

CCG6. Personal Protection Equipment

The committee considered a report by the Project Development Manager which outlined 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.

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic there was an international shortage of PPE due to:

- increased demand for PPE, some of which was 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, and
- issues within the transport industry impacting on delivery of PPE, including shipments from abroad.

The report set out the work to date, summarised the development of local and national guidance, and set out the process for accessing PPE and the risks and issues associated with this. It confirmed the efforts being made to ensure sufficient stocks of PPE and to respond to any sudden increases in demand for particular types of PPE.

HSCP staff, Falkirk Council staff and care providers had worked to procure sufficient quantities of PPE to support the safe delivery of care. In addition to supply shortages the cost of PPE had risen sharply. To date sufficient stocks have been accessed and more were on order. Stock levels were continually monitored and there was daily activity to source the PPE required, in very difficult circumstances.

The Health Protection Scotland PPE Guidance had been updated as new evidence around Covid-19 emerged to ensure the safety of staff and patients/service users/carers was maintained to the highest levels possible. There had been frequent changes to the guidance as new evidence emerged about Covid-19 transmission. Staff followed national guidance at all times, despite the difficulty of incorporating frequent changes.

Decision

The committee:-

- 1) noted 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) noted the challenges associated with procuring appropriate PPE for social care CP and the ongoing actions to procure required stock; and**
- 3) noted the progress to ensure up to date accessible guidance is available to those using PPE.**