



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Office of the Chief Clinical Officer  
Dr Steevens' Hospital | Steevens' Lane | Dublin 8 | D08 W2A8  
email: [CCO@HSE.ie](mailto:CCO@HSE.ie)

Oifig an Príohoifigeach Cliniciúil Eatromhach  
Ospidéal Dr Steevens | Lána Steevens | Baile Átha Cliath 8 | D08 W2A8

BY EMAIL ONLY

To: NPHET Secretariat  
FAO: Dr Cillian De Gascun, Chair of the Expert Advisory Group  
From: Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer  
Date: 30 April 2020  
Re: NPHET EAG Consideration of revised criteria for Covid-19 testing, people requiring urgent dental treatment as part of cancer and cardiac care plan

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Dear Cillian,

I received correspondence from Joseph Green – HSE National Oral Health Operations Lead, seeking a revision of priority groups for Covid-19 testing to include people requiring urgent dental treatment as part of their cancer and cardiac care pathway.

In line with the Government announcement of 27th March, dental treatment in Ireland is currently restricted to “essential”, i.e. urgent and emergency care only, with triage of presenting complaints and enhanced infection prevention and control.

There is a small group of patients for whom access to dental treatment is required as part of their cardiac or cancer care plan; for example, restorative and periodontal dental treatment prior to head and neck radiotherapy or cardiac surgery. This patient group is included in the scope of essential dental care. Knowledge of their Covid-19 status, through priority Covid-19 testing, would greatly benefit the planning and scheduling of dental treatment, and hopefully prevent avoidable delays in their hospital treatment.

I would be grateful if this issue could be brought to the attention of the NPHET Expert Advisory Group for consideration to inform any revisions to the priority groups for Covid-19 testing.

Yours sincerely

Dr Colm Henry  
Chief Clinical Officer