



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig an tUas. Pat Bennett,
Príomhoifigeach, Eagraíocht Cúram
Sláinte Pobail, Lár Tíre, An Lú, An
Mhí
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte,
Oifig Cheantair, Bóthar Ardáin, An
Tulach Mhór, Co. Uíbh Fhailí.

☎: 057 9359787/774

☎: 057 9358065

✉: CHO8@hse.ie

Office of Mr. Pat Bennett,
Chief Officer, Midlands
Louth Meath Community
Health Organisation,
Health Service Executive,
Area Office, Arden Road,
Tullamore, Co. Offaly

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4th June 2020

Ms Carol Nolan T.D.,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Parliamentary Question – 7035/20

To ask the Minister for Health the steps he has taken to address the shortage of PPE in private and public nursing homes in counties Offaly and Laois; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Carol Nolan

Dear Deputy Nolan,

Following the emergence of Covid-19 there was a clear decision by the HSE to include the vulnerable residents of nursing homes, whether private, public or voluntary in the consideration as to how to manage the situation. Since January of this year the HSE has engaged with private nursing homes to assist them and their residents. This has been both nationally, through Nursing Homes Ireland, and locally through individual providers through the Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) network.

Each CHO Area Crisis Management Team (ACMT) has prioritised the needs of long term care residents within their areas and has offered very significant support to the nursing homes in their areas, particularly those with COVID 19 outbreaks. This has included management support, PPE and other supplies, Public Health and other clinical inputs, support with sourcing staffing and, in some cases the reassignment of HSE staff to support these facilities.

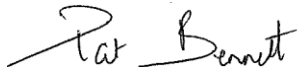
In the early days of the response to COVID 19, the HSE faced an unprecedented challenge in the face of global demand for PPE in what is an exceptionally competitive and highly volatile global market. Ireland was not alone in this challenge. The major supply line the HSE has established with China, together with increased domestic production of certain elements of PPE is essential to ensuring we have an adequate and sustainable source supply. Our success in sourcing significant quantities of PPE has meant the PPE supply situation has improved significantly over the past 4 weeks in particular.

Every effort has been taken to ensure available PPE is targeted at the areas of highest priority. Distribution of PPE continues on a daily basis right across the wider health service including home care, residential and primary care services. It is important that shortages of PPE that may arise are documented and escalated through the official HSE governance system so that they can be addressed as quickly as possible. A total of 32.38 million items of PPE were distributed across the health service over the four week period from the 17th April to the 14th May 2020. 12.6 million items or 39% of the total was provided to the long term residential care sector.

In line with the above, Midlands Louth Meath CHO participates in a national process for the standardised demand and supply management of PPE across all its facilities. In addition a standardised ordering process for all nursing homes (public and private) is in place and the HSE has assigned staff that act as a point of contact for the private nursing homes to ensure that there is an adequate supply off PPE available to all nursing homes.

I trust the above is in order but please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries in this regard.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Bennett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Pat Bennett

Chief Officer CHO Area 8