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Dear colleagues

PPE FOR SOCIAL CARE PROVIDERS, UNPAID CARERS AND PERSONAL ASSISTANTS

Thank you for your continued work in leading, delivering and supporting efforts in the Covid-19 response. We know that the supply and distribution of PPE for social care providers, unpaid/family carers and personal assistants has been a particularly challenging topic. I am grateful to you all for your input thus far to supporting the sector with supplies and finding a way forward that works for everyone.

You will know that, until now, the following national arrangements have been in place to support registered social care providers with accessing PPE:

- NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) Social Care PPE Triage helpline
- Local Hubs for collection of PPE by providers/distribution to them
- One-off direct drop to all adult care homes of a week's supply of PPE

I am writing to you to let you know that the Cabinet Secretary has this evening agreed that, from Monday 27 April:

- **local Hubs will be the primary model for distribution of PPE supplies to the whole social care sector; and**
- **that the Hubs will extend their provision to include unpaid/family carers and personal assistants.**

We recognise that there have been some challenges faced with the Hub model so far. We have therefore been working with partners over the last week to agree an improved model for the Hubs and support to put this in place. This has only been possible because of the input from partners across the sector to reach consensus, driven by a shared aim to ensure the right PPE gets to the right people at the right time, and that we provide to keep everyone safe.



We will provide further details tomorrow tailored to the implications for those of you leading local systems, and those of you representing providers, staff, unpaid carers and personal assistants.

I have set out below a high-level overview of what the improved Hub model will look like and the assurances that will be expected from all parties:

- Business as usual is that providers source their own stock of PPE.
- Where this fails, the hubs will provide PPE to the whole social care sector, including personal assistants and unpaid carers.
- Supplies will be used in line with guidance and distributed equitably according to need, regardless of employer.
- NHS NSS will supply stock to the Hubs to meet need based on actual consumption/reasonable planned usage data – recognising that actual consumption may rise as business as usual sources of supply dry up and as Hubs expand their provision.
- Hubs will receive stock on a pre-determined day of the week, and will know what deliveries will include. They will be expected to provide a regular stock return to NSS.
- NSS will provide virtual training for Hubs and providers on Hub operations and expectations.
- All parties recognise the global scarcity of PPE.
- The Triage helpline will revert to being for emergency use only.
- Distribution and supply arrangements will be analysed using evidence gathered from the ongoing operations, and kept under review for changes and improvements where necessary. This process will include all parties.

We will be asking you to help us make sure the message gets to all of the relevant people and in a consistent way, including unpaid carers, personal assistants, staff, managers, union representatives and others. We hope this will help ensure clarity and confidence in the process.

Over the coming weeks, we will collectively monitor how the Hub model is operating. This will allow challenges to be identified quickly and collective action to be taken. Data and evidence of usage will allow analysis of how well the model is working and whether improvements or changes are needed. The situation is constantly evolving and as such we recognise that we must remain flexible and open to change.

We will be in touch again tomorrow with further details. We are of course also happy to answer your questions over the coming days.

Yours sincerely

Jamie MacDougall

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