

FROM THE MINISTER OF HEALTH



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Dear Colleagues

REBUILDING HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

Following on from my commitment to update you all following the weekly meeting of the Management Board, please find below my update, following the Management Board meeting on Wednesday 11 November 2020, which considered a range of issues.

The Board received a presentation from Professor Ian Young in relation to the current wave of Covid-19 which included up to date information on the average number of new cases per day both within the community and in respect of hospital admissions. An update was also provided on the current R rate both in the community and in respect of hospital admissions.

The Board also received an updated paper on the 'Test of Change' project which is exploring making the best use of surgical capacity at the South West Acute Hospital. Members noted progress to date, with a further update to be provided on 25th November.

The Board received an update on preparation for EU Exit in three priority areas: healthcare supply chain; access to healthcare and movement of people; and data transfer. Members were advised that updated guidance will issue to the HSC next week and assurances were provided that extensive national arrangements are in place to protect the supply of medicines in NI. It is not anticipated that there will be any cross border disruption or any significant movement of people, protocols are in place to protect those HSC professionals already in post. In addition, an assurance checklist has been issued by the Department to ensure that data mitigation processes are put in place.

The Board also received an updated paper on the progress of the No More Silos project against 10 Key Actions. Members welcomed progress to date and noted further progress will be made in the coming weeks with plans progressing for Urgent Care Centres at Omagh and Altnagelvin Hospitals, the introduction of a Phone First service at the Causeway Hospital on 17th November which will be followed by Craigavon and Antrim Hospitals.

All areas are developing a range of existing and new rapid access and ambulatory pathways to schedule unscheduled care. In addition an enhanced service for clinical and medical input to care homes will commence on 16th November. Further work is ongoing to progress actions on both ambulance arrival and handover, and timely discharge from hospital.

Finally, the Board received an updated paper on the position of PPE stock levels.

I trust that you find this update helpful and I look forward to our continuing discussion on the vitally important work of rebuilding HSC services in the weeks and months ahead.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robin Swann', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robin Swann MLA
Minister for Health

