

# Deceased Management

## Advisory Group

### Video Conference

### Update 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2020

The members of DMAG held a video conference on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2020, with representatives from Scottish Government (SG) Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the Senedd Cymru (SC) present for the open part of the meeting. FBCA chaired the meeting.

DMAG Wider Consultation 4.00 – 4.45pm

#### 1. SG Update

The representative from Scottish Government reminded the meeting that the regulations which placed legal requirements on who could attend a funeral had been lifted on 15th July. Instead, guidance recommended a cap of 20 attending funerals had been put in guidance for places of worship, crematoria, indoors or outdoors and this will be reviewed, and could be changed if necessary, at the end of July.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that due to the emotional nature of funerals, social distancing is difficult to maintain. A similar situation exists with weddings.

Face coverings are required at retail outlets, including ‘front of house’ at funeral director’s premises.

#### 2. MoJ update

A revised version of the leaflet providing advice to the bereaved is being prepared, comments and suggestions would be welcome by no later than COP Monday 27th July.

A restructuring of the section responsible for the Deceased Management sector in MoJ is proposed. It will result in Judith Bernstein taking responsibility for Coroners, Inquests and Inquiries whilst Glenn Palmer will lead on Burials, Cremations and Exhumations. In future both will be invited to DMAG meetings.

The Ministry of Justice representatives congratulated the sector on the creation of DMAG. It has proved a model as a first point of contact for government departments seeking advice and operationalising policy. The



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sentiments were echoed by the representatives from the Scottish and Welsh Governments. The Chairman thanked them and reiterated the willingness of DMAG to assist the government representatives wherever possible.

### 3. SC update

The representative confirmed that with the decline of covid cases the response for the Deceased Management sector would return to the Resilience Team and Paul Critchley would attend future meetings.

It is proposed to introduce revised regulations for 30th July. There will be no major shift in policy, but a change in how the requirements are articulated. In particular the regulations will confirm that places of worship, cemeteries, crematorium and funeral directors are all “open premises” which are required to take reasonable measures to minimise risk of exposure to coronavirus (social distancing and other reasonable measures, for example measures which limit close face to face interaction and maintain hygiene).

There are no plans to introduce a figure limiting the number of mourners attending a funeral, however it is proposed to provide clarity in the next few weeks on scattering of ashes after a funeral and the implications on the sector of Test and Trace.

The requirement is still for 2m distancing on funerals and in chapels, if this changes the sector will be advised.

The required Test and Trace information will be held by the family as they have invited the mourners who attend the funeral.

Whilst face coverings are not mandatory in shops, they should be encouraged in retail premises where 2m cannot be maintained.

As this was the last meeting for Claire the Chair thanked her for attendance and support.

### 4. Notes from previous meeting

It was agreed that these could be published on the DMAG website



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DMAG Meeting 4.45 – 5.30pm

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

It was agreed that items for Cabinet/Scottish Office would be discussed at the next DMAG meeting on the 27th July.

**2. Social distancing**

The response from PHE confirmed that the requirement for social distancing was 2m and not 1m+. The representative of the APCC agreed to share this information with his Members.

**3. AOB Round robin**

There were no matters raised.

NAFD agreed to chair the next meeting



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