

Agenda Item 6

Personal Protective Equipment



Falkirk IJB Clinical and Care Governance Committee

26 June 2020

Personal Protective Equipment

For Noting

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines progress of the work to ensure access to appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) within Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership during the Covid-19 outbreak. It outlines the work to date, the development of local and national guidance, the process for accessing PPE and the risks and issues associated with this. It confirms the efforts being made to ensure sufficient stocks of PPE and to respond to any sudden increases in demand for particular types of PPE.
- 1.2 HSCP staff, Falkirk Council staff and care providers are working to procure sufficient quantities of PPE to support the safe delivery of care. There have been significant shortages and the cost of PPE has also risen sharply. To date sufficient stocks have been accessed and more are on order. Stocks are continually monitored and there is daily activity to source the PPE required, in very difficult circumstances.
- 1.3 PPE shortages are well documented as an international issue. The Scottish Government, Scotland Excel and local procurement services have continued to seek out supplies and procure these where possible.
- 1.4 The Health Protection Scotland PPE Guidance has been updated as new evidence around Covid-19 emerges to ensure the safety of staff and patients/service users/carers is maintained to the highest levels possible. There have been frequent changes to the guidance as new evidence emerges about Covid-19 transmission. Access to national guidance is maintained locally through updating local guidance, links to appropriate Health Protection Scotland web pages and sharing of information via the HSCP mobilisation centre. Staff are following national guidance at all times, despite the difficulty of incorporating frequent changes.

2. Recommendations

The Clinical and Care Governance Committee is asked to:

- 2.1 note the progress made in ensuring a robust distribution process of available PPE across the HSCP and including non-regulated service providers, personal assistants, unpaid carers and volunteers
- 2.2 note the challenges associated with procuring appropriate PPE for social care delivery within the HSCP and the ongoing actions to procure required stock

- 2.3 note the progress to ensure up to date accessible guidance is available to those using PPE.

3. Background

- 3.1 As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic there is now an international shortage of PPE. This is associated with:
- increased demand for PPE, some of which is now being worn in settings where it would not previously have been required
 - issues within the manufacturing sector due to the closure of workplaces and/or reduction in levels of staff within these settings (to enable safe social distancing within the workplace) which impact on productivity
 - issues within the transport industry impacting on delivery of PPE, including shipments from abroad.
- 3.2 It is worth noting that small service providers are finding that the increased cost of PPE, as a result of the shortage, is making it difficult for them to access PPE in sufficient quantities. Some suppliers require a 'minimum order' and it may be difficult for small providers to coordinate with other providers to access sizeable orders.
- 3.3 To respond to the above and mitigate some of the risks NSS Scotland set up a supply chain and National Triage Helpline for providers to access emergency stocks of PPE when they are unable to source these from their usual suppliers. The NSS Triage Service requested that HSCPs set up local delivery Hubs where Triage stock could be sent for distribution to providers in the local area.
- 3.4 A PPE coordination group meets weekly, chaired by the Chief Social Work Officer, to ensure requirements across all service areas are understood and that forward planning is facilitated, including potential changes to PPE requirements as lockdown restrictions are eased. The group has membership of the Project Development Manager, staff from Falkirk Council Services, Children's Services, Procurement Manager, Health and Safety Advisors and HR (when required).
- 3.5 Reports are made regularly to the HSCP Huddle meetings. These were daily for the first several weeks of the current crisis and are now 3 times each week. Issues, risks and action taken are also reported directly to the Heads of Service and Chief Social Work Officer as they arise. PPE is a standing agenda item at the daily HSCP Senior Management Team meeting.

4. PPE Supply and Local Hub Distribution

4.1 Hub Process

Initially Falkirk HSCP set up 3 local Hubs:

- Carronbank House (Home Care Office) for west Falkirk
- Summerford Care Home for central Falkirk
- Cunningham House Care home for east Falkirk.
- Stock was delivered weekly to the Hubs and picked up by providers, subject to the issue of a PIN number and an allocation agreed by NSS Triage. This was in place for a number of weeks but operationally it was difficult to manage.
- Initially there was no appointment process in place by NSS Triage to advise Hubs when orders would be picked up. This resulted in unannounced visits to the three Hubs by providers to pick up PPE. The process was managed by issuing PPE at the door of each of the premises using appropriate social distancing measures and adhering to hygiene requirements. No-one was permitted to enter buildings to pick up PPE.
- All stock issued was recorded manually and stock counts were requested regularly from Hub managers to report back to NSS. This was difficult to manage for the Hubs as the Hub managers were managing busy services.
- Providers sometimes arrived without PIN numbers and an additional process was required, while they were at the Hub, to acquire these details.
- Only registered care providers/homes were issued with a PIN causing difficulty for unregistered providers that required PPE.
- Stock allocated to providers by NSS Triage was very limited and increased the number of times the provider had to visit the Hub.

4.2 In response to the issues experienced with the way the Hubs were initially set up, it was agreed to use the capacity within Central Stores to help with PPE distribution. All Hub stock was moved to Central Stores and a PPE delivery service set up for service providers, including voluntary sector, unpaid carers and personal assistant employers as the issue of PPE to non-regulated services was added by NSS. Stock was moved to Central Stores on 24 April 2020 and deliveries commenced the week beginning 27 April.

4.3 Appendix 1 provides a sample of the type and volume of PPE being issued by the Hub.

4.4 A dedicated mobile number and mailbox were set up for PPE enquiries and this is the primary route for accessing PPE supplies.

4.5 An audit of provider requirements across the HSCP area was commenced to establish the weekly amount of PPE required to ensure staff and service users/carers could remain safe. This is still a work in progress as not all providers responded and so contact is being made with individual providers to try to complete this information. The initial results of the Audit indicated that around 46,000 care at home visits and care home sessions were delivered each week. A session indicates an episode of care within a care

home where PPE was worn continuously whereas a care at home visit signifies a visit to someone's home. Where 2 carers are needed for a visit/session this is counted as 2.

- 4.6 As evidence about the symptoms and mode of transfer of Covid-19 has changed over the last weeks, the approach to PPE use has also changed. In particular the requirement to wear a fluid repellent face mask has increased and the frequency of PPE changes within care homes has (more recently) had to increase. This is in response to the Health Protection Scotland advice regarding the potential transmission of Covid-19 by asymptomatic carriers. The Audit is being updated to reflect these changes and establish the impact on PPE usage.
- 4.7 It is recognised that the amount of PPE required will fluctuate depending on whether service users/carers are shielding, displaying symptoms of Covid-19, have tested positive, are unable to practice social distancing or have health conditions that present an increased risk e.g. respiratory conditions.
- 4.8 Resources have been provided to personal assistant employers with the delivery of their PPE and to unpaid carers through the Falkirk Carers Centre.

5. Procurement

- 5.1 Stocks of PPE generally are in short supply. The Procurement Manager, Project Development Manager and Health and Safety Team have been working closely to identify suppliers and establish appropriate supply lines for stock shortages. We have also been working to establish that PPE is of the required specifications and that due diligence is completed to ensure suppliers are genuine and avoid any risk of fraudulent companies being used.

6. Guidance

- 6.1 The Project Development Manager has been working closely with the Workforce Development Manager, Health and Safety Team, HR, Contracts and Commissioning Team, Falkirk Carer's Centre and SDS Forth Valley. This is to produce local guidance on the appropriate use of PPE, links to the Health Protection Scotland national guidance as well as access to FAQs for staff, service users and carers. Appendix 2 provides a list of Guidance issued in relation to PPE.
- 6.2 This guidance has been uploaded to the websites of the above organisations and is updated in line with any changes to the national guidance.

7. Partnership Approach

- 7.1 The procurement and distribution of PPE across Falkirk HSCP has depended on a collaborative approach across a range of partners, including significant support from staff within Falkirk Council and partnership organisations. Often the guidance and levels of PPE available changed daily with little prior notice. It is testament to the willingness of staff to work together and at significant pace that relevant Guidance and PPE distribution has been achievable and safe levels of care and support have been maintained.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 Maintaining a sufficient stock of PPE is essential for the safe delivery of care and support. There is continuous effort to ensure that all care and support provision across Falkirk HSCP is supported with sufficient stock levels and delivery solutions to ensure the safety of staff and patients/service users/carers and reduce transmission rates of Covid-19. As described above this requires a diligent staff resource and sustained effort to fill gaps in PPE availability. We have, to date, been able to support all providers with PPE when they have been unable to access this from their usual supply routes. This work will continue for the foreseeable future.
- 8.2 The partnership working across services has enhanced relationships and led to some new ways of working together. It will be useful to look at the learning from this, to acknowledge the benefits and the efforts of the teams involved and to ensure this knowledge is used to inform continuous improvement as we emerge from this crisis.

Resource Implications

The projected increase in expenditure, as a result of these additional PPE requirements is being monitored. The Chief Finance Officer is advised of current and projected spend on a regular basis and this is included in the Partnership's mobilisation plans.

Impact on IJB Outcomes and Priorities

The provision of appropriated PPE is essential to support the delivery of IJB outcomes by ensuring that the care and support provided by paid staff, volunteers and unpaid carers can be done safely. This ensures that patients/service users and their carers and families have confidence in the support available during what are unprecedented circumstances.

Legal & Risk Implications

The main risk associated with PPE is that shortages result in insufficient PPE being available resulting in essential care not being deliverable, without putting staff/patients/carers at significant risk of infection. The arrangements set out in this report should provide some assurance that all possible

measures are being taken to mitigate risk and ensure safe delivery of care and support.

Consultation

Consultation is not required.

Equalities Assessment

Equalities assessment is not required.

9. Report Author

Margaret Petherbridge, Project Development Manger
(PPE coordination)

10. List of Background Papers

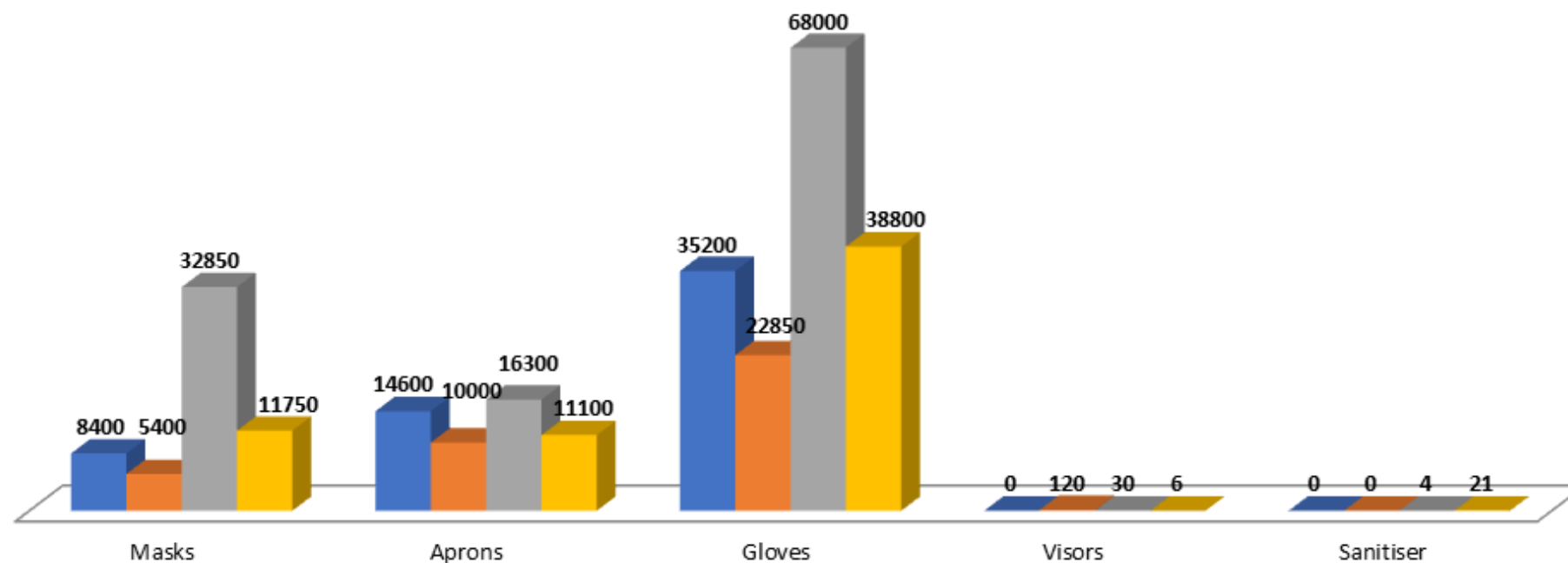
n/a

11. Appendices

Appendix 1:	PPE Distribution from Hub data
Appendix 2:	PPE Guidance distributed across the Falkirk HSCP area.

Hub PPE distribution - Falkirk Central Stores 30

■ wk1 04 - 10 May 2020 ■ wk2 11-17 May 2020 ■ wk3 18-24 May 2020 ■ wk4 25-31 May 2020



Appendix 2

Correspondence/ Publication Date	From	Title
25-Feb-20	Scottish Government	Preparations for coronavirus stepped up
2-Apr-20	Scottish Government	Protecting Our Frontline Staff
8-Apr-20	HSCP	FAQ's about using PPE
25-Apr-20	Scottish Government	Extending PPE access to all social care providers
29-Apr-20	Scottish Government	Coronavirus (COVID-19): PPE access for social care providers and unpaid carers
29-Apr-20	Scottish Government	Coronavirus (COVID-19): Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for personal assistants
30-Apr-20	Care Inspectorate	PPE and other supplies
9-May-20	Scottish Government	Increase in PPE production
11-May-20	Falkirk Council	Update webpages on PPE
26-May-20	Scottish Government	CNO Letter on Reuse of PPE