

Cost of cremation to fall

New legislation, passed by The Scottish Government today, will scrap the £147 cremation fees and give greater scrutiny to the death certification process.

Under current arrangements, cremation incurs an additional cost. The new bill will create consistency between burial and cremation with a universal fee of around £30.

The bill will also improve the quality and accuracy of cause of death forms and ensure appropriate scrutiny of deaths in Scotland.

Public Health Minister Shona Robison said:

“The new changes will mean an improved service for bereaved families – one that is better quality and better value for money.

“These reforms will introduce a universal fee - considerably lower than what is currently paid by two thirds of families in Scotland. This will save bereaved families up to £3.6 million every year.

“Improved accuracy of cause of death forms will provide vital public health information and help ensure that public health resources can be directed where needed.

“This means that around 50 per cent of deaths in Scotland will be subject to scrutiny and, for the first time, relatives will be able to request a review of the information in the certificate where they have concerns.”

The new system will replace the current crematoria medical referee system and the associated forms and therefore abolish all cremation fees which are paid by families to doctors.

The bill will also remove the historical differences between

cremation and burial which were introduced at a time when medicine was less advanced, and when it was believed that more stringent measures were needed for cremations because the evidence of the body would be destroyed.

The new death certification system is expected to be implemented in 2013-14.