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Deputy Rob Ward
Chairman, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel
Scrutiny Office
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14 May 2020

Dear Deputy Ward,

Questions prior to the Quarterly Hearing 15 May 2020

Please see the below answers to the questions posed by the Panel ahead of our quarterly hearing tomorrow.

Schooling for children attending school during lockdown

1. What are the procedures in place regarding Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the staff working in schools where the children are attending?

As a department we continue to be guided by the GoJ medical advice, which is largely aligned to that of Public Health England and PPE is not currently recommended for all schools. PPE is currently provided for staff at Mont a L'Abbe School only, where we have children with complex needs. Some schools are sourcing and providing cloth masks for their staff.

PPE procedures will be reviewed as part of our safe exit strategy. Should the advice change and result in schools' staff requiring more extensive PPE it will be sourced from within the PPE Cell, as part of the current central Government of Jersey arrangements.

2. What additional health and safety guidelines, if any, are the staff following outside of the public guidelines that can be found on the Government of Jersey website?

School management teams and staff are kept up to date with all health and safety related guidelines and they follow the departments H&S policies and procedures. All schools have developed Coronavirus and potential loss of services risk assessments covering such areas as:

- A member of staff/student develops symptoms who may have been exposed to other staff/students.
- The number of teaching and support staff significantly reduced because of a 14-day quarantine.
- The staff teaching and supervision of students.
- Cover during break and lunch time.

This list is not exhaustive.

Cleaning regimes have been reviewed, adapted and extended. Social distancing guidelines are being followed, reinforced with signage in the schools and by teachers as a matter of course.

The Group Director of Education sends out a weekly communication to all schools, which includes mandatory and statutory requirements such as legionella and flushing regimes.

As a department we are directed to follow the Government of Jersey's comprehensive guidelines.

Students returning from a university from outside of Jersey

3. Is any support being offered or considered to help students that have returned to Jersey from university who have left their belongings behind in university accommodation?

Restrictions are in the process of being eased with the flights now running to and from the Island. These will be expanded to include "for educational purposes", which will include students travelling to collect their belongings.

4. Some university accommodation has offered to waiver or reimburse part of a student's rental due to the Covid-19 crisis if the student is no longer staying in the accommodation (has returned to Jersey). This is only permissible on the condition that their belongings are removed from the accommodation by an issued deadline.

What support is offered to students who are unable to fulfil this prerequisite due to the restrictions in place?

Restrictions are in the process of being eased with the flights now running to and from the Island. These will be expanded to include "for educational purposes", which will include students travelling to collect their belongings.

Do you know how many students are in this situation?

The maximum number of registered off island students who could be affected is 1158. The actual number of students may be higher, due to an unknown number of students who do not register with student finance.

Is the department in contact with the university students who have had to return to discuss any logistical or practical issues that they may be facing?

The department has responded to any queries that have been received and will continue to answer any future questions as appropriate. Some of the questions will be answered by the FAQ sheet for student finance, which will be updated as required.

5. Many university students have come back to Jersey on short notice and have not completed their course for the year. Students may be feeling anxious and uncertain for their futures.

Are university students being supported with regards to their wellbeing at this time?

The gov.je website has been updated with all of the support available for wellbeing. Students should also have access to their institutes' support

Is the department in contact with students to discuss any concerns they may have?

The department has responded to any queries that have been received and will continue to answer any future questions as appropriate. Some of the questions will be answered by the FAQ sheet for student finance, which will be updated as required.

Where can students go to access support, and how is this being communicated?

The department is using the GoJ channels to get information out to islanders, students can access mental health support at the Listening Lounge, Mind Jersey, Samaritans, Macmillan and Youth Enquiry Service.

Testing for Covid-19

6. As testing is increased, are school staff, caring for the children of essential workers, prioritised for testing.

7. How do school staff form part of the testing scheme as testing is increased?

In addition to increased testing on demand for islanders with the symptoms of Coronavirus, the Scientific Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) has agreed a programme of proactive testing for key groups of people. The first phase of proactive testing will take place over the next three to four weeks.

We are already testing all of our hospital inpatients, and the proposed programme will include testing of all of our carehome residents.

Certain groups of essential workers have been identified for the first phase of testing, based on the likelihood that they have been exposed to Coronavirus. Patient facing health and care workers in all settings, including hospital, care homes, ambulance, hospice, family nursing and home care workers will be prioritised. Hospital and care home staff screening has already commenced.

Other groups of essential workers including police, fire and prison officers, allied health and social care workers, customs and immigration and funeral directors, will also be tested in the first phase of the programme. Testing for school staff, particularly those who are caring for the children of essential workers, is currently under review for inclusion in this first phase.

Individuals within all of these groups will be prioritised in order, focussing on those who are currently in work and in direct contact with other people. The prioritisation within each group will also be determined by a series of logistical and service management issues to ensure workforce capacity is maintained.

A constant review of the distribution and connections between positive cases will continue to inform the prioritisation of different workers. The programme of work may be amended if the distribution pattern of cases indicates it more appropriate to prioritise a different group.

In addition, demand-led testing, including contact tracing, will always have priority over proactive testing since this is a principal element of a safe exit and therefore the programme of proactive testing may vary from any anticipated schedule due to an increase in symptomatic cases.

The Scientific Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) will continue to consider future testing priorities in the coming weeks, reflecting on the performance of the testing programme and the nature and pattern of infection in Jersey.

Charities that support education

8. The Panel is concerned that charities that support education may be struggling at this time due to decreased activity and support. Additionally, some have had their grants reduced.

Is financial support available to these charities?

Charities are eligible for financial support under the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme – Phase 2 (as detailed below).

Government of Jersey COVID-19 Co-Funded Payroll Scheme [extract]

Phase 2: 1 April 2020 – 30 June 2020

Guidance Version 1 – published 24 April 2020

Eligibility of Charities

51. Charities registered in Jersey which employ paid staff are eligible for payroll support under Phase 2 of the scheme. However, Charities will still be required to confirm Material Detriment, which in the case of a Charity, will for the purpose of the scheme mean that its donation, grant or other income has dropped by at least 30% during the qualifying month, when compared to a previous comparable month.

52. If a Charity applies and is granted payroll support, this information will be shared with Government Departments administering other grants and support to Charities to assist in their decision making. The term Charity/Charities is interchangeable with the term business for the purpose of this guidance.

Could their grants be increased to cover their shortfall?

Consequently no additional review of grants is being undertaken for 2020.

The strategic commissioning team have initiated conversations with some of the charities supporting CYPES to determine operating and funding models for 2021.

Health and wellbeing of children

9. School nurses play a vital role in promoting child health in schools. The vaccination program and the collection of data occur within schools and is communicated via school nurses through schools.

Are school nurses continuing to work with schools or have they been redeployed at this time?

School Nurses continue to deliver a School Nurse Service and are not currently redeployed to any other area.

Are there any vaccination programs due to take place in schools during this period that is now not happening because of the crisis? If so, are they still taking place outside of schools?

The Year 9 Teenage Booster was delivered in January 2020 and the first Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination to year 8's was delivered in September/October 2019.

The second dose HPV was due to be delivered in May 2020 but has been deferred in line with NHS England Guidance that it is safe to defer it for a few months as most children are now not in schools.

Advice from NHS England is constantly being reviewed and should schools reopen before the end of this academic year, resource and opportunity present themselves; then the school nurses will deliver during that period. If not, then the current plan is to deliver the second dose in September 2020.

Non-scheduled immunisations for children with missing immunisations has continued during this period. The uptake has been good and as demand continues FNHC have planned a fortnightly appointed clinic which will 'step up' to weekly, if required.

How can students access these vaccinations under the current circumstances?

Children missing immunisations are identified by the Immunisation Specialist Nurse in Health and Community Services (HCS) and Family Nursing and Home Care (FNHC) School Nurses. They are asked to attend an appointment which follows appropriate risk assessment procedures for staff, young people and parents/carers. This is discussed in detail with families before they attend. Pathways Child and Family Centre is used as the venue for this offer.

How is the communication going out to parents if it is not going via the school nurse and schools?

Delayed HPV Vaccine second dose communication

An Immunisation Specialist Nurse has provided a letter to all schools to send on to the families in year 8 advising them that, 'If circumstances do not permit the current Year 8 pupils to be given their second dose of HPV vaccine this academic year, the vaccination will be given in September, at the beginning of the new academic year'. Parents/Carers will be informed of the new vaccination date by email, before nurses go into school.

Non-scheduled immunisations catch up

This is a process already in place and works well across the Immunisation Specialist Nurse in Government and the FNHC School Nursing Team. Families of young people that have missed the Year 9 Teenage Booster (January 2020) and the first HPV in (Sep/Oct 2019) are being contacted and being offered catch up clinics as before.

10. During the regular school day, teachers have the opportunity to see and speak to students. They have a vital role in identifying and monitoring issues or concerns regarding a child's wellbeing and health.

The Panel is aware that structures are in place to ensure the wellbeing of vulnerable children at this time. However, how is the wellbeing of children not in the vulnerable category monitored outside of the regular school environment (since teachers do not have the same contact with their students as they usually have in the classroom)?

Schools are in contact with pupils and students on a weekly basis. This entails either email, phone or through the various online platforms that are currently being used. For instance, teachers can speak to children through a platform such as Teams or Google Classrooms.

11. During the crisis, how is the promotion of child health taking place?

The promotion of child health is carried out by a number of agencies in Jersey including Family Nursing and Homecare (FNHC), Government and primary care (including GPs). All agencies are working differently at the moment as we adapt to the Coronavirus pandemic.

For many agencies this means that they are not able to see children and families in the way they used to, such as face to face. However, work has progressed at pace to ensure that children's health is still being prioritised and promoted this includes;

Universal support

Antenatal and new birth contacts are continuing to run via midwifery and health visiting and the Baby Steps perinatal parent education programme continues.

Health Visitors are running a "Virtual Child Health Clinic" from Monday to Friday, so parents can call or email the Health Visitors for advice, reassurance and support. This service runs from 9 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday and can be contacted on 443674 or enquiries@fnhc.org.je Breastfeeding support continues with a specialist health visitor.

GP's are continuing to offer infant check-ups and infant and preschool immunisations and appointments for childhood illnesses.

Immunisation 'catch up' clinics are running as usual, with the school nurses running them wearing appropriate PPE to provide as safe an environment as possible for the children and parents they're seeing. Whole year immunisations are currently suspended, however, we will take the next opportunity to deliver that presents.

FNHC and the Government of Jersey colleagues have developed a child health guide for parents which indicates when parents might need to seek medical help for their child. You can see it here on FNHC's website: <https://www.fnhc.org.je/media/43269/covid19-adviceforparentsposterjerseyfinal.pdf>

General physical activity and healthcare is being promoted in the wellbeing campaign work being undertaken across government. The attached leaflet which is about to go out to all people's homes encapsulates some of the signposting and advice. This has been branded under the connect me banner so as to create a single point of support that islanders already recognise.

A new Learning at Home website has been created, this covers a range of wellbeing resources for children, young people and parents on how to study well at home and look after your wellbeing. Further information can be found on www.learningathome.gov.je

Targeted Support

Communication across all health sectors is maintained via the Paediatric Liaison Health Visitor, who is part of the new multi-agency Child and Family Hub. The Hub provides advice, information, support and triage for all children and family matters. Agencies have been working together to proactively identify the most vulnerable families, each family is identified a Lead Professional who is in regular contact with the family. If they have an overriding health vulnerability the appropriate practitioner such as GP, Paediatrician, Health Visitor or CAMHS worker will be in regular contact providing advice, guidance and support.

A new Educational Psychology and Wellbeing telephone consultation line is open for parents and carers to discuss concerns and issues with regard to a child's or young person's learning or social and emotional well-being. The Consultation line is open from 10.00-1400, Monday – Friday during term time. CAMHS services continue to remain open with access via the CAMHS Duty inbox and referral line.

The Youth Enquiry Service (YES) has increased its helpline and counselling service for 14-25 year olds to 7 days per week. 12-8pm. In addition they also run a targeted walk and talk service (mindful of the 2m rule) to support young people that need face to face.

Health Safeguarding meetings continue to be chaired by the Designated Doctor for Safeguarding and all relevant agencies continue to attend multidisciplinary team meetings including Team Around the Child meetings. The FNHC Looked After Childrens Nurse continues to prioritise initial health assessments for children coming into care along with the Paediatrician Medical Advisor. These are both virtual and face to face, as required.

Childrens Community Nurse Team (paediatric nurses and paediatric care workers) continue business as usual, visiting where appropriate and virtually where not indicated. This includes the Children's Palliative Care Pathway.

I look forward to meeting with you and the Panel on Friday.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tracey Vallois', with a horizontal line underneath.

Senator Tracey Vallois
Minister for Education

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