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**NHS Chief Executives
NHS Chief Officers
HAI Executive Leads
Workforce Senior Leadership Group**

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Colleagues

Please see the following guidelines providing clarity on the Scottish Government's policy regarding the reuse of single-use personal protective equipment (PPE). We welcome your support in ensuring the service is signposted to this vital information.

PPE Guidance

Our national expert body, Health Protection Scotland (HPS), jointly with the Department of Health and Social Care, Public Health Wales, Public Health Agency Northern Ireland, Public Health England (PHE) and NHS England published updated PPE guidance in relation to COVID-19 on Thursday 2 April. The revised guidance is available [here](#).

The guidance outlines what type of PPE frontline health and social care workers should be wearing in different settings and scenarios. The guidance itself recommends the safest level of PPE to protect health and social care workers and it specifies the type of PPE that should be worn in the various healthcare and social care settings where patients or residents could be cared for.

Single-use PPE

Scottish Government is clear that single-use PPE must not be reused and should be disposed of after use into the correct waste stream. Single-use items are identified by this symbol:



Sessional Use of PPE

The UK PPE guidance introduced the concept of sessional PPE use in some circumstances which was agreed by the Health and Safety Executive. This includes single use long-sleeved gowns, masks and eye protection which can be worn for a full session, without the requirement to be changed between patients. This decision was taken to ensure that health and social care workers are able to safely carry out their work; particularly when they are working in areas

where there is a high risk of COVID-19 transmission such as Emergency Departments or intensive care units.

Sessional use is described as a period of time where a health or care worker is undertaking duties in a specific care setting. The session ends when the health or care worker leaves that care setting e.g. a person's home, private room or ward.

Re-usable PPE

At present, there are some items of PPE such as goggles or visors which may be re-usable. Where this is the case, these items must be decontaminated in line with HPS guidance below:

<http://www.nipcm.hps.scot.nhs.uk/media/1409/nipcm-appendix7-20180712.pdf>

When issuing reusable PPE the manufacturers instructions must always be available so that they may be referred to as described in the HPS guidance above.

HPS are aware that some Boards may be considering the use of reusable FFP3 respirators. These respirators can be reused following decontamination as per manufacturer's instructions and the National Infection Prevention and Control Manual (NIPCM). HPS are aware that there may be a learning requirement for staff if these are used more widely and if reusable masks are required HPS would also address any learning issues.

Reprocessing of PPE

To be clear at the outset, there is no intention to reprocess single use PPE. However, there is work being undertaken to understand what might be practicable in the unlikely event that supplies became unavailable. The work is being undertaken by a collaborative group of experts from across the UK.

I hope this information is helpful.



Professor Fiona McQueen
Chief Nursing Officer