

FROM THE MINISTER OF HEALTH

Stephen Donnelly, TD
Minister for Health



Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST, BT4 3SQ
Tel: **I&S**
Email: private.office@health-ni.gov.uk

Our ref: SUB-2113-2020

6 November 2020

Dear Stephen

You may recall I wrote to you in July, and again in September, about the challenges in respect of international arrivals into Dublin who are travelling immediately on to Northern Ireland. As I set out in that letter, the current position is that such individuals are not required to complete the full information requested on the Irish passenger locator form. Such travellers are legally required to complete the UK online form, there is no effective way to enforce or monitor this at present, and this required is generally not widely understood despite our efforts to communicate this.

In addition to efforts to resolve this issue through CMO meetings and official channels, I have asked the NI Attorney General to engage with her counterpart in Ireland to understand the concerns on data sharing and work together to seek a resolution. As I advised in September, we believe that if the information was available, Recital 112 of GDPR would permit sharing for public health reasons.

The situation with Denmark today has brought to the fore the vulnerability with any measures introduced to protect NI through UK government policy with regard to travel via Dublin. We are gathering data for arrivals from Denmark who have completed a UK PLF, however we cannot do the same for recent arrivals via Ireland. This puts public health in NI at risk, and hampers our efforts to prevent spread of the Danish mutation here.

It is imperative that we find an immediate resolution to this problem, and I would appreciate a conversation at most earliest opportunity to discuss and progress.

I look forward to discussing further with you

Personal Data

Robin Swann MLA
Minister of Health

