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21 April 2020

#### **PPE SOCIAL CARE DISTRIBUTION**

Thank you for your letter of 13 April regarding the distribution of PPE to social care staff.

I would like to assure you that the First Minister and I are absolutely clear on the need to get PPE to social care staff so that they can continue to safely provide care and support for people who are often extremely vulnerable.

I recognise and hugely appreciate the dedication of everyone in the care sector and ensuring those staff are protected is a priority for me.

As you know, I have taken the decision to ask NHS National Services Scotland to provide a one-off top up of supplies to all care homes in Scotland. That top up will provide at least one week's supply of aprons, fluid resistant surgical masks and gloves.

My hope is that should also allow time for care homes to work on sourcing their own stock. However, I appreciate the difficulty that social care providers are facing when trying to access PPE against significant global demand.

That is why I want to assure you that we are also working closely with COSLA to ensure the existing service provided by the local hubs is working as efficiently as possible. NSS has been urgently reviewing the operation of the hubs and you should see improvements across the hubs over the next few days.

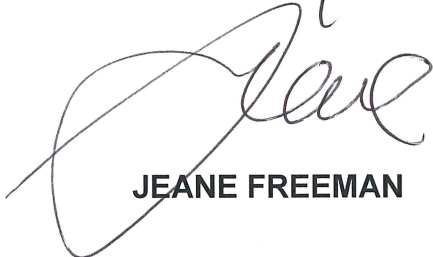
I hope that you are assured by my decision to begin a direct delivery to care homes. I should also stress that we will continue to closely monitor the supply and distribution of PPE to social care workers and will take action where necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff.

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I would like to thank you both for your continued hard work on behalf of your member organisations.

*Kind regards*  
  
**JEANE FREEMAN**

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