



Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport
Jeane Freeman MSP

COSLA Health & Social Care Spokesperson
Councillor Stuart Currie

T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

T: 0131 474 9200
E: info@cosla.gov.uk

IJB Chief Officers
IJB Chief Finance Officers
Local Authority Chief Executives

24 March 2020

Dear Colleague,

We are writing to provide a further update on recent discussions surrounding coronavirus (COVID-19) and the health and social care sector.

COVID-19 represents an unprecedented challenge to anyone working in caring professions in Scotland. The Scottish Government and Local Government have shared leadership to ensure the entire system is working jointly together to optimise the impact on our communities wellbeing.

In light of the current emergency which has been declared in the NHS in Scotland, there is an immediate and urgent requirement to increase the support and staff capacity in the social care sector, which includes nursing homes, care homes and care at home. The move aims to help the care system adapt to increased pressure placed on it by COVID -19, with many people requiring continued support for daily living, even if they have not contracted the virus.

In light of this, and subject to any additional expenditure being fully aligned to local mobilisation plans, including the IJB responses, reasonable funding requirements will be supported. This is on the basis that a process can be developed for these to be accurately and immediately recorded and shared with the Scottish Government. The basis of this reporting will be drawn up and agreed with COSLA and Health and Social Care Partnerships.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road,
Edinburgh EH1 3DG www.gov.scot

A guidance document for Local Authority commissioners has been circulated with this letter to give advice on the areas of pressure being faced by social care providers.

The implications of COVID-19 on the social care workforce are recognised, not only as a result of increased demand for services, but due to the additional pressures that will be caused by staff absence – particularly if staff are unwell or self-isolating with their households.

It is recognised that services will be subject to demands which will require different approaches to use of staffing and other resources, and that additional measures may be required to increase the available workforce. This will require significant levels of flexibility in a number of areas, such as the redeployment of staff, the introduction of temporary workers and accessing students to provide support.

More detailed advice and practical guidance will be issued in the coming days from the Scottish Social Services Council and NHS Education for Scotland. This guidance will be for care settings that may require use of volunteers and redeployed workers due to staffing challenges as a result of the spread of Covid-19. It will set out what employers need to think about and put in place to support the safe delivery of services.

It will also include resources available to induct new workers into different care settings and provide guidance on the minimum training required to equip people with the knowledge, skills and behaviours to support our most vulnerable. This will include signposting to an online portal for training.

We recognise that everyone across our health and care system is working collectively to respond to what is a uniquely challenging situation. We want to take this opportunity to thank you for everything you are doing at this time.

Kind regards,



JEANE FREEMAN



COUNCILLOR STUART CURRIE

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road,
Edinburgh EH1 3DG www.gov.scot