

**From the Chief Medical Officer
Dr Michael McBride**



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Máinnystrie O Poustie

www.health-ni.gov.uk

HSS(MD) 9/2020

For Action:

Chief Executives of HSC Trusts

GP Medical Advisers, Health and Social Care Board

All General Practitioners and GP Locums (for onward distribution to practice staff)

Director of Integrated Care, Health and Social Care Board

Assistant Director of Pharmacy and Medicines

Management, Health and Social Care Board (for onward distribution to Community Pharmacies)

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Our Ref: HSS(MD) 9/2020

Date: 28 February 2020

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FULL CIRCULATION LIST

Dear Colleague

COVID-19 BECOMES A NOTIFIABLE DISEASE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Action required

Chief Executives must ensure that this information is drawn to the attention of all clinical staff to enable them to respond accordingly.

The HSCB must ensure that this information is cascaded to all General Practitioners and OOH facilities immediately.

1. The Public Health Act (Northern Ireland) 1967 has been amended to make coronavirus disease (COVID-19) a notifiable disease. The changes come into effect on 29 February 2020.
2. The Department has made The Public Health Notifiable Diseases Order (Northern Ireland) 2020 under powers conferred by section 1(2) of the Public Health Act (Northern Ireland) 1967. The Statutory Rule is subject to negative resolution procedure before the Assembly.
3. The Statutory Rule will mean that medical practitioners are required to share patient information with the Director of Public Health if they become aware, or have reasonable grounds for suspecting, that a person they are attending has coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

4. The Director of Public Health and the Public Health Agency have a range of powers available in relation to notifiable diseases by virtue of the provisions of the [Public Health Act \(Northern Ireland\) 1967](#).

Yours sincerely



DR MICHAEL McBRIDE
Chief Medical Officer

Circulation List

Executive Medical Director/Director of Public Health, Public Health Agency (for onward distribution to all relevant staff)

Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency

Directors of Pharmacy HSC Trusts

Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB

Family Practitioner Service Leads, Health and Social Care Board (for cascade to GP Out of Hours services)

Medical Directors, HSC Trusts (for onward distribution to all Consultants, gynaecology, hepatology, A&E staff, hospital pharmacy, and sexual health/family planning centres)

Nursing Directors, HSC Trusts (for onward distribution to all Community Nurses, and Midwives)

RQIA (for onward transmission to all independent providers including independent hospitals)

Medicines Management Pharmacists, HSC Board (for cascade to prescribing advisers)

Regional Medicines Information Service, Belfast HSC Trust

Regional Pharmaceutical Procurement Service, Northern HSC Trust

Professor Donna Fitzsimons, Head of School of Nursing and Midwifery QUB

Professor Sonja McIlfratrick, Head of School of Nursing, University of Ulster

Caroline Lee, CEC

Donna Gallagher, Open University

Professor Paul McCarron, Head of School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, UU

Professor Carmel Hughes, Head of School, School of Pharmacy, QUB

Professor Colin Adair, Director of the NI Centre for Pharmacy Learning and Development, QUB

This letter is available on the Department of Health website at <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/professional-medical-and-environmental-health-advice/hssmd-letters-and-urgent-communications>