

Leeds Local Medical Committee Limited

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25 March 2020

Mr Jonathan Leach

Senior Coroner

Office of HM Coroner for West Yorkshire (Eastern) Area

71 Northgate

Wakefield, WF1 3BS

By email: hmcroner@wakefield.gov.uk

Dear Mr Leach

Re: Coronavirus pandemic

As you will be aware, Leeds Local Medical Committee (Leeds LMC) is the professional body which represents and supports all GPs in the area. You will also appreciate that general practice, along with the rest of the health service, is under huge pressure at the moment as we respond to the rapid development of covid-19 infection within our community.


We have been contacted by local practices asking if, during the coronavirus pandemic, they have permission in Leeds to verify death and complete cremation forms by video link. Practices have also asked for advice on whether remote consulting (by phone or video link) which is now recommended in covid patients, counts as having seen the patient prior to their death. We believe that similar measures are being discussed in some areas of London and understand that this may already be happening there.

Leeds LMC is aware that it is not currently legal to view a body prior to completing a cremation form via video, although the new legislation will reduce the number of doctors required to complete a cremation form to one.

We would welcome your own perspective and advice on this matter for our local area. Allowing remote consulting and viewing by video link would not only reduce risk of infection but would also speed up the process, reducing the need for doctors to travel to an undertaker, if they have not already seen the body at the time of death. We have protocols in place which we could adapt quickly and which we would be happy to discuss further with your office.

In view of the rapidly-changing nature of this emergency and the need to forward plan applying pragmatic solutions, we would be grateful for your speedy response. My personal email is srks99@nhs.net, if this is more convenient for you.

Yours sincerely



DR RAJ SATHIYASEELAN
Medical Secretary