

Deceased Management Advisory Group

UPDATE 21st MAY 2020

The members of DMAG held a video conference on 21 May 2020, with a representative from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and representative from Scottish Government present for the open part of the meeting.

1. MINISTRY OF JUSTICE UPDATE

MOJ confirmed that a revised version of the document *What to do when someone dies during the COVID-19 pandemic* had been published.

MOJ reported that London Resilience Forum had reported concerns about the number of deceased persons awaiting repatriation. MHCLG were concerned that this could be a national issue.

DMAG representatives advised that they had not received reports that this was a big problem at present, but it was matter that needed to be monitored going forward. It was understood that there was an issue with some countries not repatriating deceased persons with confirmed or suspect COVID-19.

2. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT UPDATE

Scottish Government gave the following update:

- The PPE procurement process had been operational since 13 May. 75 funeral businesses had signed up. This was now being opened up to other business sectors needing PPE.
- Guidance on funeral services was being refreshed, to include advice on the use of face coverings etc. This launch of the refreshed guidance was to coincide with a social media campaign on the restrictions as to who can attend a funeral.
- Scottish Government had published its 'road map' on the easing of lockdown. The relaxing of funeral restrictions featured in phase 3.
- Scottish Government was doing some work with faith groups on the re-opening of places of worship for funeral services.



FBCA
Federation of Burial
& Cremation Authorities



The Cremation Society

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FFMA enquired as to whether there had been any further problems with body bags from certain manufacturers being unsuitable for cremation. It was confirmed that there remained some concern about PVC body bags. FFMA reported there was a difficulty in getting specification sheets for body bags. Scottish Government advised that UNICEF publish specifications for body bags, which would be forwarded to DMAG for information.

3. EASING OF LOCKDOWN PATHWAY

DMAG considered a proposal for four stage pathway for the easing of lockdown for crematoria and cemetery services. DMAG welcomed the proposal, and it was agreed that a similar document for funeral director services would be brought to DMAG by NAFD and SAIF.

4. NOTES/MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

DMAG CLOSED MEETING

1. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS WITH CABINET OFFICE / SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

It was agreed to invite Welsh Government to a meeting of DMAG next week. Cabinet Office would also be invited to discuss the online portal proposal.

2 CARE HOME PROTOCOL

DMAG agreed to endorse the protocol for care homes and funeral directors which had been developed with the Care Providers Alliance and the National Care Forum.

3 REGIONAL MODELLING

APCC enquired as to whether regional modelling could be more fine-grained, and give projections for specific areas within regions. NAFD agreed to enquire with their modeller as to whether this was possible.



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4 LESSONS LEARNED

DMAG received the interim Lessons Learned paper, which outlined DMAG members' thoughts on what had gone well and what had been the main challenges during the pandemic. FBCA would distribute a final version of the paper, which would then be shared with key stakeholders.

5. CMA Funeral Market Investigation

NAFD and SAIF reported that CMA had been in touch regarding a timetable for sector bodies re-engagement with the market investigation. It was agreed that CMA needed to be briefed on the risks of a second wave of the virus. The importance of sector bodies re-engaging in consort was emphasised.

5 AOB ROUND ROBIN

SAIF had drafted some guidance on limousine use. It was agreed that feedback would be provided by close of play on Tuesday.

