



Mr. Paul Reid,
Chief Executive Officer & Chair HSE National Crisis Management Team (NCMT),
Health Services Executive,
Dr Steevens' Hospital,
Dublin 8,
D08 W2A8

22nd October 2020

Via email to: ceo.office@hse.ie

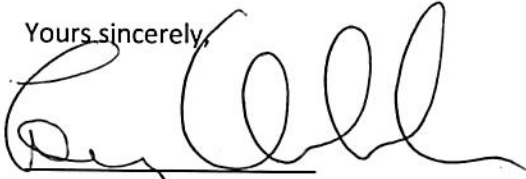
Dear Paul,

Arising from today's meeting of the COVID-19 National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE), I wish to bring to your attention, as Chair of the HSE NCMT, the following decisions of the NPHE which now require to be actioned by the HSE and Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC):

- The NPHE endorses the HSE's paper "Serial Testing in Nursing Homes" and recommends:
 - the current two-week testing cycle is maintained in residential care facilities for older persons for a further two cycles;
 - an exploration of the factors contributing to lower than optimal testing uptake rates be undertaken by the HSE;
 - the HSE consider the inclusion of residents of residential care facilities in future serial testing programmes.
- The NPHE endorses the priorities set out with the paper "Departments of Public Health, Covid-19 Priority work streams -A modified Delphi approach" and recommends its implementation across Departments of Public Health.
- The NPHE agreed that, based on the available evidence, visors are not recommended for use in most settings, while recognising they may be a useable alternative to cloth face coverings in some limited defined circumstances, specifically:
 - People with breathing difficulties;
 - Anyone who is unconscious or incapacitated;
 - People who are unable to remove masks/face coverings without help;
 - Anyone with special needs who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the mask/face covering;
 - In settings where people who are hard of hearing or deaf are being dealt with.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the wider team across the HSE for your ongoing support and work across the health and social care services as we move through the COVID-19 National Public Health Emergency. Officials from this Department have been and continue to be available to work with relevant HSE staff.

Yours sincerely,

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

Dr Tony Holohan
Chief Medical Officer

cc. Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer, HSE
Mr Liam Woods, National Director, Acute Hospital Operations, HSE