

Gateway reference: 12360
5 August 2009

To: Social Care Reference Group
CC: Directors of Adult Social Services

Dear Colleague

As you may be aware, I have recently been appointed as National Director, Social Care Flu Resilience. In my new role, I will be working closely with Professor Lindsey Davies, National Director Pandemic Preparedness, and Ian Dalton, National Director NHS Flu Resilience. I will be concentrating my efforts on supporting social care by working to:

- Build capacity and resilience across all sectors
- Ensure we are working closely with health colleagues nationally, regionally and locally to increase readiness
- Ensure leadership and direction is given to all those involved in the management and delivery of social care during the pandemic
- Make sure that adult and children's services are working together

Since taking up my post three weeks ago, I have had the opportunity to hear from a number of you. In particular I have met with groups of providers in Essex and West Sussex and I attended a gathering of local authority councillors from across England at a local authority event in Birmingham.

I have had discussions with senior staff from the English Community Care Association (ECCA) and the United Kingdom Home Care Association (UKHCA) as well as the President of the Association of Directors of Adult Services (ADASS) and I have made contact with the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and representatives from the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

During this time I have heard of and seen some excellent examples of good practice and I am aware of, and grateful for, the efforts many of you have put into ensuring the preparedness of social care to meet the challenges of the current swine flu pandemic.

If you are not doing so already now really is the time to be revisiting your pandemic flu plans and reviewing the guidance to ensure you, and those you work with, are doing as much as possible to respond to the current swine flu pandemic.

I, in turn, am working with a number of colleagues to make sure there are robust reporting arrangements in place for social care. My intention is to build on what already exists but in particular to reveal where we face particular challenges as we head into the autumn.

I am also pleased to be able to confirm that a further delivery of facemasks for social care workers was made to PCT's in mid July and a third delivery will be made in August. It is important that we recognise that numbers of masks are still limited and that is why we have asked Directors of Adult Social Services to make arrangements for the onward distribution of facemasks to all sectors of front-line social care staff currently in direct contact with people who are symptomatic for swine flu. Please ensure that facemasks are used appropriately and for reference the policy is covered in module 4 of the 9 modules of the social care tools and implementation, which can be found on the DH website at www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_093380

We hope to have some vaccine for the virus ready for use in the autumn and while decisions are still to be made around priority groups this will further strengthen our ability to respond to the pandemic. I anticipate that frontline staff will be considered alongside other high priority groups in order to protect them, their families and their patients.

And finally, I recently met with Phil Hope MP, Minister of State for Care Services, and he was very keen that I passed on his thanks to you for the efforts you have made to prepare social care for the challenges ahead. I would like to add my thanks as well.

If you would like to contact me please email me at the address below. I am keen to hear about both the challenges and the issues you face as well as your examples of good practice.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Roy Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

ROY TAYLOR

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