

6th July 2020

Dear First Minister

As I know you are aware the care home sector in Scotland has been deeply impacted as a result of Covid19. In my role as Chief Executive of Scottish Care I receive a large number of messages both by email and predominantly by social media from individuals with family members in care homes as well as from staff.

One of the commonest themes in the last few weeks relates to the experiences of those who have lost a relative to the virus. They have found it hard to reconcile a return to 'normal' with the loss and emptiness which they are experiencing.

Further as a result of the necessary restrictions brought in during the pandemic the normal means and rituals of remembrance and mourning have not been accessible, and this has left many without a sense of being able to tell the story of the deceased and share their grief with others.

I acknowledge the excellent support which is now being offered by many professionals and communities in supporting the bereaved but believe we now need to do something at a community and national level. My concern is that if we do not do so there will be far too many with unresolved and blocked grieving which will only serve to cause further hurt and pain in the future.

I am therefore writing to you to ask you to support with others in the Scottish Parliament a National Day of Mourning and Remembrance for all those impacted by Covid19 in Scotland. I am asking all Members of the Scottish Parliament to agree in principle to the idea of such a day.

- A day to mourn all those who have died in care homes, in hospital and in community
- A day to mourn all those who have died during Lockdown for whom we have been unable to grieve and remember as we might have done
- A day to remember all those who have worked tirelessly in the care of others sharing compassion, exercising professionalism and sacrificial service.
- A day to remember all those who have had their lives changed and turned upside down by this virus.
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I fully appreciate that at the present time it would not be possible to name the date of such a day and that we are still very much fighting the disease and need to focus on this but I think we also require as a community to make the decision to have such a day in the future when we can be together to focus on those we need to remember.

I hope that you will find it possible to support such a suggestion.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donald Macaskill". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent initial 'D'.

Dr Donald Macaskill

Chief Executive