postmortem examination;
 - c) identification of body or part of the deceased by full name/identification document number/ police report number/postmortem number and/or medical record number;
 - d) name, rank and number of the police officer ordering the postmortem examination;
 - e) retention of records and specimens;
 - f) types of specimens collected at postmortem which are to be submitted for histopathological, ~~or~~ cytological, toxicology and other relevant investigation.
- 23A.3.1.8 There are written instructions for the proper handling of the specimens as required by law which include collection, labelling, sealing, packaging, transport of specimens, despatch/handing over to relevant authority. These instructions are readily accessible to the staff. The chain of evidence shall be maintained throughout the process of specimen handling.

23A.3.1.9 Complete records of the following shall be maintained:

- a) Registration of bodies received.
- b) Records of specimens forwarded to other laboratories.
- c) All specimens and evidences taken from the deceased or patients.
- d) All relevant reports (e.g. laboratory results) are filed with the records of the deceased.
- e) All movement of record or reports out of the mortuary services office.

23A.3.1.10 There is evidence of compliance with policies and procedures.

23A.3.1.11 There are written safety procedures and manuals on hazards and safety precautions specific to the Mortuary Services. All staff shall practise Standard Precautions and Safety Guidelines.

23A.3.1.12 A Mortuary Services staff shall be assigned as the safety officer to monitor safety in the mortuary and observance of Code of Safe Practice.

TOPIC 23A.4: FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT**STANDARD 23A.4.1**

There are adequate facilities and equipment for the safe and efficient provision of Mortuary Services taking into consideration the potentially hazardous circumstances of the services. This shall comply with relevant regulations and statutory requirements.

CRITERIA FOR COMPLIANCE:

- 23A.4.1.1 The mortuary shall be accessible to an outside entrance of the Facility.
- 23A.4.1.2 Appropriate transport to transfer the cadaver to the mortuary, commensurate to the dignity of the deceased shall be provided.
- 23A.4.1.3 There are appropriate areas for reception of bodies and storage.
- a) Body receiving area shall be of a suitable size and design to facilitate incoming and outgoing of bodies.
 - b) Clean and dirty areas are clearly designated.
 - c) There is sufficient space and refrigeration for storage of bodies with provision for accurate identification of bodies.
 - d) The temperature of the body freezer ($2-8^{\circ}\text{C} \pm 2$) shall be maintained, monitored and documented.
 - e) There are adequate space, facilities and equipment for the administrative, professional, and technical functions of the Mortuary Services.
- 23A.4.1.4 There are appropriate areas for autopsy suite, body cleansing, last rites and release.
- a) Access to the postmortem room shall be controlled.
 - b) The postmortem room has adequate space, ventilation, and lighting; and is clean.
 - c) There are adequate facilities for performing postmortem examination and recording of findings.
 - d) The autopsy equipment is appropriate and adequate to meet the demands of the services and is properly maintained.
 - e) Autopsy table is of a suitable design with proper facilities for the disposal of effluent into the sewage system to ensure safety.

- f) There is adequate ventilation with extraction for fumes and odours in the work area where appropriate.

23A.4.1.5 There is suitable, adequate and safe provision for air conditioning, lighting, power, water, and drainage.

Notes/Explanations

- a) Air conditioning shall be efficient to maintain low humidity, constant and comfortable room temperature.
- b) Power supply must be adequate, and there are sufficient power sockets which are suitably located.
- c) Adequate and appropriate lighting.

23A.4.1.6 There are designated areas for reception and the handling of foul body or high risk cases where appropriate.

23A.4.1.7 There are designated areas for body viewing and bereavement.

23A.4.1.8 There are staff facilities with changing room, shower, locker facilities, and storage for protective clothing, and they are suitably located.

23A.4.1.9 There are adequate and appropriate data processing, retrieval, and communication facilities.

23A.4.1.10 Where specialised equipment is used, there is evidence that only qualified and privileged staff, operate such equipment.

23A.4.1.11 All equipment must meet current safety standards, e.g. electrical safety code.

23A.4.1.12 There is documented evidence that equipment complies with relevant standards, e.g. those set by SIRIM Berhad.

23A.4.1.13 Each equipment/instrument has a logbook and maintenance records, and these shall be made available when required.

23A.4.1.14 There is evidence to show that the facilities and equipment are maintained in good working order and subject to ongoing planned preventive maintenance and calibration.

23A.4.1.15 There is evidence of general cleanliness in the Mortuary Services.

23A.4.1.16 There are proper facilities for the disposal of biohazard material as either effluent or containerised material.

TOPIC 23A.5: SAFETY AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES**STANDARD 23A. 5.1**

The Head of Mortuary Services shall ensure the provision of high quality performance with staff involvement in the ongoing safety and quality improvement activities of the Facility.

CRITERIA FOR COMPLIANCE:

- 23A.5.1.1 There are clearly assigned responsibilities for the safety and quality improvement activities within the services.
- 23A.5.1.2 There are planned and systematic safety and quality improvement activities that monitor and evaluate the performance of the services including a plan for action and follow up to ensure that the action taken is effective in continually improving the quality of care.
- 23A.5.1.3 There are safety and quality improvement activities in place which support the Facility's safety and quality improvement activities including tracking and trending of specific performance indicators which include but not limited to the following indicators:
- a) timeliness on releasing of bodies to next of kin/claimant for non-police cases within 3 hours. (from the time of received of bodies in the mortuary)
 - b) timeliness on performing autopsies for non-complicated cases within 24 hours. (from the time the 'Polis 61' order received.) where applicable.
 - c) no of complaints in relation with mortuary services.

Notes/Explanations

Non-complicated cases refer to accidents, suicide and natural deaths.

- 23A.5.1.4 Appropriate documentation of quality activities is kept and confidentiality of identity of staff and deceased is preserved.
- 23A.5.1.5 Mortuary staff shall participate in audit activities with other clinical specialists.
- 23A.5.1.6 There are safety and quality improvement activities that address staff safety.

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