

Response ID ANON-5KKZ-73AK-U

Submitted to Regulation of alkaline hydrolysis ('water cremation') in Scotland
Submitted on 2023-11-09 11:06:40

Introduction

1 Do you think that the Scottish Government should introduce regulations to allow the use of alkaline hydrolysis as a method of disposal of human remains in Scotland?

No

Please provide the reason for your answer:

The bodies of the dead must be treated with respect and charity.

In Catholic tradition, the burial of the dead is a corporal work of mercy as it honours the children of God who are temples of the Holy Spirit. A corporal work of mercy is an act of love which addresses the physical and material needs of others.

Whilst it may be said that the Catholic Church sees burial and internment of the body as the best means of treating the body with respect and charity, the Church does not forbid cremation unless it has been chosen for reasons which are contrary to Christian teaching. The Church, however, calls for cremated remains to be interred in cemeteries or other sacred places.

Both cremation and alkaline hydrolysis introduce a chemical reaction to speed up the decomposition of the human body, however, they introduce the remnants back into the world in very different ways. In the more common cremation method, the gaseous remains of the chemical reaction are introduced directly back into the atmosphere. In alkaline hydrolysis, however, the remains, in liquid form, are poured down the drain, in a way similar to human waste. In this way, alkaline hydrolysis is unnecessarily disrespectful of the human body. In the absence of a guaranteed suitable and dignified means of disposing the liquid we do not think the Scottish Government should introduce regulations to allow the use of alkaline hydrolysis as a method of disposal of human remains in Scotland.

2 Have the sustainability claims made by manufacturers influenced your response to question one?

Yes

Please provide details:

The relevant section suggests pouring down the drain as one method of disposal. This method is unnecessarily disrespectful of the human body, as outlined in our response to question 1.

Regulation and oversight of alkaline hydrolysis

3 Assuming that alkaline hydrolysis is to be allowed, should it be regulated in a similar manner as cremation?

No view/comment

Comment:

4 Do you agree that the same procedure as applies to opening new crematoriums should apply to opening alkaline hydrolysis premises?

No view/comment

Comment:

5 Should alkaline hydrolysis operators be subject to inspection in the same way as cremation authorities?

No view/comment

Comment:

6 What information do you think should be included in a management plan by a provider of alkaline hydrolysis?

Comment:

7 Do you agree that there should be statutory application forms similar to the cremation application forms?

No view/comment

Comment:

8 Do you have any views on the provision of alkaline hydrolysis for children under age 4 and for stillborn babies (even though no ashes are likely to result)?

Comment:

We refer to our response to Q1, and restate that the use of alkaline hydrolysis, as currently proposed, is unnecessarily disrespectful of the human body.

9 Do you have any comments on extending the requirement for a Form E1 (as applies when the body is released for cremation by COPFS) to alkaline hydrolysis?

Comment:

10 Do you agree that operators of alkaline hydrolysis (and funeral directors) should be required to comply with the same requirements and timescales for handling of the remains as they are for ashes following cremation?

No view/comment

Comment:

11 Do you agree that the content of the statutory cremation register for bodies should be replicated for alkaline hydrolysis?

No view/comment

Please add any comments on what you think should be different and why. :

12 Do you agree that the content of the statutory cremation register for body parts should be replicated for alkaline hydrolysis?

No view/comment

Please add any comments on what you think should be different and why. :

13 Do you agree that the content of the statutory cremation register for stillborn babies should be replicated for alkaline hydrolysis?

No view/comment

Please add any comments on what you think should be different and why.:

Duty of local authority to arrange funerals

14 Section 87 of the 2016 Act provides that where a person dies or is found dead within a local authority area, and no arrangements are being made for them to be buried or cremated, the local authority must make the arrangements. In these cases, should the local authority be able to use alkaline hydrolysis where it is available?

No

Please provide reasons for your answer:

We refer to our response to Q1, and restate that the use of alkaline hydrolysis, as currently proposed, is unnecessarily disrespectful of the human body.

Sustainability Considerations

15 As noted in the consultation, supporters of alkaline hydrolysis have suggested that the liquid could be considered for sustainable disposal, such as fertilizer. If relevant consents are obtained, do you have any views on whether this should be an option?

Yes

Comment:

We would give consideration to concrete proposals for alternative disposal of remains if such proposals are put forward.

Question

16 Do you have any other comments on the regulation and use of alkaline hydrolysis which you wish to share?

Comment:

Impact Assessments

17 Do you have any views on the potential impacts of the proposals in this consultation on human rights?

Please provide details :

18 Do you have any views on the potential impacts of the proposals in this consultation on equalities and the protected characteristics set out in the information box below?

Please provide details :

19 Do you have any views on the potential impacts of the proposals in this consultation on children and young people as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?

Please provide details :

20 Do you have any views on the potential impacts of the proposals in this consultation on socio-economic inequality?

Please provide details:

21 Do you have any views on the potential impacts of the proposals in this consultation on communities in the Scottish islands?

Comment:

22 Do you have any views on the potential impacts of the proposals in this consultation on privacy and data protection?

Please provide details:

23 Do you have any views on the potential impacts of the proposals in this consultation on business and the third sector?

Please provide details :

24 Do you have any views on the potential impacts of the proposals in this consultation on the environment?

Please provide details :

About you

25 What is your name?

Name:

Anthony Horan

26 What is your email address?

Email:

ahoran@rcpolitics.org

27 Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

Organisation

28 If you are responding as an individual, please select if you currently work in any of the following areas of the funeral sector

Not Answered

29 If you are responding from an organisation, please select the type of organisation that best applies

Faith/religion based organisation

30 What is your organisation?

Organisation:

Bishops' Conference of Scotland

31 The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

Publish response with name

32 We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Yes

33 I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.

I consent

Evaluation

34 Please help us improve our consultations by answering the questions below. (Responses to the evaluation will not be published.)

Matrix 1 - How satisfied were you with this consultation?:

Slightly satisfied

Please enter comments here.:

Matrix 1 - How would you rate your satisfaction with using this platform (Citizen Space) to respond to this consultation?:

Slightly satisfied

Please enter comments here.: