



# Coroners Act 1988

## 1988 CHAPTER 13

*Medical witnesses and post-mortem examinations etc.*

### **19 Post-mortem examination without inquest**

- (1) Where a coroner is informed that the body of a person is lying within his district and there is reasonable cause to suspect that the person has died a sudden death of which the cause is unknown, the coroner may, if he is of opinion that a post-mortem examination may prove an inquest to be unnecessary—
  - (a) direct any legally qualified medical practitioner whom, if an inquest were held, he would be entitled to summon as a medical witness under section 21 below; or
  - (b) request any other legally qualified medical practitioner,  
to make a post-mortem examination of the body and to report the result of the examination to the coroner in writing.
- (2) For the purposes of a post-mortem examination under this section, the coroner and any person directed or requested by him to make the examination shall have the like powers, authorities and immunities as if the examination were a post-mortem examination directed by the coroner at an inquest into the death of the deceased.
- (3) Where a post-mortem examination is made under this section and the coroner is satisfied as a result of it that an inquest is unnecessary, he shall send to the registrar of deaths a certificate under his hand stating the cause of death as disclosed by the report of the person making the examination.
- (4) Nothing in this section shall be construed as authorising the coroner to dispense with an inquest in any case where there is reasonable cause to suspect that the deceased—
  - (a) has died a violent or an unnatural death; or
  - (b) has died in prison or in such a place or in such circumstances as to require an inquest under any other Act.