

*From the Chief Environmental Health Officer*  
**Mr Nigel McMahon**



Department of  
**Health, Social Services  
and Public Safety**

[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta  
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

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Your Ref:

Our Ref:

Date: 21 October 2009

**BY EMAIL**

To:

Chief Environmental Health Officers  
Local Government Emergency Management Group

Dear Colleague

**SWINE FLU: GUIDANCE FOR FUNERAL DIRECTORS**

Events over recent days have raised concerns regarding the safety of funeral directors and their staff who will be involved in the handling of deaths resulting from swine flu.

I am writing to you to ask that, through your local contacts, you bring the following pieces of guidance to the attention of funeral directors in your area.

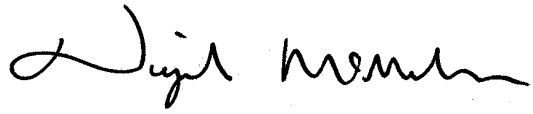
The first of these was issued by the Health and Safety Executive in Great Britain in 2005 and has been adopted by the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland. Entitled "Controlling the risks of infection at work from human remains", it describes employers' duties under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations as they relate to controlling the risk of infection. The guidance can be accessed at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/web01.pdf>.

In addition, guidance produced jointly by the Department of Health and the Health Protection Agency in collaboration with the National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD) and the Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors (SAIF) entitled "Pandemic flu: Guidance for Funeral Directors", is also relevant and is available to download at [http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/health-and-well-being/swine-flu/how\\_to\\_prepare\\_your\\_business.htm](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/health-and-well-being/swine-flu/how_to_prepare_your_business.htm)

Both documents provide practical advice on the approach to managing risk. In the case of influenza the measures to be adopted are similar to those for other commonly occurring respiratory viruses.

I am grateful for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel McMahon', written in a cursive style.

**Nigel McMahon**  
**Chief Environmental Health Officer**

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