

## PPE Hubs

**A partnership between Scottish Government, COSLA, NHS National Services Scotland, Health and Social Care Partnerships, CCPS, Scottish Care and National Carer Organisations**

**Memorandum of understanding – v4.0  
Updated June 2021**



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
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HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE  
**SCOTLAND**



## Background

1. Due to the severity of the Covid-19 outbreak, and the demand it has placed on resources, the Scottish Government has agreed to provide PPE to social care settings where business as usual supply routes have failed. To do this, a new distribution network (PPE Hubs) has been set up and agreed by the Partners to this agreement.

## Partnership aims and objectives

2. The aim of this Partnership is to ensure appropriate items of PPE<sup>1</sup> are available to all staff, unpaid carers, personal assistants and visitors in social care settings. This includes: staff in care homes, care home visitors, care at home providers, unpaid carers, personal assistants, day services, sheltered housing services, supported housing and housing support, children's homes and hospices across all sectors (public, voluntary and private).

3. The initial timeframe for this MOU was six months, commencing on 27 April 2020. SG has confirmed that the provision of PPE via the PPE Hubs should remain in place until end March 2022, with the current model and MOU to remain in place until end September 2021. Examination of alternative models of PPE delivery through the Hubs will be taken forward over July and August 2021, as outlined in paragraph 24.

## Partnership governance and oversight

4. Governance for this agreement will be managed by the PPE Hub Steering Group. Each partner has appointed a senior member of staff to lead on the work of the partnership. The following partners will be represented on the Steering Group:

Partner	Representatives
Scottish Government	Lee Hegarty Elaine Rae (consultant)
NSS	Stephen McWilliam
COSLA	Nicola Dickie Lisa Powell
Health and Social Care Partnerships	Diane Norwood Jack Libby Anne McKenzie
Scottish Care	Donald Macaskill Karen Hedge Janice Cameron
CCPS	Annie Gunner Logan Yvette Burgess
National Carer Organisations	Claire Cairns Louise Morgan

## Principles

5. The distribution network is currently made up of around 50 PPE Hubs, each responsible for a local geography. There is also a Social Care PPE Support Centre that handles emergency requests.

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<sup>1</sup> In line with the [national guidance on PPE for health and social care settings](#).

6. All partners agree that:

- Business as usual is that care providers source their own stock of PPE.
- Where this fails, the PPE Hubs will provide PPE to the whole social care sector, including personal assistants and unpaid carers.
- Supplies will be used in line with Hub supply guidance and distributed equitably according to need, regardless of employer.
- NHS NSS will supply stock to the Hubs to meet need based on actual consumption/reasonable planned usage data – recognising that actual consumption may rise if business as usual sources of supply dry up and as Hubs expand their provision.
- PPE Hubs will receive stock on a pre-determined day of the week, and will know what deliveries will include. They will be expected to provide a regular stock return to NSS.
- NSS provide training for Hubs and providers on Hub operations and expectations.
- All parties recognise the global scarcity of PPE.
- The Social Care PPE Support Centre will revert to being for emergency use only.
- Distribution and supply arrangements will be analysed using evidence gathered from the ongoing operations, and kept under review for changes and improvements where necessary. This process will include all parties.

## **PPE Hubs**

7. PPE Hubs are the central point for receiving and distributing top-up PPE from the national stock for the social care sector. They are managed and operated by 31 Health and Social Care Partnerships.

8. From 27 April 2020, NSS will provide regular weekly top-up deliveries to the Hubs. These will contain aprons, Fluid Resistant Surgical Masks (FRSMs) type IIR, and gloves. Eye protection is also provided where necessary. NSS flex levels of stock delivered to individual Hubs in line with real-time data on actual demand to the Hubs.

## **NSS Social Care PPE Support Centre**

9. The NSS Social Care PPE Support Centre plays a critical role in the implementation and success of the updated Social Care PPE Hub system. It will triage incoming calls with:

- routine requests directed to the PPE Hubs; and
- emergency requests from care providers or Hubs which can be directly actioned by the Support Centre, and requests that cannot be actioned by Hubs.

10. The PPE Support Centre will also provide assistance and guidance on questions and concerns from Hubs and care providers. The PPE Support Centre can be contacted on 0300 303 3020.

## **Assurances**

11. The successful implementation of the PPE Hubs will require assurances from all Partners in the 'chain'. All Partners agree that:

## **NHS NSS**

- Provide process communication and training to care providers in HSCP Hub area.
- Provide new stocks of PPE weekly to each Hub based on actual usage data.
- Ensure clarity to Hubs regarding future supply.
- Model Hub future demand based on usage data from each Hub.
- Provide templates for care providers and Hubs to use to support unified reporting.
- Receive detailed weekly shipment data from Hubs to monitor and report care provider, Personal Assistant, and unpaid carer usage nationally.
- Receive weekly stock reports from Hubs and weekly emergency shipment data from Social Care PPE Support Centre.
- Establish and maintain the Social Care PPE Support Centre to support supply of emergency PPE and provide guidance on questions and concerns.

### Health and Social Care Partnerships – PPE Hub Management

- Stock provided to Hubs from NSS are for social care use only (including Personal Assistants and unpaid carers).
- Hubs provide PPE stock to all elements of social care within its geographic boundary.
- Hubs commit to PPE stock being for use, not stockpiled.
- Stock allocated on an organisation-independent basis, on the basis of need only, and taking into account totality of sector's need.
- Communicate directly with their providers, unpaid carers, and Personal Assistants so that people know the Hub details, opening hours, how to get in touch when they need PPE and how to order it from the Hub, what training is needed in the use of PPE, etc.
- Hubs work with the carer centre(s) who will help with triaging requests from unpaid carers. Ensure excellent communication between Hub and carer centre(s).
- Hubs should be open as a minimum Mon - Fri, 9am-5pm, and be staffed by at least one person per shift, with arrangements locally for emergency access outwith such hours.
- Hub personnel/contact details to be kept updated and changes communicated to the necessary groups, and support contact by phone, email and SMS.
- Receive orders from care providers, unpaid carers and Personal Assistants, agree available supply, confirm the order being processed, and issue stock accordingly.
- Distribute products to care providers/carer/Personal Assistant (either care provider/carer/Personal Assistant uplifts from the Hub or the Hub delivers to them).
- Record any shortages or orders not able to be fulfilled and liaise with NSS to resolve, and to be factored into future supply.
- Record any orders not fulfilled by NSS and liaise with NSS to resolve.
- Receive and stock replenishment products from NSS weekly.
- Supply weekly stock data to NSS by product.
- Report shipments by requester/Product/Quantity/Date to NSS weekly.
- Refresh overall weekly stock level and report to NSS.

### Social Care providers

- Social care providers, including Health and Social Care Partnerships, will purchase PPE through normal business as usual supply routes.
- If those routes fail, providers, individual carers and personal assistants access stock through their designated Hub according to local Hub access arrangements.
- Commit to taking no more than one week's supply of PPE. This, in practice, may be less than a week depending on when the next stock delivery is due at the Hub.

- Commit to ordering and using PPE from the Hubs in line with [national guidance](#), and not above or beyond that. On occasion this may entail reference to individual risk assessments particularly regarding very vulnerable people who are being supported with personal / intimate care.
- Provide intelligence to Partners on the status of their business as usual routes as appropriate to inform PPE Hub policy.

## Monitoring

12. All partners commit to ongoing monitoring, with the aim of ensuring accountability and performance against the principles of this agreement.

13. The Strategic Hub Leads Group will co-ordinate the monitoring and report back to national reporting lines as appropriate. They will also provide oversight of the use and demand for stock via the dedicated NSS PPE live hub system.

14. The following metrics shall be used to inform monitoring:

Organisation	Frequency	Report
NSS	Weekly	Stock deliveries to each Hub itemising stock provided
	Weekly	Comparison of stock delivered versus the tracked stock need and consumption
	Weekly	Intelligence report of supply issues
	Weekly	Stock provided by the PPE Support Centre
	Weekly	Complaints received by the PPE Support Centre with detail of action taken
PPE Hubs	Weekly	Care provider usage itemising stock provided to each provider, unpaid carer or personal assistant
	Weekly	Hub stock levels by product
	Weekly	Any shortages or orders not able to be fully allocated
Care Providers	As necessary	Any issues with business as usual supply routes
	As necessary	Any issues with access to PPE via the Hubs or Support Centre

15. All Partners will also share commercial information where necessary to inform where collective purchasing power or targeted purchasing will allow more efficient use of the public purse.

## Dispute Resolution

16. All Partners will work co-operatively to identify and resolve issues to mutual satisfaction and in a timely manner so as to avoid all forms of dispute in meeting our obligations under this agreement.

17. Where that is not possible, members of the Steering Group will notify other members of the group about a dispute as soon as possible.

18. Steering Group members will proactively deal with any dispute on a Best for Service basis in accordance with this agreement, so as to reach unanimous resolution to finally resolve any dispute the resolution of which shall be binding upon all Partners.

19. Where unanimous resolution is not possible or where it appears to the Scottish Ministers that a party has failed to comply with the principles at paragraph 6 or the obligations at paragraph 12 (whether generally or in relation to a specific Hub), the Scottish Ministers may issue a formal direction to finally resolve any dispute or require compliance, with which Partners undertake to comply. Such direction may include a direction to NSS to provide stock directly for such period and in such manner as the direction may set out.

### **Distribution of Lateral Flow Devices**

20. From December 2020, Lateral Flow Devices (LFDs) have been distributed to care providers throughout Scotland as part of wider Infection Prevention and Control measures. It has been agreed that the PPE Hubs will be used to help distribute LFD kits to social care workers, including personal assistants day centre/day service staff and mobile care at home staff who provide care and support for adults. SG is responsible for decisions on which groups are eligible to receive LFD kits and it is important for maintaining consistency of supply and distribution that LFD kits are distributed strictly in line with SG instructions. The cohort of social care workers eligible to receive LFDs from the Hubs is likely to change depending on circumstances. SG will ensure NSS and HSCPs are kept fully informed of any changes to the cohort.

21. The Scottish Government have established a general helpline to support care homes, care at home and housing support services who have opted to receive direct deliveries of LFD tests - 0800 008 6587.

22. For Hub distribution of LFDs, adult day care centres, Personal Assistants and the social care workforce can call the PPE support centre to be signposted to their local hub - 0300 303 3020.

23. The supply of LFD kits to the Hubs will be managed by NSS, in line with Scottish Government policies and guidance. Hub staff do not have responsibility for advising recipients of LFD kits on how to use them and should instead direct them to the guidance available at Coronavirus (COVID-19): adult care at home testing guidance - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)).

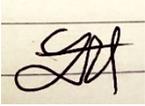
### **Future models**

The steering group will continue to review the operation of the Hubs and explore areas where there may be the potential for improvement, including the possibility of expanding the eligibility criteria for accessing the Hubs. This will include consideration of the financial implications of any changes. Any change in current practice will require a decision from Scottish Ministers.

### **Disclaimer**

24. It should be noted that by signing this document or by participating in the PPE Hub Partnership, the Partners are not committing to legally binding obligations. It is intended that the Partners remain independent of each other and that their collaboration and use of the term 'Partner' does not constitute the creation of a legal entity, nor authorise the entry into a commitment for or on behalf of each other.

Signed on behalf of Scottish Government (MoU v3.0)



24 June 2021

Date .....

Lee Hegarty, Mental Health and Social Care Directorate, Scottish Government

Signed on behalf of NHS NSS

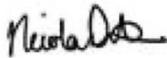
24 June 2021



Date .....

Stephen McWilliam, Director, NHS National Services Scotland

Signed on behalf of COSLA



24 June 2021

Date .....

Nicola Dickie, Chief Officer H&SC, COSLA

Signed on behalf of Scottish Care



24 June 2021

Date .....

Karen Hedge, National Director, Scottish Care

Signed on behalf of CCPS

*Annie Gunner Logan*

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Annie Gunner Logan, Chief Executive, CCPS

24 June 2021

Date .....

Signed on behalf of National Carer Organisations

*Claire Cairns*

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Claire Cairns, Coalition of Carers in Scotland

24 June 2021

Date .....



## Annex – Definitions

1. **PPE Hubs** – Hubs are geographically designated points of contact, managed by Scotland’s 31 Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs), for PPE stock allocation for Scotland’s social care support (made up of private, public, and third sector organisations, and unpaid carers and Personal Assistants).
2. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** - personal protective equipment is protective clothing, helmets, goggles, or other garments or equipment designed to protect the wearer's body from injury or infection. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has emphasised the importance of appropriate use of PPE, particularly among frontline health and social care workers.
3. **NHS National Service Scotland (NSS)** - NSS is a Non Departmental Public Body, accountable to the Scottish Government, which delivers services critical to front-line patient care to support the efficient and effective operation of NHS Scotland.
4. **Care Providers (CPs)** – in this context, this term encompasses the following entities: care homes, care at home providers, unpaid carers, personal assistants, day services, sheltered housing services, supported housing and housing support, children’s homes and hospices across all sectors (public, voluntary and private).
5. **Best for Service** – to undertake to work towards the aims and principles of this agreement in order to deliver PPE to people in social care roles regardless of employer and based solely on the requirement to wear PPE in pursuit of their caring roles.