

## Meeting of Pandemic Ethics Advisory Group Minutes

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

### 1. Minutes

- The Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed.

### 2. Update from NPHET

- The Chair provided an update on the most recently available COVID-19 statistics.
- She noted that NPHET continues to discuss nursing home clusters and advised that residential care settings were not as acutely affected.
- The Chair also noted that the system is continuing to build ICU surge capacity.
- She advised that NPHET is examining the protection of care pathways for patients who are being treated for non COVID-19 issues.
- The Chair outlined the plans for COVID-19 research, including the imminent establishment of a National Research Ethics Committee to address all COVID-19 related research.

### 3. Feedback on *Ethical Considerations Relating to Critical Care in the context of COVID-19* paper

- The Chair informed the members that the Critical Care paper had been published and would be added to the HSE’s COVID-19 document repository in the coming days.
- The reception of the papers released thus far was assessed. A discussion of the membership of the PEAG ensued and it was agreed that the membership would be kept under review. In addition, the dissemination of the papers both within the health system and to the wider public was evaluated. The Chair undertook to contact the HSE regarding dissemination within the health system and the DoH Comms team regarding communicating with the public.
- The Chair advised that NPHET is to publish the membership of NPHET and all of its sub groups.

#### **4. Submission of Ethical Considerations Relating to PPE and the Duty to Provide Care**

- The Chair thanked the group for their input into the PPE paper and advised that it would be submitted to NPHEt for Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April.
- The group discussed feedback from the Medicines and Medical Devices sub group of NPHEt and agreed to strengthen the reference to the global PPE shortage in the paper.

#### **5. Future Work**

- The group discussed what areas would be benefit from consideration at PEAG. A number of topics were raised. These were:
  - Treatment protocols developed by the various institutions
  - Data collection/surveillance
  - Biobanking
  - Restrictions – ethical justification for them and ethical consideration of lifting them
  - Topics nominated by the other NPHEt sub-groups
  - Repeat triage
  - Nursing homes and residential care settings
  - Disinformation
  - Good citizenship in a pandemic
  - Patient transfers
  - Treatment of non COVID-19 patients
  - Ethical guidance for pharmacists should medicine shortages occur
  - Adequacy of palliative care in other settings
  - Resuscitation
  - Patient rights and family visits
  - Data modelling
  - Clinical trials and vaccinations.
- The Chair requested members to prepare scoping papers for three of the above suggestions:
  - Nursing homes;
  - Good citizenship in a pandemic; and
  - Vulnerable groups.

#### **6. AOB**

- It was agreed that the PEAG would meet again on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April.