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To: Trust procurement directors

Copy to:  
Chief financial officers  
Regional directors

1 May 2020

Dear colleague

This letter is to update you on how, with your ongoing support, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and cross-government colleagues are seeking to distribute supplies, including PPE and a number of clinical and non-clinical consumables, distributed where they are most needed throughout the country.

NHS staff working in procurement are among the many critically important colleagues in the battle against COVID-19. Thank you for all you are doing to support the health of our staff and nation.

We are grateful for at the many examples, across the country, of NHS procurement teams working together to pool efforts and resources – including recently teams from Guy's and St Thomas', Royal Free, King's, Leeds Teaching Hospitals and Royal Surrey – as well as the many trusts that have mutually assisted one another.

### [National procurement of critical supplies](#)

**Annex A sets out the items currently managed nationally** across the four nations through a procurement team comprising hundreds of colleagues from the Government's commercial function and other government departments. In addition, NHS Supply Chain teams continue to buy through their existing supplier relationships.

The global demand for PPE and other supplies is unprecedented. Therefore, **it is vital that the UK Government procures items nationally, rather than individual NHS organisations compete with each other for the same supplies**, to protect the health of NHS staff and patients across the whole country.

The cross-Government team is keen to work jointly with you to review procurement lists and to understand your market intelligence to see where aligned national procurement is helpful now as well as to monitor the evolving situation. Heads of procurement from a number of NHS trusts will help provide this insight. More information on this will be shared in due course.

### Local procurement of critical supplies

Details of any significant procurement already in progress of the items listed in Annex A should be flagged to these heads of procurement. The national team can help you to conclude the deal, reimburse you, and manage the products through the national stocks. Several trust procurement teams have already worked with national colleagues, in the interests of the whole NHS, to complete these kinds of deals successfully and we are enormously grateful for their help.

Local procurement of other supplies (those not in Annex A) can continue as normal.

Some of you may be working with new small, local suppliers or with goods that have been donated. **This does not conflict with national procurement** and we are grateful for your continued efforts to manage these local relationships. Please signpost to the relevant national contacts when appropriate – for example, where manufacturers may be able to scale up production to support national efforts. Of course, in doing so you will be working with the relevant agencies to ensure products are passed for use in the relevant clinical setting. If there are challenges getting products reviewed or approved, please contact the national team via the heads of procurement for assistance.

### Central in-bound stock management

Colleagues from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Trade continue to bring equipment to the UK with due speed. To do so, they confirm departure of equipment from other countries. To improve accuracy and visibility of all equipment arriving in the UK, the cross-Government team are working with the logistics suppliers to ensure all in-bound stock destined for the NHS is identified as it arrives.

A standard operating procedure for the management of all critical stock arriving into the country is in place. It covers how stock purchased for individual NHS trusts will be processed and issued. This process will be shared with trusts via the regional teams. A national allocation process has been in place for ventilators and associated goods for the last six weeks. Currently a 'push' model is in place for PPE, which has

different requirements than high end medical devices. When certain stocks are under less demand and pressure, they will be removed from the national allocation process – as has been the case with some items of medical equipment over the last week.

On ICU consumables a separate process is in development, which will ensure trusts can continue to order on their own behalf, with a cross-check happening nationally to ensure orders are within reasonable expectations. Any changes or restrictions on ordering will only be made after discussion between trusts and regional or national leads.

### National PPE manufacturing efforts

Alongside buying from existing suppliers, the 'Make' cross-government team continues to work hard with companies to manufacture PPE and other essential equipment. This programme is being led nationally by Lord Deighton.

Currently the team is working with around 170 different companies, 17 of whom are already in contractual agreements. For example, Ineos is making hand sanitiser, Rolls-Royce and Survitec are making gowns.

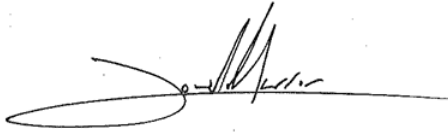
The cross government team would also like to engage local teams to work with manufacturers that are signed up through national work to make goods for the NHS. They will be in touch in the near future to ask for support.

### Staying aligned

For items managed nationally, we are rolling out a data collection process which will help regions to ensure deliveries are focused on trusts who need them most. This will also help support mutual aid. Further details will be shared imminently.

Thank you for your ongoing exceptional efforts in these difficult times. Please send any feedback regarding the national procurement process to your regional teams.

**Kind regards**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Marron', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

**Jonathan Marron**

**Director General, PPE and Public Health,  
Department of Health and Social Care**

**SRO for PPE policy**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Emily Lawson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Emily Lawson**

**Chief Commercial Officer**

## Annex A

### **Nationally sourced item list**

- Personal protective equipment
- Mechanical ventilators
- Bilevel / Non invasive ventilators
- CPAP devices
- Oxygen concentrators
- Video laryngoscopes – reusable and single use
- Bronchoscopes
- Ultrasounds
- Patient monitors
- CT scanners
- Mobile X-ray
- Portable suction pumps
- Enteral feed pumps (and associated consumables)
- Syringe drivers
- Volumetric pumps
- Blood gas analysers

### **Renal Replacement Therapy equipment being procured on behalf of England**

- Continuous renal replacement therapy machines
- Ambulatory peritoneal dialysis machines
- Reverse Osmosis machines