

Burton's bid to remove suicide from death certs is criticised

By Eamon Donoghue

SUICIDE prevention groups have expressed their concern over Government plans to omit the cause of death from death certificates, which are set to be introduced in the coming weeks.

Tánaiste Joan Burton has said that plans to introduce shortened death certs are at an advanced stage, as she aims to ease the distress caused to the family and friends of suicide victims.

Ms Burton explained that the regulations to introduce these certificates will be introduced in 'the next week or so', adding that she hopes 'that this will provide some comfort to families where the details of the cause of death registered are upsetting.'

Only two days ago the Andy Morgan Foundation released a video of Alex, the ten-year-old daughter of Andy Morgan who took his life three years ago, encouraging parents to be open about suicide to their children.

Alex's mother Joanne says that this new regulation will not deal with the suicide problem in Ireland at the moment, where there are approximately 400-500 deaths from suicide each year.

'On Andy's death cert he has "death by hanging" and, yeah, that could just be suicide, but I think [this proposal] is just masking what's going on in the country, and it's not going to help.'

'In my opinion the truth sets you free. That's why I told my children from the start, so it's not a big dark secret hanging over them for the rest of their lives.'

Talking to the Irish Daily Mail last night, when her daughter's video had reached almost 4,000 views in just 24 hours, Joanne understands that all families may not be 'as liberal' as her.



Video: Ten-year-old Alex lost her father Andy

'I'm very open, not many people think the same as I would - but I think they're just covering it up.'

'It's not making much difference. This country loves to sweep things under the carpet, as you can see with the mental health cuts.'

'I think to change the death cert might help some families, not everyone is as liberal as me. But for future generations it's important to be able to look back on your family

'It's painful but we need the truth'

history as these things, like depression, run in families.

'I'd rather know and I'd rather my family know.'

In the video which can be seen on the Andy Morgan Foundation Facebook page, Alex said she was 'much happier' to know the truth.

The schoolgirl said: 'When I go to

the grave I feel happy as it's the closest I get to him.'

'Even when I talk now I don't get sad as I've learned to accept it.'

In the video, she tells youngsters: 'I know you'll be sad as it's a big thing losing a mum, a dad, or anyone from suicide.'

'But there's always someone there. Don't bottle it up, if you need to cry, cry with someone.'

'My dad died three years ago through suicide. I miss him but I'm OK.'

Ms Burton revealed the plans when responding to a parliamentary question from TD Richard Boyd Barrett. The People Before Profit TD was querying the progress of the consideration and looking for a statement on the matter.

While the plans are aimed at helping families cope with the trauma of losing a loved one to suicide, there are also potential financial implications in life insurance policies.

A number of such policies include

Reform: Ms Burton plans changes to death certs



Another small boy loses life in a farming accident

By Niamh O'Donoghue

A FIVE-year-old boy has been killed in the country's latest farming tragedy - the second in the past week.

Liam Lyons was fatally injured by a rotary mower at the rear of a tractor while meadow was being mown yesterday afternoon in Co. Offaly.

The accident happened at around 3pm on a farm owned by a relative of the boy in Kincora near Ferbane.

He was airlifted by helicopter to the Midland Regional Hospital in Tullamore.

Gardaí and the Health and Safety Authority are investigating the incident. It's the second farm tragedy in a number of days.

On Friday three-year-old Fionn Mulhall died from crush injuries after he was struck by a mechanical digger on the family's farmyard outside Drimoleague near Bantry, Co. Cork.

Liam Lyon's father, Eoin, works the family's dairy farm in Rath, near Birr. Mother Marian works as a HSE speech therapist although she is currently on maternity leave having given birth to a baby girl just weeks ago. The couple have five children - all of whom are believed to be under the age of ten.

Mr Lyons is involved in the local GAA and coaches youth hurling in Drumculien, including Liam's own team.

Rath parish priest Fr John Moorehead described the incident as a terrible family tragedy. 'It's a terrible family tragedy and has hit the family very hard,' he said.

Meanwhile, the funeral of Fionn Mulhall took place yesterday in The Church of Mary Immaculate, Dromore, in Cork. He was buried in Drimoleague New Cemetery.

Fionn was the youngest son of farmer Gregory and teacher Imelda. He had three brothers - Luke, Greg and John.

He was the second child to die from crush-related injuries on a farmyard in Co. Cork over the last three months.

In May, 18-month-old Fionn Cashman, the youngest child of Con and Deirdre, died in a tragic accident on a farmyard outside Killeagh after being struck by a reversing tractor.

And last month two-year-old David Roche drowned in a container of water on the family farm in Limerick.

At least 16 people have been killed on Irish farms this year with a high percentage of deaths related to tractors and other machinery. Last year, 16 people died in farm-related accidents.

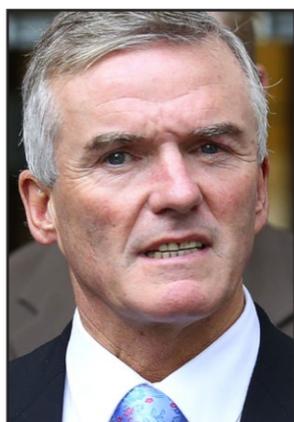
Man takes pipe bomb to Garda station in pram

A GARDA station was evacuated yesterday after a man wheeled a pipe bomb into the building in a child's pram.

The man found the device close to his home and decided to bring it to the Garda station in Togher, in the south of Cork city. He became concerned after he saw wires sticking out of the device. It is believed the device may have been intended for another family in the area as part of an ongoing feud.

The Army explosive unit was called in and the suspected bomb was made safe. A Garda source said: 'This member of the public found the device outside their home and decided the safest thing to do was to bring it to a Garda station.'

Gardaí have begun door-to-door inquiries in the Ballyphehane area, where the device was found, to see if anyone noticed suspicious activity yesterday morning. It is understood that gardaí are now investigating whether the device may be linked to a long-running feud in the Togher area between two rival groups, which has already resulted in one man's death.



Invoices: Ivor Callely

THE solicitor who defended Ivor Callely in his recent court case in which the disgraced former minister was jailed for five months has called for a full investigation into the legitimacy of expenses claimed by politicians.

Mr Callely, 56, pleaded guilty at Dublin Circuit Criminal Court on March 3 last to four counts of using invoices from three phone companies to make false expenses claims.

Last week he was sentenced to five months in prison by Judge Mary Ellen Ring.

In a letter to The Irish Times yesterday, Noel O'Hanrahan wrote that the former minister pleaded guilty to the offences with which he was charged and, 'in so doing he had the honesty and integrity to acknowledge the

By Irish Daily Mail Reporter

wrongfulness of his actions.'

Mr O'Hanrahan continued: 'Had he chosen to he could have pleaded differently.'

The solicitor added that: 'Ivor Callely was a victim of a culture which promoted expense claims - "Of the politicians, for the politicians, by the politicians" - which it was open to politicians of all hues to exploit.'

'In a culture that has seen even recently the amount claimed by high-profile politicians come into question, is it not time to have a full investigation to examine every detail of the legitimacy of all expenses claimed by all politicians both past and present?' the solicitor asked.

Mr O'Hanrahan said the initiation of such an appropriate inquiry 'would be

in the public interest and would ensure that Ivor Callely was not just sacrificed on the altar of political expediency and hypocrisy in a perceived purgation of the political process.'

'Perhaps the results of such an inquiry would challenge the media to apply their attention to more serious and egregious breaches of the expenses claim regime than the relatively small amount involved in the case of Ivor Callely,' he added.

Mr O'Hanrahan, who is founding partner at O'Hanrahan and Company Solicitors, noted that he had written the letter in 'a personal capacity'.

Mr Callely was taken to Mountjoy last Monday and put under observation by medical staff. He was kept in a single cell away from the rest of the prison population as a 'precautionary measure', a prison source revealed.

BRENDA POWER: JOAN IS WRONG

SEE PAGE 12

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Call for expenses probe 'in public interest'