Title: Agenda Item 6 - Communications Update

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Action required:
☐ For noting
☐ For discussion
☐ For decision

Approved for future publication: YES/NO (remove as applicable)
NPET – Communications Update
19 November

Quantitative Tracker
The nationally representative sample of 1,600 people conducted on behalf of the Department of Health on 16 Nov, available here reveals

• The level of worry, now at 6.3/10 is beginning to fall back to the level seen in Aug & Sept, with a 81% self-reporting to be staying at home
• 83% of people say they are following public health advice but only 58% believe that most/almost everyone is following the guidelines
• 33%, now believe that the worst of the pandemic is happening now with 24% believing it is ahead of us.
• 65% are happier to have a much quieter Christmas year
• 72% say they will avoid some meetings with friends and family this year even if others go ahead and meet. This number drops to 63% for under 35s
• 45% of people have already made plans for Christmas this year with the majority expecting to have the same number (44%) or fewer (46%) people at Christmas dinner

Qualitative Tracker
The qualitative tracker is now running on a fortnightly basis and will be updated next week.
• Citizens are exhausted. No let up, few holidays, little to look forward to, and no craic. People are searching for some normalcy in a bid to maintain their spirits and re-find balance. Level 5 is wearing, even for the majority that accepts there is little choice.
• It is important to the public that authorities acknowledge how difficult it has been and to encourage all to stick with it, and to get through it. A tone of positivity and hope should balance bad news. The country needs to be both informed and buoyed
• The vaccine has taken centre stage this fortnight, with Pfizer’s announcement. There is little real understanding of what this means and people are wary of having expectations dashed. It is important to manage education and understanding of the pathway to a vaccine now. Tone should be sober, scientific, and educational layer of positivity and explain complexity.
• December 1st 2020, when Level 5 is lifted, is imminent. A tone of caution and personal responsibility is needed. This is not a time to finger wag. Allow citizens breathe, and support them in planning and self-regulation. Make it easy to do the right thing
• Christmas will be different. A safe Christmas is achieved through planning, and there is an important role for Public Health here

Campaigns underway now
- #HoldFirm 40” TV ad
- COVID Video stories
- Cases & Contacts to self-isolate & restrict their movements
- Healthy Ireland Community Resilience campaign

Campaigns in development
- Young Adults
  o Ad campaign
  o Creative Counsel
- Winter communications campaign targeting older people to commence mid Nov
- Stay Safe at Christmas
Communication Priorities

1. Cases and Contacts
   - Social media campaign underway along with COVID TV ad – underway now

2. Young Adults
   - Co-creating solutions to increase young adults’ compliance – end Nov

3. Older People
   - Winter communications campaign targeting older people to commence mid Nov