

Nursing Home Expert Panel Report
Implementation Oversight Team (IOT)
Meeting: 21 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
Kelly Jones	Project Manager, HIQA
Fiona Walsh	Fair Deal Specialist, NTPF
Ms. Brigid Doherty	Public Interest Representative
Anne-Marie Hearne	Older Persons Policy Development Unit, DOH
Sandra Walsh	Assistant Principal, GP Services and GMS Contract, DOH
Fiona Larthwell	Principal Officer, Older Persons Services Oversight & Planning, DOH
Catherine Gibson	Assistant Principal, Older Persons Policy Development Unit, DOH

Apologies:

Carol Grogan	Head of Regulatory Practise Development Unit, HIQA
Prof. Cecily Kelleher	Chair of Reference Group
Helen Simon	Administrative Officer, Older Persons Policy Development Unit, DOH
Nuala O'Reilly	Assistant Principal, Older Persons Policy Development Unit, DOH

Secretariat:

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.
2.	Conflict of Interest	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.
3.	Update on Epidemiological Data	<p>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.</p> <p>Action 3.1: Secretariat to circulate Epidemiological data to IOT Group after the meeting.</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"> - In the last week of testing, 75% - 80% of nursing homes had no positive cases detected - Community transmission remains a significant factor in the spread of disease into nursing homes. - Uptake among nursing home staff of testing is currently at 73%, with efforts ongoing to improve on uptake levels. - Concerns were raised that a small number of symptomatic staff are still presenting for work. The challenges with regard to ongoing staff replacement where staff are on COVID-19 leave was noted. <p>Action 3.1: HSE Public Health will provide an update on serial testing with respect to health care workers at the next IOT meeting.</p>
4.	Matters Arising	<p>An update was provided with regards to the information campaign targeting persons-in-charge of nursing homes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An internal HSE Group will be set up to co-ordinate this team. - Significant work has taken place regarding the key messages that need to be communicated. - Agreements to leverage HIQA mailshots to persons in charge have been secured. - It has been proposed that a website and webinars could also be explored for development to complement the initiative - The focus initially is on messaging for staff around not presenting for work with symptoms or while awaiting a test.

		<p>Action 4.1: Chair requested that the Information Campaign team consider issuing some introductory messages ahead of the rollout of the official campaign in December.</p>
5.	<p>Update on meeting between the Ministers and agencies</p>	<p>A brief update of this meeting was provided by the Chair. Points of note included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The meeting was opportunity to identify areas for further support and any further priorities required. - The extraordinary supports provided by HIQA and the HSE to private nursing homes was acknowledged. - The legal and clinical governance responsibilities of the person in charge in nursing homes were further noted. - It was acknowledged that with higher community transmission, it is challenging to keep the virus out of the nursing home setting. - The continued development of key supports such as the serial testing programme. - Shared concern at current epidemiological situation and the continued focus of all stakeholders on supporting nursing home residents. - Staffing remains a concern, particularly the continuing low base line of staffing private nursing homes and generally the resilience of nursing homes a concern as they continue to rely on external HSE support - Further consideration of staff surge/emergency capacity is required given these ongoing concerns. - No additional concerns were raised. The commitment to ongoing collaborative interagency working and implementation of any additional actions was reiterated by HSE, HIQA and the Department of Health.
6.	<p>Referrals to Reference Group</p>	<p>Reference Group held their second meeting on 19th October.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Referral process document has been adopted by the Reference Group - Draft Progress Report and 14.1 document were broadly welcomed by the Group. - The Group raised operational considerations and increasing case numbers. - There were enquiries from the Reference group around uptake of training and home hours allocation. - The Chair of the Reference Group has proposed that 4 short life subgroups be established to examine some specific issues in over the next few weeks with a view to collating views/inputs

		<p>on the topics in question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The groups would consider specific recommendations relating to IPC, Communication and Wellbeing, COVID Response Teams, GPs and Nursing Homes integration. - It is intended that these groups will meet once and complete their work in advance of the next meeting to with a view to bringing some further insight to the IOT. <p><u>Action 6.1:</u> DOH to discuss further with the Chair of the Reference Group in relation to the work of its proposed subgroups.</p> <p><u>Action 6.2:</u> Follow up with Chair Reference Group to respond to Reference Group queries</p> <p><u>Action 6.3:</u> The Chair of the Reference group to provide update on the work of the subgroups at the next IOT Meeting.</p>
7.	Update from lead agencies	<p>NTPF: NTPF are working with HSE regarding costings in the context of the TAPS.</p> <p>Noted that provision of isolation rooms not covered by TAPS, further work including public health advice was required to give consideration to this matter.</p> <p>HSE: The HSE steering group held its first meeting. There was broad agreement around ToR and assignment of tasks split across 4 or 5 headings. Assistance will be required from the IOT as well as internally in the development of workstreams. Some of these workstreams relate to community operations, which are being led by Gerry Clerkin, Sandra Tuohy and Yvonne O’Neill. Significant work has been carried out already.</p> <p>The HSE noted that there is a lot of active work progressing on TAPS following the extension of the Scheme in collaboration with the NTPF and the Department.</p> <p>HIQA update provided under Item 10</p>
8.	Costings update	<p>Progress on costing work was discussed, specifically with reference to the funding allocated in Budget 2021.</p> <p>The Department also noted that Budget 2021 provided €40m in funding for implementation and the relevant agencies were asked to start to consider suitable proposals and business cases to support the implementation.</p>

9.	Discussion on Recommendation 14.1 Document	<p>All feedback and comments received has been taken on board and incorporated into the document. It was noted that the final document going forward will be a living document with regular updates.</p> <p>Action 9.1: DOH to circulate the finalised Rec 14.1 Document to the wider group and it will be published shortly after.</p>
10.	HIQA Presentations	<p>HIQA gave two presentations to the Group on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infection prevention and control (IPC) regulatory compliance in Nursing Homes. - An overview of a survey that they are proposing to send to nursing homes providers to capture their feedback on their individual implementation of recommendations <p>Discussion was held on the quality and type of data that could be gathered by the survey within the processes and systems available to HIQA.</p> <p>The Department noted that the Ministers had requested that this survey would be a repeated survey.</p> <p>Action 10.1: HIQA to further consider matters relating to the Survey of Nursing Home providers.</p> <p>There was a broad discussion on the critical importance of enhancing governance systems for HSE staff providing advice and working within private nursing homes during COVID-19. It was agreed that this should focus on nursing home assessments (HSE and HIQA), responsibilities, governance, escalation pathways, protocols, mandates and clinical indemnity.</p> <p>Action 10.2: The Department and the HSE committed to urgently convene to follow up on enhancing governance systems for HSE staff engaging with private nursing homes during COVID-19.</p>
11.	Progress Report to the Minister	<p>Final comments will be accepted up until close of business on 22nd October.</p> <p>Action 11.1: DOH to circulate the finalised Progress Report</p>
12.	AOB	<p>The next meeting will take place on 4th November at 11:00 am.</p>