

An Roinn Sláinte
Department of Health
Office of the Chief Medical Officer



Mr. Simon Harris TD,
Minister for Health,
Department of Health,
Miesian Plaza,
50-58 Lower Baggot Street,
Dublin 2.

21st April 2020

Via email to Private Secretary to the Minister for Health

Dear Minister,

I write further to today's meeting of the COVID-19 National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE). The NPHE reviewed the proposal from the Subgroup of the Senior Officials Group on COVID-19 to introduce targeted and time limited childcare measures for essential healthcare workers only and made the following recommendations:

- In circumstances where a parent/guardian/partner is an "essential healthcare worker", the other parent/guardian/partner is supported by their employer to remain at home to care for the child(ren). There is no public health rationale to suggest that this measure should not be implemented as soon as is practicable.
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) supported in-reach service where registered childcare workers provide support in an essential healthcare workers home. This measure will be reviewed as a candidate measure by NPHE as part of its consideration of the phased reduction of the social distancing measures which are currently in place.

Other decisions and actions agreed at the NPHE meeting today have been forwarded to the HSE and I enclose this letter for your information. Officials from this Department have been and will continue to be available to work with relevant HSE staff, other health agency staff and staff across Government on the implementation of these actions.

I would be happy to discuss further, should you wish.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Tony Holohan
Chief Medical Officer

Chair of the COVID-19 National Public Health Emergency Team

c.c. Ms Elizabeth Canavan, Department of the Taoiseach and Chair of the Senior Officials Group for COVID-19

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Enclosed: Letter from Dr Tony Holohan to Mr Paul Reid dated 21st April 2020.