

Meeting of Pandemic Ethics Advisory Group Minutes

- **Attendees (via Microsoft Teams):**
 - Dr Siobhán O’Sullivan (Chair);
 - Dr Barry Lyons;
 - Dr Simon Mills SC;
 - Mr Stephen McMahon;
 - Dr Joan McCarthy;
 - Dr Andrea Mulligan BL;
 - Dr Louise Campbell;
 - Mr Mervyn Taylor.

- **Apologies:**
 - Prof. David Smith;

- **Also in Attendance:**
 - Emily de Grae (secretariat);
 - Audrey Ní Chaoidealbháin (secretariat).

1. Ethical Considerations Relating to Long Term Residential Care Settings (LTRCS)

- A brief overview of the revised paper was provided by the Chair. She informed members that the draft document had been sent to HSE colleagues (older persons and disability programmes) for consultation purposes and a number of comments in relation to the concepts of vulnerability, home, duty of care, testing etc. were submitted. There followed a discussion as to how they might best be integrated in the paper.
- It was agreed that the document should focus on how to safeguard the rights of all people living in residential care facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was acknowledged that residents of LTRCS cover such a broad spectrum of people and needs and that it would be difficult for a short paper to cover everything adequately. However, while LTRCS raise important broader ethical questions, it agreed that these considerations would be beyond the scope of the COVID-19 specific remit of the group.
- It was decided that, given that the most significant burden of COVID-19 has been placed on older persons, especially those living in residential care that the issues discussed in the paper would be particularly pertinent to the nursing home sector.
- It was agreed that the document could be more explicit in its distinctions between the different types of residential care facilities and stronger in its acknowledgement of the unique care needs of every individual living in congregated settings. It was also agreed that it was important to state that human rights principles need to be upheld.
- It was agreed that the Chair would revise the current document, taking on board the feedback and would send an updated version to members for review/comment on Wednesday evening with a view to agreeing the text via e-mail and submitting to the NPHE on Thursday.

2. AOB

- The Chair informed members that the developers of a contact tracing app had contacted the Department in recognition of the ethical issues that developing the app will raise and to seek expert ethical opinion.
- It was agreed that subject to receiving a formal request, the PEAG would prepare an input along with other stakeholders.

3. Date of Next Meeting

- The date of the next meeting is TBD.