

From the Chief Medical Officer
Dr Michael McBride



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte
Máinnystrie O Poustie

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BY EMAIL

Chief Executives, HSC Trusts
SOLACE NI (for dissemination to all Local Council Chief Executives)
Joan McCaffrey, Local Government Regional Officer
National Association of Funeral Directors (NI Federation)
Society of Allied Independent Funeral Directors
British Institute of Funeral Directors
Irish Association of Funeral Directors
British Institute of Embalmers

Dear Colleagues

COVID-19 – UPDATED GUIDANCE FOR FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Regional guidance to assist Funeral Directors in managing infection risks when handling deceased individuals with COVID-19, was issued by the Department of Health on 16 April.

Since publication, new information advice and guidance has emerged on a range of issues and consequently a refresh of the document has been undertaken to reflect these changes.

The changes include new sections on preparing the deceased, viewing and cremation. There is no change at this stage on the recommended number of attendees at a funeral which remains at 10. The guidance also reiterates that no wakes should be held and that bodies should not be taken back to family homes.

These issues are under constant consideration and will be updated as required in line with the changing situation.

The revised document can be found on the DoH and PHA websites at <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/interim-guidance-for-funeral-directors.pdf> and <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/guidance-professionals-and-organisations#guidance-for-funeral-directors-on-managing-infection-risks-when-handling-the-deceased>.

I would ask that this information is cascaded to all relevant staff as a matter of urgency.

I will continue to review all relevant advice and guidance published to ensure that guidelines issued by the Department are updated as and when required.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael McBride". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and the last name "McBride" clearly distinguishable.

DR MICHAEL McBRIDE
Chief Medical Officer