



Ministry
of Justice

Alex Chalk MP
Parliamentary Under-
Secretary of State for
Justice

Members of the Deceased Management Advisory Group

MoJ ref: TN 82579

20 October 2020

Dear all,

COVID-19 RESPONSE

I know that you and your members have been working extremely hard these past months, through what remains an extraordinarily challenging time for your staff, your businesses and for the bereaved. The Government fully recognises these efforts and I want to express our sincere thanks for the commitment and support that you, your members and all those in the wider funeral sector continue to provide.

The Deceased Management Advisory Group is established as an important forum, and the Government is extremely grateful for its continuing contribution in supporting the day to day operation of the death management process and providing vital information in that context. During the emergency period, the sector's response has been key to the Government's objectives of securing continued capacity to manage excess deaths whilst ensuring that the bereaved are treated with care and compassion, and the deceased with dignity and respect.

As you know, the Government continues to bring together and update relevant guidance; has introduced measures to support the sector through business rates relief and other measures; and has taken steps to speed up the processing of Funeral Expenses Payment claims in support of those who need it most. We will continue to assess the impacts of Covid-19 and keep the matter of support for the bereaved and the sector's needs under review.

Unfortunately, incidents of Covid19 are increasing as we move into autumn, and so it remains hugely important that we continue to work together to understand the ongoing implications for the bereaved and the funeral sector. Ministers and officials, across the UK Government and the devolved administrations, will continue to maintain direct efforts on the management of the deceased, working in partnership with you. To support this, we would be very grateful for your continued engagement in identifying, planning for and managing the particular challenges of the winter period. I know that my officials are already working with you on this, and I greatly value your sustained contribution to our understanding of the ongoing Covid impacts.

I am copying this letter to the Paymaster General, Penny Mordaunt, in the Cabinet Office.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alex Chalk." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and a period at the end.

ALEX CHALK MP