

Deceased Management Advisory Group

Update 22 February 2021

The members of DMAG held a video conference on 22 February, with representatives from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ); Scottish Government (SG) and Northern Ireland Government (NI) present for the 'Open' part of the meeting. NAFD chaired the meeting.

Apologies were received from ICCM and Welsh Government.

DMAG Wider Consultation

1. Ministry of Justice (MOJ)

- a. The MOJ reported that they would be providing further information to DMAG in the near future on access to asymptomatic testing.
- b. The MOJ stated that they would be responding shortly to SAIF's enquiry about care homes requiring funeral directors to be tested before being able to enter the premises.
- c. FBCA enquired as to what work was being done to make sure that those measures put in place to improve the efficiency of death registration and certification processes were retained after the Coronavirus Act was rescinded. MOJ stated that this was a matter which was to be discussed at the Cabinet Office weekly meeting, and that it would be useful for MOJ to know now what measures DMAG members would wish to be retained.

2. Scottish Government (SG)

- a. SG reported that the First Minister would be issuing a statement on 23 February about forthcoming easing of restrictions, but it was not expected that funerals would figure in the statement.
- b. NAFD reported that some funeral staff in Glasgow and Clyde, who had missed the first round of vaccination appointments, were now being told that they would not be able to receive a priority vaccination but would have to wait until their age group was being vaccinated. SG agreed to explore further.
- c. NAFD enquired as to whether SG might issue a similar letter to that issued by the Minister for Policing in England giving reassurance about the limits of the funeral



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director's responsibility in the event that excess mourners attended a funeral. NAFD reported that some funeral directors in Scotland wanted clarity on this point, particularly in the light of large numbers of mourners attending funerals in Lanarkshire. SG agreed to explore further.

3. Northern Ireland (NI)

- a. NI reported that no changes would be made to lockdown restrictions in NI until April.

DMAG Closed Meeting

1. Notes from previous meeting.

These were approved for publication.

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

FBCA stressed the importance of the APPG on Funerals and Bereavement being briefed on those changes to death registration and certification which DMAG wished to be retained after the Coronavirus Act is rescinded. It was agreed that members should list those changes they wished to be retained so that DMAG was able to present a clear and unified message.

3. Attendance at funerals

NAFD and SAIF gave an update on a recent meeting with Hertfordshire Police on the approach that was to be taken at a funeral taking place on 23 February where up to 500 mourners were expected to arrive. NAFD and SAIF reported that the Police felt that engagement with the funeral director had been excellent, and that the Police's approach would be to prevent excess mourners entering the cemetery and not to take action against the funeral director or venue.

NAFD reported that there was no further update on the funeral director who had received a £10K fixed penalty notice.

4. AOB Round robin

It was agreed that DMAG would meet once a week from w/c 1 March on Mondays at 4pm. If there was an urgent need for an additional meeting, these would happen at 4pm on Thursday.

SAIF would chair the next DMAG meeting.

