

11/03/2020, 22:33 - Robin Swann: <https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-flares-lit-outside-arena-as-football-match-played-behind-closed-doors-11955763>

11/03/2020, 22:36 - Dr Michael McBride: Every decision has a behavioural consequence. Sometimes posing greater risks as here.


11/03/2020, 22:41 - Dr Michael McBride: Busy few days ahead. Major decision at COBR tomorrow for next week. Important oral statement Mon in all likelihood. Have discussed with Richard & David. Much work to steady & ready the system through to & over the weekend.

11/03/2020, 22:44 - Robin Swann: Emergency Legislation will be published next week as well.

11/03/2020, 22:53 - Dr Michael McBride: Perhaps the beginning of the end of the messy phase - now just the really difficult work for all over next number of months. This in itself will bring a new reality and discipline.

11/03/2020, 22:54 - Robin Swann: indeed, you not watching yourself on Nolan?

11/03/2020, 22:56 - Dr Michael McBride: No going to bed.

13/03/2020, 14:32 - Robin Swann: <Media omitted> 

13/03/2020, 16:51 - Dr Michael McBride: Helpful

13/03/2020, 16:54 - Robin Swann: my take is, sf will jump on Community Transmissions as a reason to close schools..

13/03/2020, 17:08 - Dr Michael McBride: Yes and it's not. I have been trailing for days when not if.

17/03/2020, 20:41 - Dr Michael McBride: Taoiseach, make addressing the nation 9 pm RTE. Tony and I spoke today on strands of N/S cooperation & joint working. Meeting later this week.

17/03/2020, 20:43 - Robin Swann: anything significant - any other steps that'll see calls for the same here?

17/03/2020, 20:47 - Dr Michael McBride: I haven't been advised that's all I know. That would be my concern given 69 new cases in RoI today. If so and we are bounced I think our line should be. "Minister Harris and I have agreed that our CMOs will meet in coming days to develop areas for joint working in the interests of the population in the RoI and NI"

17/03/2020, 21:10 - Dr Michael McBride: Minister, really a call to arms, preparation for the times ahead and catch up on our protection of the most vulnerable. Extremely impressive and statesman like even if he did steal a few of our lines. It may risk being contrasted by the media with a "divided" NI Executive.

17/03/2020, 22:12 - Robin Swann: Had a call from Peter Weir, looking at mtg with you & me in the morning, I believe Philip Weir is to contact you.

\*They are looking to move on Special school closures by the end of the week.

17/03/2020, 23:12 - Dr Michael McBride: Yes asked to attend meeting at 9 am. I have no details. Do you? I would support an immediate partial closure of such schools for those with severe complex underlying condition with appropriate support for families. For those with LD eg severe autism with no complex underlying conditions to move to close with no alternatives would be hugely impactful

and disruptive. We need to have plans in place. I am pressing CMO colleagues that subject to SAGE advice on Thursday I will advise you to bring forward Easter holidays probably to 31st March. Proviso - DE must have sustainable arrangements to support vital HCWs with children to ensure no adverse consequences on health care until September. Without this we may crash the health service. Also Peter to be assured no detriment to education & examinations through provision of alternative arrangements. Time between now and 31st to finalise these plans. Provided we have evidence of benefit & advise Westminster in advance I can live with that. Michael

17/03/2020, 23:16 - Robin Swann: He has wind that Scots are going to move independently and that Gavin Williamson is to make a similar proposal to Boris on Easter as you have suggested & ground already being laid <https://twitter.com/bbcnewsnight/status/1240046231226892293?s=12>

17/03/2020, 23:29 - Dr Michael McBride: That only because I trailed with CMO colleagues earlier this week and today. I'm afraid they don't quite get it. Everyone wants to take the lead now. Suggest you & the Executive do and steal a March if any planning to do so prior to Thursday advice from advice. How about a statement along the lines of "unless scientific evidence recommends a further delay, NI schools will be bringing forward the Easter holidays to the 31st March and remain closed until further notice. In the interim schools should put in place plans to ensure there is no detriment to children's education or examinations and that there is provision for childcare of frontline health professionals." This will now be a political rush to declare first and Nichola will want to lead the way. Not optimistic on UK consensus on timing and perhaps in discussion with Peter, Arlene and Michelle we should steal a march and declare our intent. Schools closures are inevitable- we might as well be on the right side given we have held the line at cost. Suggest you consider floating before the morning. Nichola may cease the moment.

17/03/2020, 23:31 - Dr Michael McBride: Apologies for typos no specs

17/03/2020, 23:40 - Robin Swann: are you content I share with Peter/Arlene/Michelle, early am?

CMO would support an immediate partial closure of special schools for those with severe complex underlying condition with appropriate support for families. For those with LD eg severe autism with no complex underlying conditions to move to close with no alternatives would be hugely impactful and disruptive, so there needs to be plans in place for support for those pupils, their families & carers.

And that unless scientific evidence recommends a further delay, NI schools should bring forward the Easter holidays to the 31st March and remain closed until further notice. In the interim schools should put in place plans to ensure there is no detriment to children's education or examinations and that there is provision for childcare of frontline health professionals.

17/03/2020, 23:46 - Robin Swann: or from me, but then question is do you have CMO support?

17/03/2020, 23:49 - Dr Michael McBride: Minister, I have now departed from the realms of professional evidence based advice to you to anticipating further SAGE evidence. I am confident they will recommend school closures although probably not prior to Easter. You and Ministerial colleagues have held the UK line at cost in support of me. I need to now recognise the political reality and confusing public narrative. The experience of my CMO colleagues is just not there. This is not a time

for purist academic modelling. There are no certainties. Happy for you to share. Scotland should not lead the way and Nichola will pre announce.

17/03/2020, 23:51 - Dr Michael McBride: I will sort my CMO colleagues leave that to me. They have no appreciation of the complexity of the politics in NI or N/S. I shall seek forgiveness with a short early warning.

17/03/2020, 23:54 - Robin Swann: Thanks, I'll issue to the others after 7am tomorrow, or no one will get any sleep, I don't think Scots will move too early pre COBRA, tomorrow am gives Peter something for Committee & may help with the JR.

17/03/2020, 23:59 - Dr Michael McBride: Minister I may have misunderstood but I would strongly caution against Peter pre announcing at the Committee as this is an Executive decision. Just to be aware I have not discussed with Richard so might be best if this a political proposal when we meet tomorrow and the request is to me to consider and advise. Pending this suggest you take a tactical view from Richard as in my experience he is good as such things and may proffer some useful considerations for you as Minister.

18/03/2020, 00:01 - Robin Swann: will discuss further in the morning, won't issue anything.

20/03/2020, 15:37 - Dr Michael McBride: COBR(M) informal tip off - will be recommending UK wide closure of clubs, pubs & bars. Non food shops/food shops takes to remain open.

20/03/2020, 15:37 - Robin Swann: but RoI hasn't done that????

20/03/2020, 23:57 - Dr Michael McBride: <Media omitted> 

21/03/2020, 08:10 - Robin Swann: <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/alex-kane-o-neill-should-have-looked-before-she-leapt-on-school-closures-1.4207046?mode=amp>

21/03/2020, 08:26 - Robin Swann: "Your Tag-Team performance with Dr Michael McBride on The View, was reassuring, comforting, but also at the same time brutally realistic - and this was needed."

21/03/2020, 22:15 - Dr Michael McBride: Minister, apparently niece of a 95 yr old has announced death on social media from COVID-19. Had been in CAH ICU for 24 hrs.

21/03/2020, 22:18 - Robin Swann: had one of our Cllrs from Banbridge raise it as well, told to await official confirmation.

22/03/2020, 13:22 - Dr Michael McBride: Just off CMO call. 2 pm press conference FM Scotland. She may possibly say something further re Weddings/Parties/crowding in shops or even calling for all non essential shops to close. Concerns that ICU capacity will be exceeded in Scotland in 3 wks if transmission does slow & social distancing not observed. Evidence of benefit/disbenefit of non essential shop closures just not there but it may emphasis the messages on scenes of crowding & ignoring social distancing which is troubling.

22/03/2020, 13:29 - Robin Swann: Thanks, have we modelling on icu capacity yet?

22/03/2020, 13:37 - Dr Michael McBride: Underway. Will share when available. The key is the social distancing to reduce transmission so we don't get there. I suspect we are probably 3-4 weeks out from exceeding ours irrespective of how many we order. I have had conversations yesterday & today with RoI and NHSE re mutual aid but recognising there will be pressures everywhere.