

# Deceased Management Advisory Group

## Update 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021

The members of DMAG held a video conference on the 18<sup>th</sup> January, with representatives from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), the Scottish Government (SG), Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Executive (NI) present for the 'Open' part of the meeting. The ICCM chaired the meeting.

## DMAG Wider Consultation

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

- 1.1. Vaccinations – the definition of 'funeral operative' is still with officials at the DoH. The MoJ is aware that there is currently inconsistency around the country, and is trying to get this resolved asap.
- 1.2. SAIF queried if there was any news on people travelling into the UK to attend a funeral. MoJ replied that CCS are looking into this, but the general position is that people who are self-isolating are able to leave their self-isolation to attend a funeral.
- 1.3. NAFD raised the issue of FD staff having to do things they don't normally do, eg in one area FD staff are being asked to take witness statements from families for the Coroner. The MoJ will consider this and report back.

### 2. Welsh Government (SC) update

- 2.1. SC reported that they are still lobbying regarding the definition of funeral workers to include cemetery and crematorium staff. Priority has been given to those funeral workers who visit hospitals and care homes to reduce the risk to those most vulnerable. Many funeral directors in Wales are small businesses and workers may have multiple roles, but those who enter hospitals and care homes should be put forward for vaccination.
- 2.2. The list of who should be vaccinated should be sent to the SC representative, who will then forward this to the vaccination team for onward transmission to the local health boards.
- 2.3. DMAG reiterated the importance of including cemetery and crematoria staff in the priority vaccination group as they are coming into contact with many people. Some crematoria are very short staffed due to staff having to self-isolate, and are perilously close to having to shut. APCC and ICCM send examples to SC.



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## 3. Scottish Government (SG) update

3.1.SG reiterated what MoJ and SC said about trying to define a funeral operative, and they will blog when this is sorted.

3.2.SG had met with regional resilience partners, some of whom are already vaccinating. Some FDs have been passing on the phone number they were given to book their vaccination to people who are not working in the funeral sector. SG asked that a message be sent that the system is not to be abused.

## 4. Northern Ireland Executive (NI)

NI confirmed that a letter has been sent out to the funeral sector with information about registering for a vaccination. Over 600 have registered so far. Queries have been received from the wider sector, including celebrants, priests, hearse builder etc. The vaccination priority is to protect the most vulnerable. One funeral director reported that their staff don't want the vaccination due to concerns about side effects.

## DMAG Closed Meeting

### 1. Notes from previous meeting.

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

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

DMAG agreed that the list of items for consideration at the weekly Cabinet Office meetings needs to be redefined and refocussed, with supporting evidence/examples submitted where appropriate. APCC will circulate some suggestions for comment before this week's CO meeting.

### 3. Response from CO re vaccination priorities

The response from the CO to an email from DMAG regarding priority vaccination for cemetery and crematorium workers was noted. DMAG will not send a further response at this stage but will monitor the situation.

### 4. AOB Round Robin

There were other no points raised.



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The next meeting will be held on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021 with FBCA chairing the meeting.

