

Important information from the Chief Inspector of Social Services on infection prevention and control measures during inspection (COVID-19)

Communique no 11

25 May 2020: This notice relates to the infection prevention and control measures that inspectors will take when carrying out inspections in designated centres.

As you are aware COVID-19 has resulted in significant changes for the people living and working in designated centres and services. It has also resulted in challenges to the Chief Inspector as to how designated centres can be inspected safely. Onsite inspections are required to assess the quality and safety of resident care in designated centres.

Throughout the inspection social distancing will be maintained and interactions with staff and residents will be limited to less than 15 minute intervals.

The following infection prevention and control measures, developed in consultation with the HPSC, will be taken by inspectors when carrying out an inspection of a designated centre:

- **Self-monitoring** – Each inspector will self-monitor for symptoms. Any inspector with symptoms and or a temperature of 37.5°C or higher will not carry out an inspection.
- **PPE** – Each inspector has been provided with an inspection pack containing gloves, plastic aprons, face masks, gowns, antibacterial wipes, and hand hygiene supplies.

In addition, inspectors have been supplied with a change of clothes to wear on inspection (where appropriate) consisting of navy scrub tunic and trousers.

- **Training** - All inspectors have received training on standard infection prevention and control precautions.
- **Information required** - If the inspection is announced by telephone in advance, we would appreciate if the following information is given to the inspector;

- The layout of the centre i.e. the clean and contaminated zones.
- Confirm the COVID status and location of residents.
- The PPE arrangement in use in your centre.

Where the inspection is unannounced, the inspector will seek this information on arrival.

- **Flow of the inspection** – to keep movement around the centre to a minimum, we ask that there is a room for use by the inspector where they can review documentation and meet with the person in charge and staff (where physically distancing can be maintained).
- **Meeting with residents and staff** – Conversations with staff and residents will be facilitated while maintaining the 2m physical/social distance and keeping the contact to under 15 minutes intervals.
- **Don and Doffing PPE**
PPE will be used in line with national guidance, and any additional precautions a provider and person in charge may have in the centre.
- **Provider feedback meeting**
The inspector will make arrangements with the provider and/or person/manager in charge for a feedback meeting the next day via telephone or video conferencing.

Your continued co-operation in this regard is appreciated. We will continue to provide updates to registered providers and the public as required.



Mary Dunnion

Chief Inspector of Social Services