

COVID-19

SECOND WAVE: ARE YOU PREPARED?

Government modelling suggests that the second wave of the virus may prove more challenging than the first, with a second wave - if it occurs - having a more prolonged peak than the first. If you compound this with the normal challenges that winter weather and the normal seasonal mortality rate spike represents for the sector, then it's clear - this is not the year to leave any planning to chance.

IS YOUR BUSINESS COVID-SECURE COMPLIANT?

Creating a COVID-secure workplace has never been more important. COVID-compliance has now become a legal obligation, and not meeting these standards in your workplace will result in fines of up to £10,000 and being forced to close your doors.

Citation's Health & Safety and HR experts have put together an extensive checklist of all the considerations you need to make to get your workplace inspection-ready and safe for your people, and this has been emailed to all members.

REVIEW YOUR PLANS

The NAFD has updated its Pandemic Response Planning Guide with all the learning and experience of the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. We've also added in sections on caring for the health and wellbeing of staff and other information that

we hope will be useful to members and the wider profession. The NAFD would once again like to thank the guide's author, Past President Alison Crane, for her ongoing determination to provide support for her fellow funeral professionals through the pandemic.

The NAFD would also like to remind members that the updated Manual of Funeral Directing, released earlier in 2020, also contains useful advice and support - as well as signposts to other useful sources of information.

STOCK UP ON PPE

Although it's possible that we may not experience the shortages of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in the second wave that we did in the first, we do know that there are already challenges in sourcing certain items - so make sure you are not caught out.

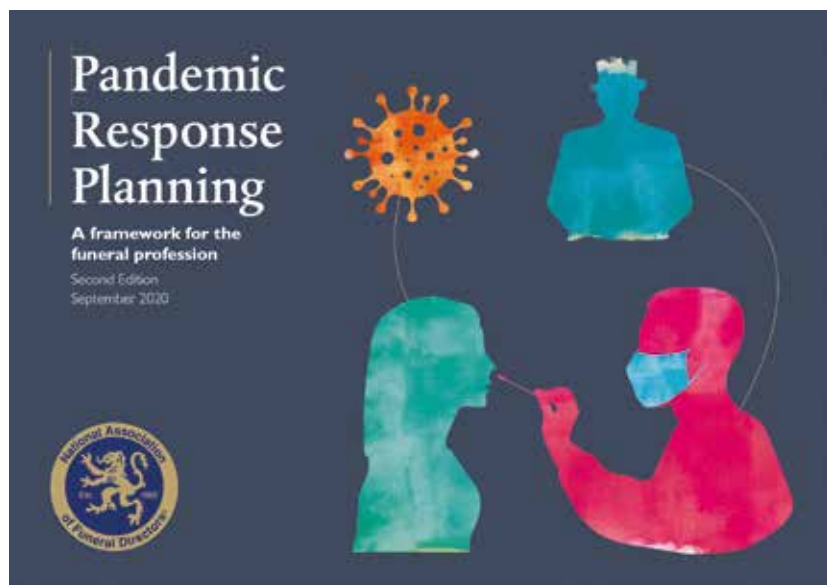
The NAFD has written to the Chancellor to seek an extension of the zero rate of VAT on PPE, which expires on 31 October, but there is no certainty that it will be extended.

There is also no guarantee that the funeral sector will have access to the national supply in the event of shortages, as it did in the first wave via local resilience forums.

Again, we are strongly arguing the case for this with the Government but, whatever the outcome of our discussions with government, members are urged to stock up now.

GRADUALLY INCREASE STOCK LEVELS OF KEY ITEMS

During the first peak, unnecessary over-buying by some firms caused delays in the system. Our





advice is to speak to your key suppliers and take a measured approach. As chair of the Funeral Furnishing Manufacturers' Association, Julian Atkinson's advice is "increase stock by 50% for the winter period but this needs to be done now over a period of three months and, likewise, the reduction of stock should be tapered over a similar period. This would really help handle the situation in a more rational way."

PLAN FOR POTENTIAL STAFFING SHORTAGES

With the testing services facing serious challenges, and multiple sectors seeking priority access, we do not know how easy it will be for funeral staff to access a timely test if they have symptoms or have to self-isolate.

This could cause serious staffing issues for funeral firms and so you are urged to think through how you might handle staff absence now. There is information to support you in the NAFD's Pandemic Response Planning Guide.

PREPARE FOR WINTER WEATHER WOES

On page 42 you will find information on operating your business through the winter from

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NAFD preferred insurance provider, SEIB. Each year, funeral businesses prepare for the impact of cold, snow, ice and other winter pressures on their businesses - but have you thought through the additional impact these might cause to the way you operated during the first peak of the pandemic?

HOW THE NAFD CAN SUPPORT YOU

1. Make sure the right email address is registered with the NAFD for operational and government updates. Too many of them are still going to email addresses that aren't checked regularly. If you are not receiving our e-communications, please advise us of the correct email address by email to su@nafd.org.uk.
2. Monitor the NAFD on social media - and check our dedicated website nafdcovid19.org.uk for updates.

