

Message

From: Hugo Van Woerden [/O=HSCNI/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=54AF7BFDACC74232A354FBB5F51ECC9B-HUGO VAN WOERDEN]
Sent: 28/03/2020 18:33:58
To: Pengelly, Richard [Richard.Pengelly@health-ni.gov.uk]
CC: Gordon, David [David.Gordon@health-ni.gov.uk]; Brid Farrell [brid.farrell@hscni.net]; Stephen Wilson (PHA) [stephen.wilson@hscni.net]; DoH Minister [minister@health-ni.gov.uk]; Geoghegan, Lourda [Lourda.Geoghegan@health-ni.gov.uk]; [NR]@health-ni.gov.uk; [NR]@health-ni.gov.uk; [NR]@health-ni.gov.uk; michael.mcbride@dhsspsni.gov.uk [michael.mcbride@health-ni.gov.uk]; Valerie Watts [valerie.watts@hscni.net]; Paul Cummings [paul.cummings@hscni.net]; [NR]@hscni.net; Miriam McCarthy [miriam.mccarthy@hscni.net]; [NR]@hscni.net; Sloan Harper [sloan.harper@hscni.net]; DoH SpAd [spad@health-ni.gov.uk]
Subject: RE: COVID-19 daily testing figures
Attachments: RE_Deaths recorded today.msg; RE_COVID-19 27_03_2020.msg

Dear Richard

I appreciate fully the urgency of the request for greater detail on this issue as outlined in correspondence received at lunchtime today. As per attached previous emails, I believe that this was responded to in a timely way on each occasion that I was contacted earlier this week.

ACTIONS

1. A team of people have been working on a response since the email arrived at lunchtime today.
2. I have ensured that the CEO of the HSCB and other senior executives are sighted on the issues that have been raised.
3. Further to your conversation yesterday with Valerie and I, I raised the concerns that you and the Minister's expressed to all the Trust CEOs at the 1 pm teleconference yesterday. The response of all Trust CEOs was provided via GOLD yesterday and is reattached.
4. [NR] discussed ongoing data issues raised with the CMO's office yesterday and I believe that his understanding was that they had agreed to take the lead on further responses to concerns that you and the Minister had. A response to that effect was communicated to [NR]

RECOMMENDATION

I do believe that a meeting on Monday including Trust representatives (senior management and laboratory staff who are best placed to provide a comprehensive verbal update that would supplement a written report) is in the best interests of good communication with you and with the Minister. However, I recognise that this is your call to make.

I believe that this repeated recommendation indicates the urgency with which the issue is being considered and I have offered to help set it up, if that would be helpful.

REPORT

I hope to have a report for you before the end of play today.

Best wishes

Hugo

Professor Hugo van Woerden

Director of Public Health and Medical Director
Public Health Agency
12 – 22 Linenhall Street
Belfast, BT2 8BS

I&S



From: Pengelly, Richard [mailto:Richard.Pengelly@health-ni.gov.uk]

Sent: 28 March 2020 17:43

To: Hugo Van Woerden; DoH SpAd

Cc: Gordon, David; Brid Farrell; Stephen Wilson (PHA); DoH Minister; Geoghegan, Lourda; E [mailto:] **NR**

Subject: RE: COVID-19 daily testing figures

Hugo

Can I suggest that you now take this issue a little more seriously than seems to be the case, and provide a comprehensive written response urgently. These issue have been kicking around for a number of days, and I am astonished that you don't seem to appreciate the frustration it is causing. I thought I had made this clear in my conversation with you and Valerie earlier in the week, but it would seem that my points did not get the traction you assured me they had.

By way of illustration, I asked for a daily reconciliation between testing capacity and number of tests carried out - I have yet to see that.

We do not need a meeting on this, but some firm action on your part to resolve. I would be grateful for that full written report by lunchtime tomorrow at the latest.

If this is a problem, or you feel unable to address it, please come back to me directly and I will determine an alternative way forward.

R.

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(www.blackberry.com)

From: Hugo Van Woerden <Hugo.VanWoerden@hscni.net>

To: Gordon, David; Hugo Van Woerden; Brid Farrell; Stephen Wilson (PHA); DoH Minister; Pengelly, Richard; Geoghegan, Lourda; NR

Subject: FW: COVID-19 daily testing figures

Thanks David, suggest no response is issued until we get exactly to the bottom of what is really going on here.

There are serious discrepancies in what the Minister is being told and what is actually happening. I also continue to have serious concerns about the quality of information being published in the daily PHA surveillance report.

Hugo/Brid - the Minister & I both asked for clarity yesterday, and with all respect we didn't get it. I was even told yesterday that's it's not the time to be getting into the detail. It is.

It is my understanding that on the 17th March in a teleconference between DoH, public health and virology it was agreed to expand the categories for priority testing to include 1) healthcare workers and 2) tests requested by medical director or nominated senior person. Silver was notified of this change that evening. Silver was then tasked to do a quick turnaround piece to define exactly who was to be in the HCW group. Laboratory services I believe were also agreeable to expanding the testing groups.

I am concerned by the email from PHA press office to DoH press office yesterday. Does that mean, as it tends to suggest, that HCW testing is not being covered by the surveillance?

I asked the question yesterday, but it wasn't answered, so I'll ask again - how many HCWs across Northern Ireland have been tested to date?

Can we have confirmation that the expansion for testing agreed 11 days ago was relayed to Trusts and has been fully implemented?

Can we also have confirmation that all testing, including those carried out by the Trusts, is being reported through the daily surveillance report? It was concerning that the Northern Trust had reported a nil increase in testing in yesterday's report, even though I believe they commenced their own testing on Wednesday.

These are direct questions which we now require direct answers to.

Mark

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From: Gordon, David <David.Gordon@health-ni.gov.uk>
Date: Saturday, 28 Mar 2020, 8:16 am
To: DoH SpAd <spad@health-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: COVID-19 daily testing figures

See below

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From: DoH Press Office <PressOffice@health-ni.gov.uk>