



AUSTRALIAN FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

4 September 2020

The Hon Jenny Mikakos, MP
Member for Northern Metropolitan Region
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for the Coordination of Health and Human Services COVID-19
319 Spring Street
Reservoir, VIC 3073
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Urgent health guidance needed for family who are now allowed to be in contact with virus-positive deceased immediately before death

Dear Minister,

The Australian Funeral Directors Association (AFDA) is the peak funeral industry body in Australia with members in each State and Territory, representing around 65% of all deaths in the country.

AFDA urges DHHS to recommend that funerals for virus-positive deceased be delayed 14 days after death in circumstances where family members have been allowed to visit their loved-one during their final hours and days.

In recent times there has been an understandable loosening in protocols, allowing families, while wearing PPE, to spend time with family members who are positive to the virus and in their final hours. Our funeral director members have encountered families who have subsequently tested positive to the virus following these meetings, exposing funeral directors and others to the risk of infection and temporary business closure.

Presently, AFDA members are receiving inconsistent advice from Western Region Health and DHHS in this area, with varying views based on whether the family member died at a hospital or a nursing home.

If this practice is to continue, AFDA supports a 14-day quarantine period of family members who are in close proximity to terminally ill patients or delaying the funeral 14 days to allow those in contact with the deceased time to reveal symptoms and be tested.

Please do not hesitate to contact AFDA if any of the above points require further elucidation.

Yours faithfully,

Andrew Pinder
National President

Dale Gilson
Chief Executive Officer

Promoting

professional

funeral standards

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