



National Director, Quality Assurance and Verification

Room 149, Dr. Steevens Hospital, Dublin 8.

T: 01 6352619 E: national.qav@hse.ie

14th April 2020

Ms. Mary Dunion

Chief Inspector of Social Services, Director of Regulation

HIQA,

Unit 1301,

City gate,

Mahon,

Cork

Re: Your reference MD/PR/BOC/PPE

Dear Mary

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated the 8th April 2020 addressed to Mr. Paul Reid, CEO HSE, which he has asked me to respond to.

The task Ireland faces in sourcing Personal Protective Equipment [PPE] in the most competitive and highly volatile global market is unprecedented. Most traditional supply sources are no longer available and the major supply line we have from China is therefore a very welcome and essential source of supply. In addition to the above, the HSE has also been successful in working with manufacturers in Ireland to increase domestic production of certain PPE.

PPE is now being provided to a range of settings outside of acute hospitals, in particular long term residential settings [nursing homes, mental health and disability services] where there are confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19. These are settings serving populations most vulnerable to the disease.

As supplies are arriving in Ireland on an almost daily basis, it will be some time before we have a full PPE stock in country, after which it will be a case of replenishing stocks. Due to these challenges it will not be possible at the moment to provide a 3 day baseline supply to all nursing homes and congregated disability centres. We do however have very significant distribution management arrangements in place and coordinated with each of the Area Crisis Management Teams to ensure provision of PPE is targeted at the highest risk locations. These arrangements also allow us to respond rapidly to locations where new outbreaks occur. As critical supplies build up in the country I will of course keep your request under review.

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Yours sincerely;



Patrick Lynch,
National Director, Quality Assurance and Verification.

- cc. David Walsh, National Director, Community Operations HSE
- Anne O'Connor, Chief Operations Officer HSE
- Phelim Quinn, CEO HIQA
- Dr. Kathleen Mac Lellan, Assistant Secretary, Department of Health
- Mr Sean Bresnan, Head of Procurement HSE