

Morbidity and Mortality (M&M) review meetings

The phrase *Morbidity and Mortality* is used in medicine and public health to describe the effects of diseases and health conditions. *Morbidity* refers to the presence of illness or health complications, while *Mortality* relates to death. Since the illness (morbidity) often comes before death (mortality), the phrase is structured in that order.

M&M meetings should be an integral part of the provision of good medical care and are established to review deaths as part of professional learning, as they have the potential to provide employing bodies with the assurance that patients are not dying because of unsafe clinical practices. These meetings are a crucial part of clinical governance, as they focus on reviewing patient outcomes to identify areas for improvement in patient care and safety.

Pathologists should be involved:

Expertise in Pathology:

Pathologists bring their expertise in interpreting diagnostic results, understanding disease processes, and contributing to the overall understanding of a patient's condition, including the circumstances of their death, which is often discussed at M&M meetings.

Reviewing Cases:

Pathologists should be involved in reviewing cases for M&M meetings, particularly those involving complex diagnoses, unusual findings, or potential errors in the interpretation or management of cases.

Learning and Improvement:

M&M meetings are a platform for pathologists to share their knowledge, learn from their colleagues in different specialties, and to also contribute to the development of best practices in their own specialty.

Supporting Clinical Governance:

By participating in M&M meetings, pathologists can contribute to the overall quality and safety of patient care within their employing body and across the UK.

Pathologist's roles in M&M meetings may be:

Presenting Cases:

Pathologists may present cases where they have provided diagnostic information, and they can discuss the significance of their findings in relation to the patient's overall outcome.

Providing Expertise:

Pathologists should be consulted during M&M meetings to provide insights into the clinical significance of specific pathological findings.

Contributing to Discussions:

Pathologists should actively participate in discussions, offering any alternative interpretations, raising questions, and suggesting areas for improvement in patient care.

Implementing Changes:

Pathologists should contribute to the implementation of changes based on M&M meeting discussions, for example, by modifying diagnostic procedures or improving communication with other clinicians.

M&M meetings have the potential to contribute to the governance of patient safety. They exist in many healthcare organisations and are a governance resource that is generally underutilised. They can improve the accountability of mortality data and support quality improvement without compromising professional learning, especially when facilitated by a standardised mortality review process

[Mortality and morbidity meetings: an untapped resource for improving the governance of patient safety.](#)

[Frailty, Sickness, and Death: Models of Morbidity and Mortality in Historical Populations](#)