

# Deceased Management Advisory Group

## Update 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020

The members of DMAG held a video conference on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020, with the National Medical Examiner (ME) and representatives from Senedd Cymru (SC) and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) present for the open part of the meeting. CSGB chaired the meeting.

### 1. Ministry of Justice update

The MOJ will find the relevant contact from the MHCLG Taskforce so that they can be invited to a DMAG meeting to discuss the re-opening of places of worship.

Because of these exceptional circumstances the question was raised if the date for the deadline for responses to the CMA could be amended? MOJ will contact CMA for clarification.

The MOJ asked DMAG if any excess monies in a prepaid funeral plan would be refunded. The majority of funeral plan providers are (voluntary) members of the Funeral Plan Association (FPA). Under FPA regulations any excess money will be credited to the deceased's family after all funeral expenses have been paid.

The DMAG Portal is currently being looked at by CO and MOJ. We will await their report.

### 2. Easing out of lockdown (SC)

SC have introduced a traffic light system to Wales to aid with the easing out of lockdown (black, red, amber and green). The funeral sector guidelines are envisaged to remain the same at the moment (and this includes the interment of ashes) and will probably not be reviewed until the "green" stage of lockdown. This will also include church services and weddings.

Wales are now looking at "lessons learnt" and DMAG will send our draft document to SC. The DMAG "easing out of lockdown" document has been received by SC who thanked us for the information.



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### 3. Medical Examiners Service.

The question of retention of form 4 has been raised on previous occasions but DMAG sought the advice of the ME regarding this matter. His response is that it is for local determination to follow the MOJ guidelines. The MOJ representative said that further discussions are taking place regarding form 4.

APCC wished for clarification on the Retention of Records Act and how it interfaced with Medical Examiners and their Codes of Practice. Wherever ME's record their information be it on paper or electronically it would be subject to the same regulations as a medical record.

The ME informed DMAG that during this period of emergency there has been some changes around paperwork and registration etc. Going forward we must be cautious not to provide too much flexibility as this could be open to misuse.

The Medical Examiners' office will be resuming implementation of the rolling out of ME by 1<sup>st</sup> July.

DMAG closed this session with grateful thanks to the National Medical Examiner, Senedd Cymru and Ministry of Justice for their attendance and contribution to the work of DMAG.



**FBCA**  
Federation of Burial  
& Cremation Authorities



**ICCM**  
Institute of Cemetery and  
Crematorium Management



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## Part two

### 1. Items for future meetings with Cabinet Office/ Scottish Government

Track and trace. Very little guidance/information has been given by Government. Ask for progress from CO at Thursday's meeting. We will ask Peter Tallentire to attend a DMAG meeting next week.

### 2. CMA

We are aware at that during the covid-19 crisis that funerals have changed dramatically. APCC raised the question that CMA may make long term decisions on out of date information. CMA need to be cautious with the remedies they propose to the sector. SAIF are responding saying how the funeral sector has changed because of covid-19 and things need to be totally reviewed. NAFD concerned that the CMA will make recommendations without Government intervention and exercise their own powers to regulate the sector. APCC wondered if DMAG should issue a joint response to CMA. In the meantime APCC will gather the figures for April- June quarter to forward to CMA on behalf of DMAG.

### 3. DMAG Budget

It was agreed, that if DMAG wish to undertake any project/task that would be equally beneficial to all then it would be jointly funded. A budget would be established per project as and when the need arose.

### 4. Lessons Learned

FBCA asked if we should approach all those who had been sent the "lessons learned" document and ask for feedback. Those contacted could be asked if they agreed with any or all of the 7 recommendations in the document. A matrix of support could be then presented to CO. NAFD will contact CO-OP and Dignity for their thoughts.

### 5. AOB Round Robin

David Best (Northern Ireland) and Ewan Walker and Kirstin Leath (Scotland) will be attending DMAG on Wednesday. JL not available on Wednesday. APCC will chair.



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