



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice



Department of Justice

Office of the State Pathologist

Performance Delivery Agreement 2022

1. Background and context

1.1 Objectives of this Agreement

The purpose of this Agreement is to define, in the context of the resource inputs provided, the targets by which the performance of the Office of the State Pathologist (OSP) will be measured in 2022. The ongoing supports that the Department of Justice will provide to the OSP in this regard, and the mechanisms for monitoring and appraising performance, form part of the overall governance arrangements between the two parties and as such are set out in the separate but complementary Oversight Agreement 2020-22.

1.2 Inputs

1.2.1 Financial Inputs

The OSP's budget allocation for 2022 is as follows:

Pay	€ 888,000
Non-Pay	€ 239,000
Total	€1,127,000

1.2.2 Staffing Resources

The following table sets out the OSP's whole-time equivalent staffing levels as at 1st Feb 2022:

Chief State Pathologist	1
State Pathologist	2
Deputy State Pathologist	1
Locum Assistant State Pathologist*	0.25
Higher Executive Officer	0.6
Executive Officer	1
Clerical Officer	2.8
Senior Scientist	1
Total	9.65

** Funded from non-pay budget*

2. Performance Targets

The following are the principal targets that will be referenced in 2022 to assess the OSP's efficiency and productivity in using the resources allocated to it.

2.1 Quantitative targets

Output area or initiative	Metric	2022 Target	2021 Target	2021 Outturn	2020 Target	2020 Outturn
Post mortem examinations (PMEs) performed in suspicious or unusual deaths	Percentage of PMEs performed within 1 day of notification from Coroner	80%	80%	80%	80%	73%
	Percentage of case reports peer reviewed	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Percentage of final reports issued to Coroners and An Garda Síochána within 120 days of PME taking place	65%*	60%	60%	90%	46%
	Percentage of homicides reviewed at intervals of 6-8 weeks	100%	100%	100%	100%	97%

* Timeframes for finalising PME reports are not fully within OSP's control owing to dependencies on the receipt of ancillary investigation reports (toxicology etc) from external providers. The Covid-19 pandemic and its residual impacts continue to affect pre-existing delays in receiving such external reports and have contributed significantly to the decision to only slightly increase the relevant target percentage for 2022. The current procedures and processes for production of PME reports will continue to be reviewed by OSP in 2022 to identify possible efficiencies that would support faster turnaround times.

2.2 Other targets

Output area or initiative	Target
Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS)	System in place with search criteria by end 2022
Teaching and elective attachments	Three completed projects by end 2022
Business improvement projects	One completed project by end 2022: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audit of trace evidence collection at post mortem examination
Academic research/publications	One publication in an international peer reviewed journal (end 2022)
EQA results histology lab	Adequate scores achieved (accreditation standard)

2.3 Main risks to achievement of targets

The main potential risks to achievement of the targets set out in this Agreement, and the corresponding mitigation measures in place, are as follows:

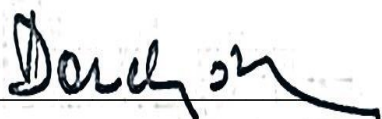
Key Risk/ Risk Factor	Impact	Key Controls/ Mitigations
Inability to resolve issue with external provider of new LIMS at OSP	Reduced internal audit capabilities and continued reliance on paper based file systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued and regular engagement with the remaining staff at the external company • Investigate alternative resolutions, potentially with DOJ ICT or another provider
Risk of COVID-19 resurgence	<p>Any resurgence may impact speed of delivery of ancillary investigation results in cases, which may in turn affect turn-around times</p> <p>Remote working of staff (if required) may impact peer review, typing and turnaround times</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All office and pathology staff provided with remote working capability including Dictaphone typing software • Appropriate, confidential remote methods for peer review and case review meetings • Regular contact with all employees • Use of equipped facilities in no swab priority cases
Delays receiving toxicology, neuropathology and other results	Will impede the finalisation of PME reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated office staff member follows up with relevant laboratories • Audit of toxicology transport and receipt following autopsy to identify problems
Human error leading to errors in reports	Reputational damage, report not meeting legal requirements, legal challenge etc.	Peer review of all case reports
Surge in demand for OSP services	Would impact on all aspects of OSP's work (timelines in respect of PMEs, reports, admin work etc.)	<p>Engagement with Mass Fatality Expert Group as part of the National Major Emergency Management framework, to consolidate draft preparations for any mass fatality event</p> <p>Draft national plan is in place and was used as a basis for the Covid-19 mortality response as well as for other smaller events in the past</p>

2.4 Amendment of targets

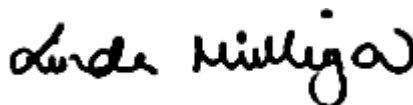
In exceptional circumstances it may become necessary to amend one or more targets over the course of this Agreement. Where either party believes this may be necessary, they shall consult with the other party with a view to agreeing any appropriate changes as soon as practicable.

3. Duration and signatories to the Agreement

Doncha O'Sullivan, Assistant Secretary, Department of Justice, and Dr. Linda Mulligan, Chief State Pathologist, affirm that this Agreement shall be in effect until 31st December 2022.



Doncha O'Sullivan
Assistant Secretary
Department of Justice



Dr. Linda Mulligan
Chief State Pathologist
Office of the State Pathologist

Date: 18/02/2022