

Dealing with problems with GPs and Nursing Homes



January 2018

SAIF has often been contacted by members who have problems with GPs refusing to travel to verify and certify death. Often this also impacts nursing homes, who will only allow the closest funeral directors to remove the deceased, in order to reduce problems with the GP surgery, even if a different funeral director has been selected by the family.

This is an unfortunate situation which is increasing across the UK with GP's refusing to travel. However GPs are within their rights, according to the BMA, to choose where they view and certify death.

SAIF recommends:

1. In the first instance - write a polite letter to the GP surgery explaining the predicament and extra costs incurred by a client's family. You may also explain that you would be prepared to pay travel expenses for the GP to attend your funeral home at Inland Revenue rates (currently 45p per mile – that will be cheaper to the family, than the current arrangement).
2. You may suggest a meeting with the practice manager at the surgery ensuring that this is a courteous and polite meeting to seek to build a compromise.
3. You may also suggest a meeting with the nursing home, if this is applicable in your situation.
4. We would encourage you to have a good working relationship with a funeral director where you can use their chapel of rest in reach of the GP surgery. Many members already do this to improve the service they provide to families.