

Deceased Management Advisory Group

Update 26 April 2021

The members of DMAG held a video conference on 26 April 2021, with representatives from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ); Scottish Government (SG); Welsh Government (SC); and Northern Ireland Government (NI) present for the 'Open' part of the meeting. SAIF chaired the meeting.

Apologies were received from the FBCA.

DMAG Wider Consultation

1. The Ministry of Justice (MOJ)

The MOJ advised that guidance for 'workplace testing for Covid-19' was to be issued from the DHSC. It was mentioned that workplace testing is the most reliable form. Businesses that have registered will receive free testing kits to 30th June 2021, and an email address given if they have not received correspondence from DHSC following their registration. The MOJ would circulate this information to DMAG members.

The NAFD asked if the testing kits would remain free of charge after 30th June. The MOJ did not know.

2. Welsh Government (SC)

The funeral guidance was due for release. The legal advisers to SC were concerned about the wording of this guidance in relation to a Covid-19 positive mourners attending funerals. There is uncertainty over who should collect this information versus privacy and GDPR concerns.

The NAFD advised that the client could sign that they would advise mourners of the risk of a person attending who had the coronavirus.

The FFMA recommended that signage warning mourners at a crematorium to be aware there might be a mourner with the coronavirus in attendance.

The ICCM suggested the advice be given in general and the importance for mourners to ensure that face coverings and social distancing be practiced due to the risk of a mourner attending with the coronavirus.



Deceased Management Advisory Group

The APCC raised the point that as the mourner restrictions are lifted, there would be more danger for infection to spread.

The SC will consider the views expressed and issue the guidance.

3. Scottish Government (SG)

The SG representative advised that from 26th April Scotland moved to level 3, which permits up to 50 mourners to attend a funeral service, which is subject to following the 2 metre physical distancing rule in the venues. The effect of this for most crematorium venues is that restrictions below 50 mourners will remain.

50 mourners are permitted at post funeral events, wakes and at authorised venues.

It is permitted for a funeral cortege journey to parade down a street lined with mourners who are standing socially distanced.

The SG confirmed their guidance to Care Homes that testing of funeral professionals when removing a deceased resident was unnecessary, on the basis the funeral director had regular LFTs.

4. Northern Ireland (NI)

From the 12 April 2021 funeral mourners numbers moved from a threshold limit to a risk assessment based on the size of the venue to allow for social distancing.

From 30 April, 15 people, or three households, can gather outdoors at a private dwelling.

The NI Government is due to give an updated definition of a Covid-19 death.

The ICCM asked if Test and Trace was still deployed across the four nations.

NI: Test and Trace was removed 12 April

SG: QR codes via software are recommended by the venue.

SC: Test and Trace remains in place, no change.

MOJ: TBA

The next meeting is 4pm Monday 10th May with the FFMA in the chair.



Deceased Management Advisory Group

DMAG Closed Meeting

1. Notes from previous meeting.

These were approved for publication.

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

Please see points 3 to 5 below that are relevant here.

3. Attendance at funerals

Discussion centred around the need for funerals to keep in step with the restrictions being lifted across the rest of society.

The NAFD advised that they had been contacted directly by the Daily Mail.

DMAG agreed that the solution in England for funeral numbers is to move to venues risk assessing safe Covid-19 social distancing and mourners numbers should be determined by this method.

4. APPG on Funerals

The FFMA felt that there are accessible resources already in place as a Bereavement Guide, whether through the NAFD or SAIF, or hospital bereavement offices.

Also, the FFMA questioned the annual report framework themes.

The APCC thought that the bibliography in the annual framework document could provide links to bereavement support and procedures for parliamentarians use. Furthermore, that MPs tend to have a short term outlook and various immediate themes would be generated on the agendas of the APPG, but it is also important that we have some longer term strategic goals for the APPG.

It was agreed SAIF would speak to JBP on these two points.

The NAFD, supported by SAIF, thought that education and training is an important topic for the annual framework, but to remove apprenticeships.



FBCA
Federation of Burial
& Cremation Authorities



ICCM
Institute of Cemetery and
Crematorium Management



The Cremation Society

Deceased Management Advisory Group

A meeting to agree DMAG's priorities for the APPG during 2021 was agreed.

Subsequent to this, an email was circulated by SAIF proposing that in 2021 the APPG areas of interest include:

- 1. Reuse of graves and the Law Commission reform for burial and cremation.*
- 2. Recognition of the Coffin Accreditation scheme*

This was accepted as a suitable pathway for 2021 (and would roll beyond this year, whilst we will adopt new areas of focus for the APPG in 2022).

5 & 6. Co-ordination/Reflections on the living with Covid-19 by DMAG

The APCC produced a very good paper to be presented to the Cabinet Office.

Edits by DMAG members are to be with the APCC no later than 27 April.

The Cabinet Office would be sent this document on the 28 April.

7. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

8. AOB

There were no other areas of business.



FBCA
Federation of Burial
& Cremation Authorities



ICCM
Institute of Cemetery and
Crematorium Management



The Cremation Society