

Healthcare MIG | 24 March 2020

Purpose

- The focus of this meeting will be on healthcare supplies as well as a further discussion on shielding measures implemented last week in England.
- Cathy Harrison, the NI Chief Pharmaceutical Officer (CPO) and Dr Michael McBride, the NI Chief Medical Officer will be dialling into the meeting. They are prepared to speak to the items in relation to healthcare supplies.
- Chris Matthews, NI DoH Healthcare policy, will be covering off the aspect of Shielding.

Overall Steer

- We propose that you allow the NI DoH officials to provide detail on the NI update.
- However NI is experiencing particular shortages of PPE in healthcare and the wider public sector. **As such, it will be important to raise how DHSC is collecting information on PPE requirements for all 4 nations of the UK and how healthcare supplies will be procured and shared out among the 4 nations** (This question has been raised by the Head of the NI Civil Service).

BACKGROUND

- As of 2pm on Monday 23 March, 2692 tests have been completed with 148 confirmed cases in Northern Ireland. **There have been currently been 3 coronavirus-related deaths.**
- The NI Health Service is in a much more precarious position with healthcare workers recently writing to NI politicians stating that *"NI is in the worst shape of any part of the NHS going into this"*. A surge in coronavirus is likely to create particular challenges for an already stretched service.
- We are working closely with the NI Executive to get a better understanding of the pressures and concerns, however, at this stage we do not have as joined up approach as we would like. The establishment of an NI Hub will allow us to improve data and allow you to set out that position much clearer.
- It will be important to be an active voice for Northern Ireland and highlight the particular challenges facing the health service for the Secretary of State for