

The PPE Demand & Strategy team at the Department of Health and Social Care is looking at the use of PPE across the social care sector in order to get a better idea of the historic and current financial costs, as well as demand for PPE and so inform planning to meet those needs and prepare for different circumstances that may arise in the future.

We know that many across the sector have already provided information on use of PPE as well as stocks and supplies in response to requests from both DHSC and CQC. This has been invaluable in estimating future PPE needs and assess the resilience of the supply network in different situations (such as a severe winter flu outbreak). This continues to inform our plans and actions to maintain a robust PPE supply network through the coming autumn and winter. We are extremely grateful to all who have helped so far. We now need to extend our work to factor in expenditure on PPE and the impact this has had, compared to historic levels, and would like to ask for your further help in developing a more accurate understanding of the PPE needs, both financial and in volume terms, of the social care sector. This will give us additional insight into the strain of PPE demand by comparing spending on PPE and volumes supplied (and through this price and use) before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. Through this we will be better placed to take realistic, practical steps to ensure PPE supply in the future.

We would like to collect information from a large number of care homes and providers of home care on PPE purchases for two recent months and where this has been purchased from, and similar information from shortly before the Covid-19 pandemic. We understand that this is potentially sensitive information, and your participation is entirely voluntary. We do not need to identify individuals and there is no need to provide names or other identifiers. Anything provided will be anonymised and used only to calculate total sector usages and identify main UK PPE suppliers. In addition, we understand that some will have long term arrangements or contracts with suppliers. If these include provisions about confidentiality or sharing information, please respect these and do not send material that is covered by these provisions.

We should also make clear that we are looking at demand for PPE and supply routes. Invoice information provides a convenient way to do this but should not be taken to suggest that we are considering reimbursement of costs.

Request:

Extracted information from invoices for all PPE purchases, from all sources, for the periods:

1 October 2019 – 31 October 2019

Any two-month period between 1 May 2020 and 31 July 2020.

These two periods will allow a comparison of expenditure and supplies shortly before the Covid-19 pandemic and now. October 2019 has no special significance other than being before the Covid-19 pandemic began and so if information is not available for this month then please substitute any recent pre-pandemic month.

Please complete the information for as many services as possible under your control, in groups or individually. We only require information pertaining to core PPE items, i.e. Masks by type, gloves and aprons. A template is provided in the attached Excel spreadsheet which we hope will facilitate the collection of this information.

Please input the requested data from each of your invoices for the relevant periods. If only partial information can be provided, please leave the additional columns blank and enter just the available information.

Please return completed spreadsheets to ppefuturedemand@dhsc.gov.uk by Friday 7 August 2020.

We appreciate that some may not have the very short time available to do this. If it would be easier, those responding are welcome to send scanned copies of relevant invoices to the mailbox given above and we will extract the information. We recognise that invoices may include a range of information some of which will not be relevant to this request – please blank out anything that you do not wish us to see. In this case please include in the email the numbers of beds providing personal care, number of beds providing nursing care or numbers of people for whom you provide care at home as appropriate.