

6. Whilst the subsequent April 2020 recommendation advocated enhanced PPE protection, including a variety of masks, visors and gowns in ICS settings, IHCP highlighted that the *"uncertain and changing"* PPE protocols presented considerable difficulties in planning for both the volume and type of equipment required.
7. The RCN considers that the guidance was insufficiently clear and transparent until May 2020. It raised issues over the guidance in early 2020 with DoH and the PHA, and also wrote to the HSENI in late March 2020, stating that *"we do not believe that our members are being adequately protected with the current UK guidance that is being adopted within Northern Ireland"*, as well as highlighting members' views that employers were interpreting guidance based around PPE availability, instead of what was required to protect staff. At this stage, the RCN stated that the World Health Organisation was recommending higher PPE standards for respiratory, body and eye protection.