



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

18th June 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). On the basis of the good progress that has been made in suppressing the overall incidence of infection and the overall public health risk, as previously indicated in my letter on 4th June, the NPHE undertook to examine realigning the remaining three phases of its *"Public Health Framework Approach in providing advice to Government in relation to reducing social distancing measures introduced in response to COVID-19"* (1st May 2020) into two phases.

The phased easing of public health restrictions is an iterative process and in line with procedural values for good decision-making, it is appropriate for NPHE to review the Public Health Framework on an ongoing basis and continually adapt national and public health responses to the current course of the pandemic in a way that is reasonable, flexible and responsive.

The NPHE has developed a new alignment of the original Phases of the Framework, which are outlined in the enclosed paper entitled *"Advice to Government in relation to realigning the Public Health Framework Approach to reducing restrictive measures into two final Phases"*. You may wish to have regard to the enclosed document in the decision-making process regarding the lifting of public health measures currently in place.

In light of the continued easing of the public health restrictions, NPHE acknowledged the importance for people of exercising their own judgement and taking personal responsibility for protecting themselves and others. While society is now required to adapt to new ways of life due to the prevailing pandemic, NPHE emphasised the need to avoid complacency in maintaining personal and collective hygiene behaviours. It is also important that there is continued commitment across society from all arms of the State, organisations, employers, businesses and individuals to work together to collectively promote, support and encourage everyone in society to adhere to the core public health principles for the benefit of all.

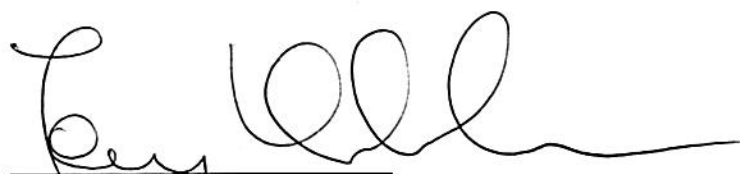
You may also wish to note following matters were agreed at today's meeting:

- The NPHET recommends the establishment of a COVID-19 Immunisation Strategy Group, chaired by the Department of Health.
- The NPHET notes and supports the submission of a paper prepared by the research subgroup of the Expert Advisory Group to the Senior Official Group, as a contribution to considerations of a national coordinated research response to COVID-19.
- The NPHET notes and supports the progress of disease management measures and initiatives in acute hospitals, in particular the intention to secure the funding required to address the immediate needs for infection prevention and control and occupational health, through the normal channels.

I also enclose a copy of the letter which has been forwarded to the HSE CEO arising from today's NPHET meeting.

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Holohan', written over a horizontal line.

Dr Tony Holohan
Chief Medical Officer
Chair of the COVID-19 National Public Health Emergency Team

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