

# Deceased Management Advisory Group

## Update 4th February 2021

The members of DMAG held a video conference on the 4<sup>th</sup> February, with representatives from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ); Welsh Government (SC); Scottish Government (SG) and Northern Ireland Government (NI) present for the 'Open' part of the meeting. FFMA chaired the meeting.

### DMAG Wider Consultation

#### 1. Ministry of Justice (MOJ)

The MOJ representative had little to update the Group on. The definition of Funeral Service Operative, in relation to vaccination priority, is still waiting to be signed off by DHSC. It is hoped the final guidance, both short & long form, will be available by Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February.

ICCM asked whether Crematorium & Cemetery staff would be included as in Northern Ireland, but the MOJ do not believe so.

APCC reported that some crematorium staff had been progressed by exception via their GP Surgeries not through any central co-ordination.

NAFD understands that Crematorium/Cemetery staff might be included as they could be exposed to the virus through contact with vulnerable people. MOJ will seek guidance.

FBCA suggested that Scottish & Welsh Governments could follow the lead given by Northern Ireland Government by amending their definition of Funeral Service Operatives to include Crematorium/Cemetery staff.

#### 2. Welsh Government (SC)

The SC representative stated that the updated Guidance is with the Health Committee. Conversations had been held within SC regarding large attendances at funerals and the best way for SC to get the message relayed to try and prevent these gatherings.

#### 3. Scottish Government (SG)

The SG are, too, experiencing difficulties with large gatherings at funerals which ignore the rule of 20 attendees. It is hoped that a message might be given by the First Minister or Chief Medical Officer to try and deter too many mourners attending. It is important that the message has the right tone.



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SG requested an agenda item at DMAG's meeting on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February in relation to Funeral Support Payments. The level of deposits asked for by Funeral Directors will be discussed.

APCC raised the issue of vaccination availability for one of its members. Each Health Board in Scotland is responsible for vaccinations in their own area and some have co-operated to serve Crematoria staff. Edinburgh has not been included in this and the SC and the APCC member will be meeting to discuss.

## 4. Northern Ireland (NI)

NI reported that over 760 names from the funeral sector had now been registered for vaccination.

An extended period of lockdown until 5<sup>th</sup> March is now in place with a maximum of 25 mourners being allowed at a funeral service. This is being largely ignored and the message will be reiterated that Regulations must be complied with.

### DMAG Closed Meeting

#### 1. Notes from two previous meetings.

These were approved for publication.

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

The Group reviewed the Cabinet Office meeting held earlier in the day. There is a feeling that there is a lull in the information being shared at the present time. There is indication that numbers of deaths and new cases are falling.

The Cabinet Office is now looking at relaxation of restrictions and DMAG will be looking to discuss this matter and feedback thoughts to the Cabinet Office with a particular view to the possible relaxation of the Coronavirus Act.



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Federation of Burial  
& Cremation Authorities



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## 3. Vaccinations

APCC asked whether Registrars may be included as priority staff for vaccinations.

APCC raised the letter received from Memoria which they had used to obtain vaccinations for their staff across the UK. Before circulating to respective Associations' members it was decided to discuss further at the meeting on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February by which time Guidance may have been issued

## 4. AOB Round Robin

NAFD & SAIF gave an update on a meeting held with Hertfordshire Police regarding the recent issue of a possible fine for a Funeral Director.

The Group discussed the matter, at length, and viewed the possible circumstance should a Funeral Director not wish to conduct a funeral where a large attendance might be expected.

What would the ramifications be?

**APCC would chair the next DMAG meeting which will be held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February at 4pm.**



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