



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

To: LRFs

From: Eric Finton James, Deputy Director, PPE cell, DHSC

Date: 14 August 2020

Dear Colleagues,

### **PPE DISTRIBUTION VIA LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUMS**

I would like to thank you and the many staff across different organisations that have supported Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) to coordinate the distribution of emergency PPE to front line services.

At the peak of demand in April, LRFs received over 35 million items of PPE in a single week. In recent weeks, demand through the LRFs has reduced significantly and now stands at an average of 2 million items a week. DHSC has secured supplies against future demand and at present there is no national shortage of PPE.

As set out in MHCLG's letter of 29 June, and reiterated during the LRF chairs call on 1 July, we believe we have now reached a position where there is no longer a need to provide emergency PPE to all LRFs via MHCLG. This decision is based on the feedback MHCLG received from in-depth calls with 15 LRF PPE teams over recent weeks, through regular weekly calls with all LRF chairs and Delta returns indicating that no LRF is reporting PPE as a significant concern.

Therefore, we have agreed to end the current emergency supply channel of PPE to LRFs via MHCLG by 11 September.

### **Resilience**

We understand that LRFs are considering what arrangements need to be in place locally to ensure resilience in the face of the continuing Covid-19 pressures, and the risk of any future unmet demand for PPE. To support LRFs, we can offer an additional drop of PPE to each LRF via DHSC at a level that would help create local reserves that can be used to manage temporary increase in demand due to local Covid-19 spikes or in case of any temporary issues with other distribution mechanisms.

Our intention is to provide sufficient PPE quantities that could meet local emergency demand for the following PPE items, and would take into consideration past average demand and population size of each LRF:

- Type IIR masks
- Aprons
- Coveralls
- Eye Protection
- Hand Hygiene
- Clinical waste bags

The reserve would also include smaller quantities of the following PPE items:

- Gloves
- FFP3 masks

Colleagues in MHCLG's PPE Cell will be in touch with all LRFs in the coming days to discuss the potential to create a local PPE reserve for your area, agree PPE quantities and the timing of your local reserve delivery. We anticipate making these deliveries between 24 August and 11 September.

Details about how this PPE reserve stock should be managed and how to receive resupply are set out in the attached.

### **Future PPE distribution routes from 1 September 2020**

We are aware of the importance of the sectors that currently source PPE via LRFs and the valuable work that they do on the front line. LRFs have been the source of emergency PPE for these sectors and we will be ensuring that these sectors can access PPE as we make changes to the supply route. From 1 September 2020, the PPE Portal will be expanded to provide PPE to the following sectors:

- Adult social care homes and domiciliary care settings
- Children's social care – including children's residential care and secure care
- Children's residential special schools
- Primary Care (GP practices, optometrists, dental practices including urgent dental care centres)
- Community pharmacies

DHSC is considering increasing order limits and working to add other PPE items to the Portal to meet all of the Covid-19 PPE needs of the above sectors. We do not anticipate the need to continue supplying these service providers via LRFs once the Portal roll out is complete.

We are working to find the most effective way to ensure continued PPE access for the following sectors and will be sending updates as this work is finalised:

- Local authorities
- Mental health community care
- Local authority-commissioned personal assistants
- Substance misuse centres
- Domestic violence refuges
- Rough sleeping services

One option for further consideration is for those LRFs who would like to play an ongoing role in PPE distribution between 14 September 2020 and 31 March 2021, should local circumstances lend themselves to such a system, to onboard directly with DHSC to continue receiving free PPE. Rather than providing only emergency supply, as has been the case to date, LRFs could take delivery of PPE from DHSC for onward distribution to meet the entire Covid-19 demand of sectors that will not be supplied via the PPE Portal. If this might be a role which your LRF would consider playing, please contact [ppe-requests@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:ppe-requests@dhsc.gov.uk) by 24 August to discuss what support your LRF may need to undertake this role.

## **Communications to sectors**

Local authorities will also be advised next week of the decision to step LRFs down from regular emergency PPE distribution via MHCLG. In areas covered by LRFs which decide to stand down, we will work closely with LAs to ensure that services have a continuous supply of PPE. Other key sectors that have been eligible to access LRF emergency stocks will also be informed of this development by their respective departments.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Finton James', written in a cursive style.

Eric Finton James

**Deputy Director  
PPE cell  
DHSC**