

Deceased Management Advisory Group

Video Conference Notes 10th December 2020

The members of DMAG held a video conference on 10th December, with representatives from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), Welsh Government (SC) and the Scottish Government (SG) present for the 'Open' part of the meeting. Apologies were received from the ICCM and the APCC. FBCA chaired the meeting.

DMAG Wider Consultation 4.00 – 4.45pm

1. Senedd Cymru Update

The representative from the Welsh Government reminded the meeting that recent changes had been made in Wales to their guidance, including a reduction in the self-isolation period from 14 days to 10 days for anyone who had been in contact with someone who had tested positive with COVID-19.

2. Scottish Government Update

The representative of the Scottish Government advised the meeting that the current Inspector of Crematoria had been appointed to the new position of Senior Inspector of Burial, Cremation and Funeral Directors. HM Inspector of Anatomy in Scotland, Professor Findlater, whilst remaining in that position will also take on the role of Inspector of Burial, Cremation and Funeral Directors. There will be further Inspectors posts advertised in the New Year. The Inspectors will be supported by a small team of staff. The changes would be announced publicly on 11th December 2020.

It is hoped to be able to recommence sector meetings as soon as possible to develop the powers to be held by the Inspectors and the licencing scheme.

3. Self-isolation for those visiting relatives dying with COVID

The representative of the NAFD had been advised of more than one instance where a person making funeral arrangements had visited the deceased in hospital shortly before they died of COVID-19 and had not been required to wear PPE.

The representative of the Welsh Government confirmed that in Wales individuals visiting patients with COVID-19 in hospital or care homes would be required to wear PPE; the Scottish Government representative confirmed similar requirements existed in Scotland, and the representative of the MoJ agreed to take the question away and check the position for England



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4. Mortuary charges

The representative of the NAFD had been made aware of a hospital mortuary imposing a fee where the deceased had not been removed within 72 hours after the necessary paperwork had been available. However, without a contract it was unclear if the hospital could enforce such a charge.

DMAG members were aware of similar issues arising in the past and it was generally accepted that such charges could not be enforced.

5. Pall bearers and disinfecting coffins

The NAFD representative had been informed of a crematorium which was insisting that funeral directors who bear coffins should also sanitise them.

It was noted that DMAG had issued advice on this issue at the start of the pandemic and this should be brought to the attention of the funeral director.

DMAG Meeting 4.45 – 5.30pm

1. Notes from previous meeting

The notes from the previous meeting were agreed and could be published on the DMAG website.

2. Items for future meetings with Cabinet Office/Devolved Governments

It was agreed that the existing items on the DMAG list should remain, subject to them being discussed with a Cabinet Office representative at a meeting of DMAG. The NAFD representative would invite the Cabinet Office representative.

3. AOB Round robin

There were no further issues raised.

