

Deceased Management Advisory Group

Update 19th August 2021

The members of DMAG held a video conference on 19th August 2021, with representatives from the Scottish Government (SG). The Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Welsh Government (SC) and Northern Ireland Government (NI) present. The FFMA tendered their apologies.

1. NI Update

The representative reported that numbers were creeping up with the most recent figures recording 384 new infections, 49 patients admitted to hospital / ICU and 13 Covid related deaths.

Funeral Ceremonies can now be held again in residential premises with a maximum of 30 people from 3 groups being allowed inside and the rest outside.

It was likely that booster vaccinations would be made available to Level 2 category workers, probably through community pharmacists.

2. MoJ Update

The representative reported that while all the known initiatives were being progressed there were no new significant decisions to report at this stage.

3. SC Update

It is felt that it will be extremely important to ensure that the simpler and revised registration processes be retained post the pandemic. It was stated that a 'Places of Worship and Funerals Action Card' had been issued.

The representative said the central statistics department were due to issue revised modelling forecasts but that a delay had occurred which was outside of his remit so he could not predict when it might be available.

There were some early indications that rates of infection were rising and an increase in hospital admissions and Covid related deaths were expected so the public were being urged to remain cautious.



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4. SG Update

Again, infections were increasing, and this was expected to continue particularly as schools in Scotland returned this week. Advice on booster vaccinations was still awaited from the JCVI

DMAG Closed Meeting

1. Notes from previous meeting.

These were approved for publication.

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

APCC had been cautiously encouraged by the emphasis placed on the National Resilience Strategy. It was agreed that members would consult with their respective peer groups but there was broad agreement at this stage that a consolidated DMAG response might well be preferable and therefore a separate meeting was likely to be necessary to agree the final content. The Consultation closes on 27th September.

The NAFD expressed concern that no firm decisions had been made in relation to retaining the changes to Death Registration which would require changes in legislation. Responsibility has been under 'Finance' since 1976 and it is thought that a larger 'vehicle' is required for its progression. Speed is of the essence as the legislative programme for the next session of parliament will be confirmed in the early autumn.

It will also be necessary to press for up to date advice, initially through the Cabinet Office, on the status of frontline workers in respect of the 'booster' vaccination programme from JCVI.

3. CMA Regulation

APCC again raised the issue of establishing a simple proportionate (% based) system for measuring Moving Average Trends (MAT's) based on calendar quarters and annual totals. NAFD believed that the CMA would not change the reporting dates but it was agreed that the NAFD would try and organise a separate meeting with them, preferably for Wednesday 25th August at 11 a.m.



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4. [REDACTED]

5. AOB Round Robin

There were no items raised under this heading.

6. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 9th September from 12.15pm – 1.15pm and will be chaired by the Cremation Society.

Annual Report Update

1. Annual Report Update

Kieran Bergholcs attended the meeting on behalf of JBP Associates and gave an explanation of how the report was likely to be received and used by various groups within the parliamentary and associated government communities.

A number of minor amendments were put forward such as removing the term 'funeral industry' and correcting the frequency at which meetings with the Cabinet Office Contingency Secretariat are now held. Kieran said that the next draft of the report would be issued early in the w/b 30th of August and members were asked to submit their responses as soon as possible given the tight timetable.

The Meeting closed at 1:05 p.m.

