National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHET) Covid-19 Subgroup - Vulnerable People

Checklist for those providing services to vulnerable people

This checklist provides an overview of the key actions that need to be taken by those providing services to vulnerable groups and individuals.

1.
Have you designated a person at an appropriately senior level in your organisation who is responsible for leading your organisation's response to Covid-19? In respect of agencies funded by your CHO, this should be person identified as lead contact on the Section 38/39 Service Arrangement with your CHO/National service.

2.
Have you ensured that all staff are familiar with, and have contact details for, your organisation/service area's lead?

3.
Have you developed (or adopted) appropriate guidance for service users, families and staff which is in line with the most recent National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHET) and Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) guidance in regard to:
- o Good hand hygiene practice
- o Good respiratory practice
- o What to do in the event of a suspected case of Covid 19
- o What to do in the event of a confirmed case of Covid 19

4.
Have you a process in place for ensuring that this guidance is updated regularly in line with NPHET and Health Protection Surveillance Centre (www.hpsc.ie) (www.HSE.ie) guidance?

5.
Have you prepared a Communications Plan for disseminating this guidance in an appropriate format to service users, families, staff and members of the public?
- o Have you developed and tested a method of communicating with all staff members in a swift and effective fashion.
- o Do you have a system in place to communicate messages, as the Community Healthcare Office may require, to all patients/clients in residential care settings/approved centres during a pandemic.

6.
Have you ensured that your organisation's communication plan is in compliance with the general data protection regulations?

7.

Have you displayed site-specific signage and posters prominently to raise awareness of basic critical infection control measures and to phone before attending a healthcare facility if the person is worried they may have symptoms of COVID-19

8.

Are your workforce adequately trained in relation to:
- o Good hand and respiratory hygiene
- o the use of personal protective equipment
- o How to spot symptoms of a potential COVID-19 infection
- o What to do in the event of a potential COVID-19 infection
- o What to do in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 infection

9.

Do you have a preparedness plan in place that includes:
- o containment measures;
- o delay measures;
- o mitigation measures;
- o infection control;
- o personal protective equipment (PPE)
- o environmental cleaning;
- o restrictions on visitor access

10.

Have you developed protocols to:
- o prevent the spread of COVID-19
- o manage placement of suspected cases
- o manage the environment in the event of a suspected case

11.

Do you have a plan in place for isolation if required? Does this plan contain an examination of the Service Provider's Asset Base to identify unoccupied physical capacity within existing operational facilities *and/or* currently unused facilities? Does this plan identify what is required to commission any unoccupied physical capacity as quickly as possible?

12.

Have you identified an appropriate facility where individuals can self-isolate when voluntary home isolation is not available to them? Have you identified what is required to commission any unoccupied physical capacity as quickly as possible – per No 11. above?

From a social inclusion perspective in the context of identification of vulnerable groups, because of their health profile, transience or people who may not have the facility/inclination to self-isolate, or initial concerns relate, in particular, to:
- Homeless population
- Traveller community
- People with addiction problems
- People in direct provision
- Victims of Domestic, Sexual, Gender Violence (Refuges)

Have you considered a specific response with regard to each of the above.

13.

Have you taken appropriate measures to secure supply chains of all routine supplies (including PPE)?

14.

Do you have a Capacity Contingency Plan in place in the event that you need to curtail your services? Have you considered the viability and/or potential risk impact of proceeding as scheduled with planned/new service developments/initiatives (e.g. Decongregation programme, disability services) and considered/agreed with CHO any necessary recalibration of targets and timelines. Have you considered how any such recalibration of decongregation/service development targets may assist in providing for physical capacity for isolation, up to and including an area-based response under which multiple service providers may be able to avail.

Have you considered how Respite Services can be most effectively prioritised for vulnerable groups as part of any containment plan that may require curtailment of certain services.

Have you considered how staff may be redeployed across different service setting (i.e Day to Residential/Respite) and how the cessation of certain non-essential activities may free up additional staff for redeployment. NOTE: There is an expectation that adequate levels of Day and Residential Respite will be maintained.

15.

Do you have a Business Continuity Plan in place in the event that a case of Covid-19 is confirmed among members of staff in your organisation/facility?