



The Rt Hon Matt Hancock,
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care,
Department of Health and Social Care,
39 Victoria Street
London,
SW1H 0EU

29th April 2020.

Dear Secretary of State,

Personal Protective Equipment for our members.

I am writing to you on behalf of the members of the UK Association of Forensic Nurses and Paramedics who are providing the highest quality of healthcare to those in Sexual Assault Referral Centres and Police Custody Suites across the UK. In particular due to the issues being raised around PPE.

We are a professional body who represent Nurses and Paramedics who work in either Police Custody and Sexual Assault Referral Centres. As such our membership is predominantly outside of NHS employment, although our services are generally commissioned by NHS England along-side Police Commissioners across the country.

We are completely aware and understanding of the intensely difficult and stressful times both the NHS and the Government are experiencing currently however it would be completely remiss of UKAFN not to raise the issues being experienced by our members, who are frontline healthcare workers.

Our members, through the daily course of their roles are dealing with many vulnerable people, the homeless who are not able to self-isolate, substance misusers who have many wider vulnerabilities, victims of sexual and domestic abuse, offenders under the Road Traffic Act who require bloods. Our police custody members are required to attend hospital Accident and Emergency departments to take blood, being potentially exposed to CV-19 and yet reports of shortages in adequate PPE are reaching us.

Our custody colleagues predominantly, but not exclusively, work for private providers who fall outside the NHS, precluding them from accessing the NHS Supply Chain. Married with the fact that their normal suppliers have been mandated, quite rightly, to supply the NHS this leaves our members and their employers in a vulnerable and precarious situation in relation to PPE stocks. Although the SARC's do fall into the NHS and CQC remit our members tell me that despite being under the NHS umbrella it has not aided them significantly in the PPE quest.

Our members are putting themselves at risk daily by continuing to perform their roles to the highest standard, but worry and anxiety for their own health and the potential transmission

to their families weighs heavy and could be alleviated significantly by ensuring they have suitable PPE to carry out their duties.

I believe you will be aware of our Paramedic members as their professional body the College of Paramedics wrote to you on this matter in March. As organisations we work collaboratively and they also support our plea to yourself for help in ensuring and acknowledging our members are in the consciousness of the Government and helping and advising us in the quest to access the essential equipment required to continue delivering our healthcare services in these uncertain and difficult times.

Yours sincerely.



Jennie Smith, RGN, MSc, ASET, PG Cert, UCPPD Forensics.
UKAFN President.