

PE1699/F

Petitioner submission of 22 May 2019

As you are aware in January last year my beloved brother was murdered in a senseless attack leaving our family devastated.

Due to Crowne Office and Procurator Fiscal Service rules in Scotland at the time we were unable to bury my Brother for 6 months.

This abhorrent situation could happen to anyone, I cant begin to explain the intense emotions we experienced during this time, unable to attempt any meaningful sense of normality or closure.

On researching the reasons behind the delay, I was inspired to lodge a Petition to the Scottish Government to see a change and hopefully avoid future unfortunate families enduring the pain we did.

On behalf of my family and myself I would like to take the opportunity to thanks everyone involved for taking the time to acknowledge my petition and provide feedback, all which will hopefully see positive changes to the current Practice. Having engaged with some of the agencies in support of this we are humbled that they have shown such support and positive feedback towards my petition.

Our family met late last year with the Lord Advocate, Mr Wolffe and Mr Yousaf the Justice Minister.

I am taking comfort in the fact that my petition has urged what once a draft protocol, to now be actioned meaning a more balanced protocol for Procurator Fiscal and forensic Pathologists to work from.

I am also assured by the Lord Advocate that the Crowne Office and Procurator fiscal service intends to monitor the protocol.

I have recently written to Mr Yousaf last week to see if he can enlighten me on the progress of things and whether there has been a positive change for bereaved families.

Mr Wolffe informed us at our meeting that only in 'special cases' will homicide victims bodies be held for prolonged periods.

My concerns are that this protocol in fact does not change things and instead more homicide victims become 'special cases' and in fact bodies are not released any sooner than they would have been before the Protocol.

The monitoring process was looking at timelines in relation to the release of bodies and also the number of post mortems carried out, I wonder if the Pathology board are noting statistics in comparison to before the protocol was in place?

I would be keen to see an improvement in statistics before this petition be closed

Again I would like to thank all involved for the time taken in relation to my petition.