

Mark Lee
Mental Health, Disability & Older People



Via email

Directors of Adult Social Care HSC Trusts
PPE SPOCs HSC Trusts

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST
BT4 3SQ

Tel: I&S

Email: mark.lee@health-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref:

Date: 15th May 2020

Dear Colleagues

PPE - Supported Living services

Further to my letter of 6 May, I am writing to update you on the arrangements which have been made with the Department of Communities (DfC) to secure PPE for supported living schemes not in receipt of funding from the HSC ('**non-jointly commissioned schemes**').

We have been advised by DfC that plans are underway to set up a resilient supply chain which will enable non-jointly commissioned schemes to access PPE through the wider public sector channels. However, this will take some further time to establish.

The Department has therefore agreed to extend the current temporary supply arrangement for access to HSC PPE stock by these providers for a further period of 2 weeks, **until Friday 29 May**. As previously stated, this arrangement applies only where the provision of PPE is required in accordance with the relevant guidance and the provider has been unable to source the necessary PPE by other means and acquire adequate stock to meet its needs.

I would be grateful if you would communicate this update as necessary to relevant contacts within your Trust.

As you may be aware, a decision has also been taken to extend testing for COVID-19 in all supported living services (jointly and non-jointly commissioned schemes). It has been agreed that in instances where there may be an outbreak or a cluster of infections in a supported living service – that is, where there are two or more people among staff or service users who meet the criteria to be a possible or a confirmed case – all staff and residents should be tested from week commencing 11 May 2020. This is being communicated to Supporting People providers by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

These are challenging times for us all and I recognise the continuing pressures on every part of the health and social care system at this time. It is important therefore that I reiterate my ongoing appreciation for the continued work you and your teams are doing to support this important sector at this time.

Yours sincerely

MARK LEE
Mental Health, Disability & Older People

cc: Sean Holland
Sharon Gallagher
Lourda Geoghegan
NR
Kieran McAteer
Names Redacted
Paul Price – DfC
David Polley – DfC
NR – DfC
Marie Roulston – HSCB
Brendan Whittle – HSCB
NR – PHA