



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health



To Directors of Public Health

1st May 2020

Dear colleagues

Thank you again for all the fantastic work that you and your team are doing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Joining up local, regional and national responses is essential, so we want to update you on the design work for the public health contact tracing operating model that is being undertaken at great pace and set out the thinking for future roles.

We are working to have the service operational in May and have set up a Design Working Group between PHE, UKCEHO Group, ADPH, LGA, FPH and SOLACE that is meeting twice a week to lead this work, which links into the wider testing and contact tracing programme led by the Department of Health and Social Care and includes the testing programme and NHS COVID-19 App.

The approach will bring together the assets of the local, regional and national elements of the public health system within a nation-wide operating model. Public health agencies in the four Home Nations are linked up on this work across the UK.

At the local level, local sector colleagues on the Design Working Group are working on the detail planning for both one and two-tier authority areas.

This includes linking across services into specific local COVID response arrangements, ensuring the service is inclusive and meets the needs of diverse local communities, interfaces with LRFs and ICSs/STPs and works with PHE in focusing on the most complex outbreaks, especially care homes. The local Director of Public Health plays the key leadership role at this level.

The regional level will focus on the mobilisation of a large workforce of health professionals and call handlers that is being recruited through the DHSC programme. ADPH regional networks will work with PHE regions on a footprint of nine areas across the country, including agreeing any sub-regional variations.

This will involve a lead DPH from the network working with the PHE regional director to establish this level. They will seek a named contact in each public health team, who will then link with the colleagues in their area, including in district councils.

At the national level, PHE is pulling together a co-ordinating team and local colleagues would be very welcome to join this through a secondment-type arrangement. This will run the Contact

Tracing and Advisory Service (CTAS) and produce and update the training materials, operating procedures and reports.

We will soon be looking for colleagues from local government and from PHE who will link the regional and national levels by providing professional expert points of contact to the health professional contact tracing workforce, and being part of the work to identify the response to local contact tracing priorities.

We have called these roles Contact Tracing Team Lead. They can be done through both home or local office working and we ideally want these to be full-time roles, but we would also be interested in exploring options for people doing this work alongside an adjustment in their day job. PHE would fund the employers of people undertaking these roles and we are working through the precise details next week.

Thus, we will be asking for colleagues from local government and other organisations to help with these public health roles, recognising that releasing staff needs to be agreed with the employer.

If you know of any health professionals who would like to join the team of contact tracers, NHS Professionals are recruiting to these roles and a micro-site to register interest will be available from Monday 4th May at <http://go.nhsp.uk/contact-tracer>

Please discuss this with your Chief Executives and colleagues. Also please channel your ideas, questions and suggestions through the ADPH network into the Design Working Group and we will keep you updated.

Thank you again for your help and we will update you again in a few days' time.

With best wishes

Handwritten signature of Richard Gleave in black ink.

Richard Gleave
Deputy Chief Executive
Public Health England

Handwritten signature of Jeanelle de Gruchy in black ink.

Jeanelle de Gruchy
President
Association of Directors of Public Health