

## Meeting of Pandemic Ethics Advisory Group Minutes

- **Attendees (via Microsoft Teams):**
  - Dr Siobhán O’Sullivan (Chair);
  - Dr Simon Mills SC;
  - Prof. David Smith;
  - Dr Barry Lyons;
  - Mr Stephen McMahon;
  - Dr Joan McCarthy;
  - Dr Andrea Mulligan BL;
  - Dr Louise Campbell.
- **Apologies:**
  - Mr Mervyn Taylor
- **Also in Attendance:**
  - Emily de Grae (secretariat);
  - Audrey Ní Chaoidealbháin (secretariat).

### 1. Minutes

- The Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed.

### 2. Update from NPHE

- The Chair provided an update on the most recently available COVID-19 statistics.
- She noted that the global shortage of PPE and testing supplies was creating challenges for health systems in their response to the Pandemic and that work was underway internationally to address this.
- The Chair also noted that among the most pressing issues for the NPHE were testing and addressing nursing home clusters.

### 3. Ethical Framework for Decision Making in a Pandemic

- The Chair informed the members that the Ethical Framework had been published and would be added to the HSE’s COVID-19 document repository in the coming days.

### 4. Ethical Considerations Relating to Critical Care in the context of COVID-19

- The Chair thanked the group for their input into the Critical Care paper.
- She advised that the paper had been submitted to the NPHE for its previous meeting, however, given the number of agenda items, the paper was not discussed. She informed members that the paper had been put (for decision) on the NPHE’s next meeting agenda (to take place on 28<sup>th</sup> March).
- It was agreed that the paper could function as an ethical reflection to inform the clinical decisions of frontline workers.

## **5. Ethical Considerations Relating to PPE and the Duty to Provide Care**

- The Chair thanked the group for submitting text in preparation of ethical advice in relation to the duty to provide care in a pandemic with limited PPE resources.
- There followed an in-depth discussion of how the ethical advice should be structured including the following:
  - The obligation of institutions to protect all HCW by providing PPE, in so far as possible;
  - Clarity of when duty of care/ duty to provide specific risky interventions is expected without PPE and the need to need to balance benefits and risks; and
  - The responsible stewardship of finite PPE resources.
- Members agreed to work on a draft paper and submit it to the chair.
- It was agreed that the text would be reviewed and agreed by the PEAG via e-mail and that the secretariat would seek to have the PPE paper added to the NPHE's next meeting agenda.

## **6. AOB**

- It was agreed that the PEAG would meet again on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April.