

Nursing Home Expert Panel Report
Implementation Oversight Team (IOT)
Meeting: 07 October 2020, 11 am

Meeting note

Attendees:

Kathleen Mac Lellan	Chair, Assistant Secretary, Social Care Division, DOH
Niall Redmond	Principal Officer, Older Persons Policy Development Unit, DOH
Karen Greene	Chief Nursing Officer, Department of Health, DOH
David Noonan	Principal Officer, GP Services and GMS Contract, DOH
Malachy Corcoran	Principal Officer, Unscheduled Care, Department of Health, DOH
Rosarie Lynch	Head of Patient Safety Surveillance, NPSO, DOH
Clodagh Murphy	Assistant Principal, Acute Hospitals, DOH
David Walsh	Implementation Lead, HSE
Dr Siobhán Kennelly	National Clinical Advisor and Group Lead, Older Persons, HSE
Gerry Clerkin	General Manager, Community Operations, HSE
Dr Kevin Kelleher	Assistant National Director, Public Health, HSE
Pat Healy	National Director Community Strategy, HSE
Dr. John Cuddihy	National Director, Public Health, HSE
Deirdre Lang	Director of Nursing, HSE
Mary Dunnion	Chief Inspector, HIQA
Susan Cliffe	Deputy Chief Inspector, HIQA
Carol Grogan	Head of Regulatory Practise Development Unit, HIQA
Kelly Jones	Project Manager, HIQA
Fiona Walsh	Fair Deal Specialist, NTPF
Ms. Brigid Doherty	Public Interest Representative
Prof. Cecily Kelleher	Chair of Reference Group
Jenna Scott	Older Persons Policy Development Unit, DOH
Anne-Marie Hearne	Older Persons Policy Development Unit, DOH

Apologies:

Fiona Larthwell	Principal Officer, Older Persons Services Oversight & Planning, DOH
Catherine Gibson	Assistant Principal, Older Persons Policy Development Unit, DOH

Secretariat:

Nuala O'Reilly	Assistant Principal, Older Persons Policy Development Unit, DOH
Helen Simon	Administrative Officer, Older Persons Policy Development Unit, DOH
Graham Mooney	Administrative Officer, Older Persons Policy Development Unit, DOH
Stephen Dunk	Executive Officer, Older Persons Policy Development Unit, DOH

DISCUSSION and ACTION POINTS

	Agenda item	Discussion and Actions Agreed
1.	Adoption of minutes of previous meeting	The minutes of the previous meeting were adopted with a minor amendment.
2.	Conflict of Interest	<p>There were no issues raised in this regard at this meeting. Chair made renewed call for outstanding conflict of interest forms to be submitted to the Secretariat.</p> <p>Action 2.1: Chair requested that any outstanding conflict of interest forms be returned to the secretariat.</p>
3.	Update on Epidemiological Data	An update on epidemiological data was presented including trends in relation to the general situation in Ireland, incidence rates, cases by mode of transmission and outbreaks in nursing homes and other settings.
4.	Matters Arising	<p>The Chair provided an update on issues raised at the previous meeting in respect of specific cases relating to outbreaks in nursing homes. It was noted that 3 interagency meetings had been convened to follow up on the issues and that while there was residual concern the situation had stabilised and considerable ongoing support was being provided to the nursing homes by local HSE teams and HIQA. The Chair acknowledged that close inter-agency work was instrumental in stabilising the situation.</p> <p>Recent epidemiological trends were noted including 4 new outbreaks in nursing homes in recent days. It was confirmed that the agencies are monitoring the situation closely and all appropriate supports are being provided to the nursing homes.</p> <p>HSE: Public health provided an update on serial testing of staff in nursing homes. Points of note included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community transmission is a significant factor in the spread of disease into nursing home - Majority of cases identified by serial testing of staff and subsequent testing of residents. - Two-thirds of staff are currently being tested. - There is a concern that a small number of symptomatic staff are still presenting for work. <p>Concern was raised that while nursing homes have contingency plans in place that when these are required to be put into practice</p>

		<p>challenges can emerge.</p> <p>HSE confirmed that the COVID-19 response teams are still in place providing multi-disciplinary support to nursing homes It was also confirmed that PPE supply and distribution protocols were still be in place.</p> <p>Action 4.1: HIQA to provide overview of IPC compliance levels in nursing homes at the next meeting.</p> <p>Action 4.2: HSE to provide update on COVID-19 testing of both staff and residents at the next IOT meeting.</p> <p>Following an in-depth discussion regarding the growing numbers of cases in nursing homes it was agreed that an information campaign targeting persons-in-charge of nursing homes should be developed and launched in the coming weeks. This will build on the ongoing training programmes available through HSE and HIQA.</p> <p>The campaign will focus on areas of particular concern in nursing homes, such as infection prevention and control, asymptomatic presentation in older people, understanding frailty and management of staff presenting with symptoms and public health requirements on staff refraining from attending work when they are COVID-19 positive, are symptomatic or are a close contact of confirmed case, in line with public health advice. The group will examine case studies on recent COVID-19 outbreaks in the context of positive learnings and incorporate awareness of the flu vaccine. There will be engagement on the planning with key stakeholders including AMRIC, HIQA and NHI.</p> <p>The campaign will convey very specific educational messages. The development of the campaign will be nurse led across the HSE and the Department and in collaboration with the Department’s communications team.</p> <p>Action 4.3: Development and launch of an information campaign targeting persons-in-charge in nursing homes.</p> <p>An update on the flu vaccine programme in nursing homes was provided.</p> <p>Points of note included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Accelerated start to this year’s campaign- Normally see over 90% uptake among nursing home residents.- Uptake amongst staff is being strongly encouraged, as uptake rates amongst staff in previous years are lower than resident uptake.
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5.	Referrals to Reference Group	<p>A process document regarding referrals to the Reference Group was discussed and it was agreed that a silent procedure would be in place until close of business, where the document would be deemed approved if no further feedback received.</p> <p>Action 5.1: Feedback from IOT Members on the referral process to the Reference Group are requested by COB, 7th Oct.</p>
6.	Update from Lead Agencies	<p>HSE: The HSE have submitted a detailed document commenting on the recommendations spreadsheet. The HSE re-iterated the importance of COVID-19 Response Teams in the response to COVID-19 and provided assurances that they remain in place.</p> <p>The HSE is continuing to work on the implementation of the recommendations and has established formal internal structures to facilitate better reporting in relation to implementation.</p> <p>The HSE is meeting with the Irish Hospice Foundation on 8 October to discuss the progress of the recommendation 11.3 (<i>joint national programme on palliative, end of life and bereavement care for nursing homes</i>)</p> <p>Work on the IPC related recommendations is continuing. However it was acknowledged that accessing the appropriately trained professionals may take time. The HSE has developed IPC guidelines which will be circulated to the IOT members.</p> <p>Action 6.1: Secretariat will circulate a link to the HSE's IPC document and will also circulate the final table of recommendations showing the agreed prioritisation status.</p> <p>The Chair asked HIQA to incorporate the update on registered provider specific recommendation (agenda item 9) into this item.</p> <p>HIQA: HIQA is finalising data collection of flu vaccine uptake for transmission to HPSC.</p> <p>HIQA has issued an assurance framework to registered providers. HIQA is holding a webinar on IPC issues next week. The webinar could be used as opportunity to communicate an education/training message.</p> <p>HIQA discussed the options open to it regarding the gathering of information on the implementation of the recommendations where registered providers are identified as the lead. It also noted some of the challenges.</p>

		<p>Action 6.2: HIQA will develop, on an administrative basis, processes to seek assurances and report on progress towards implementation of the recommendations from individual nursing homes.</p> <p>Action 6.3: The Department will work with HIQA on the identification of the staff grades to capture in the staff audit recommendation.</p> <p>NTPF: Each nursing home provider has been asked to complete report on the utilisation of TAPS funding. NTPF and HSE working on master report on the TAPS.</p>
7.	Costings Update	<p>An update on costings supplied by leads was provided.</p> <p>Action 7.1: The Department will continue to work bilaterally with agencies in relation to costings.</p>
8.	Discussion on 14.1 Document	<p>An update on the progress of the document outlining the roles and responsibilities of agencies (recommendation 14.1) was provided.</p> <p>Action 8.1: Secretariat will circulate a second draft paper on recommendation 14.1, incorporating feedback received to IOT Team leads for comments. Report will circulate to wider group thereafter.</p> <p>Action 8.2: It was noted that the Expert Panel did not include the role of the NTPF in recommendation 14.1 however, the Department will engage with NTPF on the inclusion of a description of NTPF's role with regard to TAPS in 14.1 document for completeness.</p>
9.	HIQA update on registered provider specific recommendations	<p>This agenda item was discussed under agenda item 6.</p>
10.	Progress Report to the Minister	<p>Work is underway on the progress report for the Minister. Updates have been sought from all agencies and internal departmental units for inclusion. Updates are currently being collated.</p> <p>Action 10.1: The draft Progress Report will be circulated to Group for comments prior to submission to the Minister.</p>
11.	AOB	<p>The next meeting will take place on 21st October at 11:00 am.</p> <p>The Chair acknowledged the commitment and significant work of the agencies in progressing the implementation of the recommendations.</p>