31 March 2020

For the attention of: An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, TD; the Minister for Justice and Equality, Charles Flanagan, TD; the Minister for Health, Simon Harris, TD; the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government, Eoghan Murphy, TD; the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Regina Doherty; the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone; the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Paschal Donohoe, TD; the Minister of State with responsibility for equality, immigration and integration, David Stanton, TD; the Minister of State with special responsibility for disability issues, Finian McGrath; Dr Tony Holohan, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health; Paul Reid, Chief Executive Officer, Health Services Executive.

URGENT RE: SOCIAL DISTANCING AND DIRECT PROVISION

Dear Government representatives and State officials,

We are specialists spanning fields of health systems, public health, social policy, law, human rights, migration and racism.

We write to express our utmost concern that the State is continuing at this time to require large numbers of people seeking international protection to live in shared bedrooms, and to share sanitary and eating facilities, within the direct provision system. This has prevented many people from socially distancing according to Government advice, with the aim of avoiding contracting COVID-19 and avoiding passing the virus on to others while they may be asymptomatic.

Many direct provision centres are in rural locations. An outbreak of COVID-19 within a centre, where people have not been in a position to socially distance themselves from one another, could spread rapidly and create a cluster of cases which the local health system in any given location may be unable to manage. It is also important to note that a number of people living in direct provision centres work as care providers for others in the community.

In every region of Ireland at present there are unprecedented numbers of empty hotel rooms, student accommodation units and self-catering holiday accommodation units. We implore you to act now, to provide own-door accommodation and individualised access to sanitation and eating facilities to every family unit and single person in the international protection system, given that such action is practicable at this time. This matter is urgent, given that several cases of COVID-19 in direct provision centres have already been reported.

The small financial allowance provided to people seeking international protection (€29.80 per week for a child, and €38.80 per week for an adult) does not enable those living within the direct provision system to find alternative, private accommodation in order to socially distance themselves from others. On the other hand, in light of the scale of the emergency
socio-economic measures which the Government is putting in place for the rest of the Irish population at this time, it is reasonable to expect the Government also to invest in ensuring the safety of international protection applicants to the greatest extent practicable.

We note that the Government decided in the past few weeks to remove international protection applicants from emergency accommodation (which may have included hotels) into new direct provision centres. The rationale for this, according to the Minister for Justice and Equality, is that it is easier to communicate HSE advice to people when they are gathered together in direct provision centres. However, in our view, it is eminently possible to find ways to communicate with people while also ensuring that they are enabled to self-isolate in own-door accommodation.

The Minister for Justice and Equality has further stated that his Department has instructed each direct provision centre to create self-isolation facilities for use by those suspected to have COVID-19, and that the Department of Justice and Equality will pilot ‘off-site self-isolation’ for people suspected of having COVID-19.

There are two major flaws to this approach:

First, as per the HSE’s Guidance and the Government’s current instructions to the rest of the national population, social distancing from others before a person shows signs of infection with COVID-19 is necessary in order to prevent the spread of the virus - since COVID-19 can be transmitted by individuals who are not demonstrating or reporting symptoms.

Second, reports from residents suggest that at least some direct provision centres are creating self-isolation facilities which are manifestly inappropriate, in that they do not allow for physical distancing and provide no privacy for the patient in their illness or recovery.

We further note that the Deputy Secretary General of the Department of Justice and Equality wrote in the past few days to people living in direct provision centres to assure them that the Department is ‘actively sourcing new accommodation to reduce the numbers in some settings’. We urge the Government immediately to find as many private rooms as necessary to ensure that every family unit and every single person currently within the international protection system is able to socially distance from others. As mentioned above, the accommodation is available and this matter is now urgent.

The Government’s recently published guidance on ensuring an ethical approach to managing the crisis, An Ethical Framework for Decision-Making in a Pandemic, stresses that the implementation of public health measures should protect the interests of vulnerable populations and ensure that measures taken do not result in increased health inequalities. In other words, in a pandemic, public health measures must apply to all; every person must be able to benefit from public health support, with the assistance of the State if necessary.
We remind the Government that Article 2 and Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights continue to apply at this time. We are concerned that if the State does not take steps which are clearly practicable to ensure own-door accommodation for all single persons and family units in the international protection system, in order to allow them to socially distance from others in the same way as the national population generally is being instructed to do, it may find itself falling foul of these legal requirements. The threat to life from Coronavirus is known. The Government's position, based on public health expertise, is that social distancing (including of those who are not displaying symptoms of COVID-19) is necessary to reduce insofar as is possible the rate of transmission of the virus. Failing to act to enable international protection applicants, an extremely vulnerable group, to follow this public health advice may lead to unnecessary deaths. It is clear to us that the powerlessness of many people in direct provision to socially distance as per the Government's advice to the general population is already causing feelings of intense anxiety, humiliation and distress.

We acknowledge the enormous efforts that the Government and front line workers, including civil servants, have made in seeking to respond effectively to this global crisis within a limited timeframe. We hope that this letter will encourage further action to ensure that individuals living within direct provision are equally included within the Government's approach to safeguarding public health at this worrying time.

Yours sincerely,

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354. Elizabeth Steiner-Scott, Department of History, UCC
355. Dr. Reana Maier, Institute for Social Sciences in the 21st Century, University College Cork
356. John Hastings, Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, UCC
357. Dr Sara Leitao, National Perinatal Epidemiology Centre, UCC, Cork
358. Dr Sandra Duffy, Irish Centre for Human Rights, NUI Galway
359. Professor Maggie O'Neill, Sociology&Criminology, UCC
360. Dr. Eoin Daly, School of Law, NUI Galway
361. Dr Brenda Daly, School of Law & Government, DCU
362. Dr Jim Shanahan, School of English, DCU
363. Dr Siobhan O'Sullivan, School of Applied Social Studies, UCC
364. Dr Ulrike M Vieten, Queen's University Belfast
365. Bridget Carroll, UCC
366. Ann Lyons, Community Knowledge Initiative, NUI Galway
367. Dr John Cunningham, School of History and Philosophy, NUI Galway
368. Dr David Landy, Department of Sociology, Trinity College Dublin
369. Dr James Alexander Fraser -- Lecturer in English, NUI Maynooth
370. Prof Louise Alcock, School of Natural Sciences, NUI Galway
371. Dr. Joan McCarthy, Senior Lecturer Healthcare Ethics, School of Nursing and Midwifery, UCC
372. Dr. Gertrude Cotter, Lecturer Centre for Global Development UCC
373. Dr Judi Pettigrew, School of Allied Health, University of Limerick
374. Dr Jill O'Mahony, Waterford Institute of Technology
375. Dr. Cassie Smith-Christmas, Marie Sklodowska-Curie Action Fellow, NUI Galway
376. Jenna Harris, School of Theology, Philosophy and Music, DCU
377. Dr Ivar McGrath, School of History, University College Dublin
378. Dr. Rebecca Murphy, Lecturer, Department of Psychology, Maynooth University
379. Clare Daly MEP
380. Nicola Maxwell, School of Applied Social Studies, UCC
381. Solange Cullen, Researcher, Department of Food Business and Development, University College Cork
382. Professor Susan Smith, Department of General Practice, RCSI
383. Dr Harry Gijbels, Senior Lecturer, Retired) School of Nursing and Midwifery, University College Cork
384. Niall Duggan School of Society, Politics and Ethics UCC
385. Anne Fitzpatrick, School of Applied Psychology, UCC
386. Glen Guilfoyle, Social Policy, LIT
387. Dr Brid McGrath, GP & BCLF, University College Cork.
388. Professor Maurice Devlin, Head of Department of Applied Social Studies, Maynooth University
389. Dr Deirdre Flynn, Department of English Language and Literature, MIC Limerick
390. Prof Steve Hedley, School of Law, UCC
391. Dr. Fiona Murphy, Queen's University Belfast
392. Ross Pratt-O'Brien BL
393. Dr Deirdre Lundy ICGP Dept of Reproductive & Sexual Health
394. Dr Avril Kennan, CEO Health Research Charities Ireland
395. Dr Niamh O'Brien General Practitioner Galway & HSE West Drug Service
396. Dr Seán Hewitt, School of English, UCC
397. Berni Smyth, Chairperson of the Irish Refugee Council
398. Dr Anne Marie Power, School of Natural Sciences, NUIG
399. Aoife Crummy, PhD Scholar, School of Education, University College, Dublin
400. Dr Aoife Jackson, Discipline of General Practice, NUIG
401. Dr Deirdre O'Donnell, School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems, UCD
402. Dr. Jeneen Naji, Department of Media Studies, Maynooth University
403. Sarah Curristan, School of Law, Trinity College
404. Marcella Towler, School of Education, UCC
405. Dr Maria McNamara, School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences, UCC
406. Caroline Shore, School of Applied Social Studies, UCC
407. Dr Nikita Burke, School of Nursing and Midwifery, NUI Galway
408. Dr Mary Cooper general practitioner
409. Dr Stephen Lucek, School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, University College Dublin
410. Professor Michael Doherty, Dept of Law, Maynooth University
411. Yvonne Pennisi, Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, UCC
412. Sophie van der Valk, School of Law, Trinity College Dublin
413. Dr J M Mancini, Department of History, Maynooth University
414. Irene Murphy, Managing Director, Youth Work Ireland Galway
415. Dr Valerie Cummins, School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences, UCC
416. Prof. John O’ Brennan, Maynooth University.
417. Dr Marta Kempny, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, QUB
418. Julia Hull, Solicitor practitioner in International Protection
419. Assoc. Prof. Katherine O'Donnell, History of Ideas, UCD School of Philosophy
420. Albert Llussà, Solicitor, Daly Lynch Crowe & Morris Solicitors
421. Dr Máirtín Ó Maoláin, GP and Clinical Lecturer in General Practice, RCSI
422. Dr. David Mangan, School of Law, Maynooth University
423. Dr Joe Whelan, School of Applied Social Studies, University College Cork.
424. Claire Tadla, Information & Referral Service Coordinator, Irish Refugee Council
425. Colin Smith BL
426. Emma Hurley, postdoctoral researcher, UCC
427. Leah O Leary, Immigration Solicitor, Daly Lynch Crowe & Morris Solicitors, Dublin 2
428. Dr Ruth Dwyer, General Practitioner, Lucan
429. Brian Killoran, CEO, Immigrant Council of Ireland
430. Dr. Sarah Robinson, School of Applied Psychology, UCC
431. Dr Sile Creedon, School of Nursing and Midwifery, University College Cork
432. Michelle McDonagh, Law graduate
433. Dr. Riôna Ní Fhrighil, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, OÉ Gaillimh
434. Professor Brian Hughes, School of Psychology, NUI Galway
435. Dr Clíona Ó Gallchóir, School of English and Digital Humanities, UCC
436. Dr Brendan O’Shea, GP / Asst. Adj Prof in Public Health & Primary Care, Trinity College
437. Dr Danielle Kennan, UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, NUI Galway
438. Dr. Ursula Barry, Associate Professor, Senior Researcher with Gender Studies, UCD
439. Dr Angela Veale, School of Applied Psychology, UCC
440. Dr Helen Hynes, Lecturer, School of Medicine, UCC
441. Joseph S. Robinson, Department of Geography, Maynooth University
442. Laoighseach Ní Choistealbha, MA, human rights and poetry
443. Dr Amy Morgan MB Bch BAO MICGP GP Louth
444. Dr Lucy Kelly. General practitioner. Dublin
445. Sasha Brown, PhD candidate Geography, Maynooth University / Migration and asylum
446. Steven Loyal School of Sociology, UCD
447. Dr. Elaine Byrne, General Practitioner and CMO HSE West Drug Service
448. Dr Brian Kennedy GP Nenagh Co. Tipperary
449. Dr Vittorio Bufacchi, Department of Philosophy, UCC
450. Dr. Conor Linehan, School of Applied Psychology, UCC
451. Dr Anne Karhio, Moore Institute, NUI Galway
452. Christian van den Bosch, Environmental Research Institute, University College Cork
453. Dr Sinéad Feeney, General Practitioner
454. Dr Olga O’Mahony, Access Centre, NUI Galway
455. Dr Siobhan McDonagh GP Galway city
456. Dr Ciara Conlan, Infectious diseases registrar
457. Dr Mike Thompson, General Practice, Midleton
458. Dr Nirav J Mehta, medical doctor and immigrant
459. Dr Roisin Costello ,GP
460. Dr Cliona O’Carroll, School of Irish Learning, University College, Cork
461. Dr Liz Guerin General Practitioner
462. Dr. Colin Murphy, School of Engineering, UCC
463. Prof Pat Dolan UNESCO Chair School of Political Science and Sociology NUI Galway
464. Dr Paul Burgess. School of Applied Social Studies, UCC
465. Eoin Craven, Solicitor
466. Dr Aislinn Donovan  G.P.
467. Rose Garland, Asylum & Immigration Caseworker
468. Dr Emer Shortall General Practitioner
469. Dr Hilda Loughran, Sch. of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice, UCD
470. Larry Donnelly, School of Law, NUI Galway
471. Dr Hazel O’ Brien School Of Humanities Waterford Institute of Technology
472. Fionn Woodhouse, Department of Theatre, UCC
473. Dr Sheila Rochford, Assistant Programme Director, Cork GP Training Programme
474. Cian Power, MPH, Student Budgetary Advisor, University College Cork
475. Dr. Brenda Moran, GP & SMO GUM Clinic, South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital, Cork
476. Marita Hennessy PhD, College of Medicine and Health, UCC
477. Thomas O’Carroll- Acquisitions Section, UCC Library
478. Dr Karen Lynch-Shally, Department of Law, Maynooth University
479. Dr Méabh Ni Fhualráin, Centre for Irish Studies, NUI Galway
480. Dr. Daniel Savery, Access Centre, NUIG
481. Dr Mary Byrne, UCC
482. Colette O’Beirne, Department of External Affairs, DCU
483. Stephanie Hanlon, Social, Political and Community Studies, Carlow College, St. Patrick’s
484. Dr Eluned Lawlor. General Practitioner. Loughboy Medical Centre. Kilkenny
485. Dr Colm Kearns, School of Communications, Dublin City University
486. Neza Subic, PhD Candidate, School of Law, University College Dublin
487. Dr. Lucia Gannon. General Practitioner, Tipperary
488. Colum Foley, Open Education, Dublin City University
489. Brian O Connell, Chartered Physiotherapist, Cork
490. Karina Curley, Widening Participation, DCU
491. Glen Guilfoyle, Department of Applied Social Sciences, Limerick IT
492. Professor Claire Hamilton, Professor of Criminology, Maynooth University
493. Susan McLaughlin GP Cork City
494. Dr Cathy Banstead General Practitioner, Educator in General Practice.
495. Cara O’Mahony, Research Assistant, School of Law, UCC
496. Sharon Mc Ardle, School of Arts and Movement, DCU
497. Dr Suzanne Kelly, General Practitioner, Co. Cork
498. Dr. Brendan Flynn, Political Science & Sociology NUI Galway
499. Maureen O’Connor, University College Cork
500. Dr Aidan Doyle, School of Irish Learning, UCC
501. Dr Ebun Joseph, Royal College of Surgeons, Race Relations Consultant and Lecturer Black Studies
502. Dr. Ciara Murphy, General Practitioner
503. Dr Kathleen Ryan, School of Applied Psychology, UCC
504. Dr. Hilary Shallow, GP, Cork City
505. Breege Keenan, Crosscare Refugee Service
506. Prof. Don Ross, Head, School of Society, Politics, and Ethics, University College Cork
507. Christine Chasaide Adult Continuing Education UCC
508. Dr. Francesca Lorenzi, School of Policy and Practice, DCU
509. Prof Robbie Gilligan, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin
510. Dr Maitiu O Tuathail, GP, Dublin
511. Dr Clodhna McCullagh GP Dublin
512. Dr Maureen Kelly MB BCh BAO MICGP FRCGP PhD; Senior Lecturer in General Practice, NUI Galway
513. Dr. Éabha Ni Mhurchú, GP, Cork.
514. Dr Morgan Cawley Buckley, Lecturer, Social, Political and Community Studies, Carlow College, St. Patrick's
515. Dr Helena McKeague, Graduate Entry Medical School, UL
516. Gerry Dunne, Marino Institute of Education
517. Ciara Bourke MB, BCh, BAO, MICGP
518. Dr. Orla Ryan, Community Art and Media Studies, Institute of Technology, Carlow & Carlow College
519. Anita Finucane, Barrister
520. Dr. Aisling Quinn, General Practitioner
521. Dr. James Cuffe School of Society, Politics & Ethics, UCC
522. Dr. Conor Fanning GP, Ennis
523. Dr. Barbara Siller, Department of German, University College Cork
524. Dr. Adam Loughnane, Philosophy, UCC
525. Miriam Watchorn, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies, Dublin City University
526. Dr Derek Coyle, English Literature, Carlow College/St Patrick's
527. Lisa Ryan, Research Assistant, School of Public Health, UCC
528. Dr Margaret Steele, Department of Philosophy, UCC
529. Dr Annie Ó Breacháin, School of Arts Education and Movement, DCU
530. Jennifer Scholtz, Independent Researcher
531. Dr Colin Coulter, Department of Sociology, Maynooth University
532. Dr Marie-Annick Desplanques, Folklore and Ethnology, UCC
533. Catherine Donovan, Research Grants & Contracts, UCC
534. Dr. Mareese Murphy, GP, Laois
535. Dr Emer Nowlan, CEO Educate Together
536. Carmel Shortiss, School of Microbiology, UCC
537. Claire Jackson Law UCC
538. Killian O’Brien, School of Law, Trinity College Dublin
539. Dr. Niamh Gaynor, School of Law and Government, Dublin City University
540. Sheena McLoughlin, DCU Educational Trust, Dublin City University
541. Dr Shirley Martin, School of Applied Social Studies, UCC
542. Dr. Eilish Dillon, Maynooth University Department of International Development
543. Dr Orla Murphy, Digital Humanities, University College Cork
544. Dr Brid Ni Chonaill, School of Humanities, Technological University Dublin
545. Professor Louis de Paor, Centre for Irish Studies, NUI Galway
546. Dr Alessandro Salice, Department of Philosophy, University College Cork
547. Derick Mitchell CEO Irish Platform for Patient Organisations, Science and Industry
548. Dr Darius Whelan, School of Law, University College Cork
549. Professor Linda Connolly, Maynooth University
550. Dr Christine Linehan, Director UCD Centre for Disability Studies, UCD School of Psychology
551. Dr. Caitriona Dowd, School of Law and Government, DCU
552. Dr. Andrew Jackson, Sutherland School of Law, UCD
553. Dr. Gaël Le Roux, Lecturer, Community and Youth Development, TU Dublin
554. Dr. Ciara Greene, School of Psychology, UCD
555. Joanie Cousins. Lecturer. TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus.
556. Dr Nick Chisholm, Director, Centre for Global Development, UCC
557. Dr Briege Casey, Programme Coordinator, Certificate in Homeless Prevention, Dublin City University, Founding member of Nurses and Midwives for Inclusion Health Group
558. Helen Maher, Vice President, Carlow College St. Patrick's
559. Dr. Abina Crean, School of Pharmacy, University College Cork
560. Dr. Ciara Greene, School of Psychology, UCD
561. Joanie Cousins. Lecturer. TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus.
562. Dr Nick Chisholm, Director, Centre for Global Development, UCC
563. Helen Maher, Vice President, Carlow College St. Patrick's
564. Dr. Abina Crean, School of Pharmacy, University College Cork
565. Dr Bernie Grummell, Maynooth University
566. Dr Barbara O'Toole, Marino Institute of Education, Dublin
567. Dr Carmel Davies, School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems, University College Dublin.
568. Dr Nessa Cronin, Centre for Irish Studies, NUI Galway
569. Dr. Giovanni Baldassini, General Practitioner, Cork
570. Dr Gideon Fadiran, University College Cork
571. Dr Colm McLaughlin, Centre for Business and Society, University College Dublin
572. Prof. Edmond Byrne, Process & Chemical Engineering, University College Cork
573. Rosa M. Senent, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies, Dublin City University
574. Dr Fiona Monahan, GP, Medi-Group, Cathedral Road, Cork
575. Niamh Rooney, Lecturer, Dept. Of International Development, Maynooth University
576. Maria Kenneally, Humanities Lecturer, TU Dublin
577. Michael Sherman, Theology Lecturer in Arts & Humanities, Carlow College, St Patrick's
578. Ines Bento Coelho, Postdoctoral researcher, University College Cork
579. Sheila Coyle, School of Humanities, TUDublin Blanchardstown Campus
580. Sarah Hawes, National College of Ireland
581. Dr. Caroline West, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies, Dublin City University
582. Alan Titley, Emeritus Professor of Modern Irish, UCC
583. Professor Andy Prothero, UCD Centre for Business & Society (CeBaS)
584. Prof. Donna Marshall, UCD Centre for Business and Society, University College Dublin
585. Cillian Bracken, Barrister
586. Dr. Liam Norton, GP, Cork
587. Ryan Sebastian, Biomedical Engineer, Research Assistant, Tyndall National Institute
588. Sarah Jane Aberasturi, School of Applied Languages & Intercultural Studies, Dublin City University
589. Professor Lisa O'Malley, Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick
590. Dr Maura Adshead, Associate Professor, Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Limerick.
591. Dr Samantha Dockray, School of Applied Psychology, University College Cork
592. Angela Rickard Department of Education, Maynooth University
593. Dr. Siobhán Airey, UCD
594. Julie Daniel, Dublin City University
595. Professor Eilis Hennessy, School of Psychology, University College Dublin
596. John Brennan, Vice-President International Federation of Social Workers Europe and Vice-Chair, The Irish Association of Social Workers
597. Megan Vine, PhD researcher, Social and Community Psychology
598. Dr Rebecca Dennehy, College of Medicine and Health, UCC
599. Dr. Ciara O'Connell, Trinity College Dublin
600. Ass Prof Maura Adshead, School of Politics & Public Administration, University of Limerick
601. Dr Owen Worth, Department of Politics and Public Administration University of Limerick
602. Dr. Karol Laffan GP
603. Stephanie McDermott Equality & Diversity Carlow College St Patrick's
604. Angela Rickard, Department of Education, Maynooth University
605. Lorna Fitzpatrick, President, the Union of Students in Ireland
606. Dr Angela Flynn, School of Nursing and Midwifery, UCC.
607. Rebecca Jeffers, School of Applied Social Studies, UCC.
608. John Kissane, Tyndall Institute, UCC, Cork.
609. Kieran Allen, School of Sociology, UCD
610. Dr Ken Ó Donnchú, Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge, UCC
611. Professor Mairead Kiely, School of Food and Nutritional Sciences, University College Cork
612. Dr. Eoin O'Connor, Postdoctoral Researcher in Physics, NUI Galway
613. Deirdre Kearney, PhD candidate TCD, Behavioural Psychologist, Adult Disability Services
614. Michael Hofer-Robinson, Department of German, UCC
615. Elaine Feeney, National University of Ireland, Galway
616. Siobhra Aiken, Centre for Irish Studies/ Access Office, NUI Galway
617. Professor Neil Robinson, Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Limerick
618. Dr Joan Giller, Spirasi, Cork, psychotherapist
619. Heidi Schoenenberger, PhD researcher, NUI Galway
620. Dr Sibo Banda, Department of Law, Maynooth University.
621. Dr Thomas Laffan, GP; MB BCh BAO MICGP; Crumlin Medical Clinic, D12.
622. Dr Pat Bracken, Consultant Psychiatrist, Co Cork
623. Dr Aisling Ní Shúilleabhain, GP, Adjunct Asst Prof Primary Care, TCD
624. Professor Margaret Kelleher, School of English, Drama and Film, University College Dublin
625. Dr Maeve Houlihan, UCD Lochlann Quinn School of Business
627. Dr. Patrick Crowley, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, UCC
628. Dr Ciaran O'Halloran, GP
629. Dr Nuala Brady, School of Psychology, UCD
630. Dimitri Bettoni, School of Communications, DCU
631. Mary Cunniffe, Public Health Nurse(Social inclusion)
632. Niamh Osborne, Legal Executive, KOD Lyons Solicitors
633. Dr Sinéad Ring, Department of Law, Maynooth University.
634. Dr larfhlaith Watson, School of Sociology, University College Dublin
635. Dr Rachel Hilliard, School of Business & Economics, NUI Galway
636. Ciarán Doherty, Barrister
637. Jesse Jones, Technological University Dublin
638. Georgina Lawlor, School of Humanities, Technological University Dublin
639. Caroline Mangan, UCD Global, University College Dublin
640. Gearóidín McEvoy, PhD Candidate, School of Law and Government, Dublin City University
641. Dr. Sarah McLoughlin, Research Scientist, School of Biology and Environmental Science, UCD
642. Tony McGillicuddy BL, Law Library, Four Courts, Dublin 7
643. Dr. Elizabeth Kyte, Women's Studies, UCC
644. Amin Sharifi Isaloo - Sociology - UCC
645. Cathy McLoughlin, Head of DCU Access Service
646. Dr. Lisa Godson, School of Visual Culture, National College of Art and Design
647. Dr Kevin O'Sullivan, School of History & Philosophy, NUI Galway
648. Dr Clare O'Halloran, School of History, UCC
649. Dr. Peter Moran, School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences, UCC.
650. Maria Manning, PhD Researcher, UCC
651. Dr Penelope Muzanenhamo, UCD College of Business
652. Dr Eithne Heffernan, School of Medicine, NUI Galway
653. Dr Verena Commings, Centre for Irish Studies, NUI Galway
654. Grace O'Hara, UCD Volunteers Overseas, University College Dublin
655. Dr Ger McLaughlin GP Carrigtwohill Co Cork
656. Martina Hynan, PhD researcher, Centre for Irish Studies, NUI Galway
657. Professor John Geary, College of Business, UCD
658. Seána Glennon, PhD Candidate, School of Law, University College Dublin
659. Dr. Marcin Szczepanowski, School of Applied Psychology UCC
660. Hilary Minch, Manager, UCD Volunteers Overseas
661. Dr Sean Butler, Lecturer in Law, UCC
662. Dr. Fiona Sheridan, Discipline of Management, Cairnes Business School, NUIG
663. Dr Emma O’Cinneide, General Practitioner, Co. Offaly
664. Dr Iain Atack, International Peace Studies, TCD
665. Zoe Liston UCDVO
666. Dr Anna Beug, general practitioner, lecturer general practice UCD
667. Cathrina Gaffney, School of Psychology, UCD
668. Dr Dorota Szelewaw, Asst Prof in Social Justice, University College Dublin
669. Dr Ciara Smyth, School of Law, NUI Galway
670. Anne Ahern, Barrister, UCC Law Department
671. Dr Mary Barry General Practitioner
672. Seamus O'Halloran, Seamus O'Halloran S6
673. Sinead Dolan, St. Angela's College, Sligo, Access Officer
674. Teresa Buczowski, Integration Manager, Immigrant Council of Ireland
675. Dr. Matthew Cannon, Applied Social Sciences, Limerick Institute of Technology
676. Sarah Clancy, Community Worker
677. Valerie Connor, School of Media, Technological University Dublin City Campus
678. Dr Aisling McMahon, Department of Law, Maynooth University
679. Aoife Dillon, Registered Advanced Nurse Practitioner and member of Nurses and Midwives in Inclusion Health Group
680. Dr Valentia Paolucci, UCD School of Business
681. Sinead Dolan, Access Officer, St. Angela's college, Sligo
682. Dr David O'Connell, Edenpark Surgery
683. Dr. Katharina Swirak, Department of Sociology and Criminology, University College Cork
684. Liam Sunner, School of Law and Government, DCU
685. Dr. Siobhán Madden, Community Education and Research, Independent Scholar, Galway.
686. Dr. Mags Crean, Postdoctoral Researcher, University College Dublin
687. Dr Jim Harty, GP
688. Luke Field, Department of Government & Politics, University College Cork
689. Dr Tom Hickey, School of Law and Government, Dublin City University
   (Constitutional law)
690. Dr Mari Gleeson, GP
691. Jamie Canavan, PhD researcher, Dept. of History, NUI Galway
692. Dr Niamh Pattrick, School of English, Drama and Film, UCD
693. Elizabeth Murray, Immigration Consultant, Co. Mayo
694. Carmel Hennings, Department of Nursing, Health and Disability, St Angelas College, Sligo.
695. Dr Gillian Wylie, International Peace Studies, TCD
696. Professor Caroline McGregor, National University of Ireland Galway
697. Dr Rachel Hoare, Trinity College, Dublin and psychotherapist working with unaccompanied minors
698. Sarah Bowman, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin
699. Dr. Maria Dempsey Applied Psychology, UCC
700. Dr Claire Gillan, School of Psychology, Trinity College Dublin
701. Dr Kathy D’Arcy, Women's Studies, UCC
702. Grainne Mellon, Barrister
703. Dr Patrick Cadwell, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies, DCU
704. Dr Anne Neylon, School of Law and Social Justice, University of Liverpool
705. Dr Michelle D’Arcy, Department of Political Science, Trinity College Dublin
706. Dr Susie Donnelly, School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems, University College Dublin
707. Dr. Fintan Sheerin, Associate Professor in Intellectual Disability Nursing, School of Nursing & Midwifery, TCD
708. Dr Gordon Dalton, Senior Research Fellow, MaREI, UCC
709. Dr Cormac O’Brien, School of English, Drama and Film. University College Dublin
710. Dr Damian Gallagher UlsterUniversity Business School
711. James Heaney, Dept of Humanities Carlow College
712. James Mullan, School of MicroBiology, UCC,Cork.
713. Dr Frances Enright Consultant paediatrician si Community child Health Mercy university Hospital Cork
714. Dr Rory Mc Daid, Dept. of Policy and Practice, Marino Institute of Education
715. Dr Mike Murphy, School of Applied Psychology, UCC
716. Dr Adrian Grant, Lecturer in Policy, Ulster University
717. Pádraig Fhia Ó Mathúna, Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge, OÉG
718. Dr Aileen O'Carroll, Maynooth University,
719. Dr Maria Helen Murphy, Department of Law, Maynooth University
720. Dr Pablo Gracia, Department of Sociology, Trinity College Dublin
721. Katie Murphy Diabetes Nurse Facilitator Dept of General Practice UCC
722. Michael Quinlan, Solicitor and Director / Secretary, Nasc, the Migrant and Refugee Rights Centre
723. Dr Órla Ní Dhubhghaill, School of Chemistry, UCC
724. Margaret Ann Cusack Migration (Children)
725. Prof. Sheila Killian, University of Limerick
726. Madeline Boughton, Associate Professor, School of Communications, Dublin City University
727. Brian Hand, Artist and Head of Dept of Sculpture and Expanded Practice, NCAD
728. Julie O’Leary BL, Legal Manager, Nasc, Migrant and Refugee Rights Centre
729. Dr Mairead O’Connor, Research Fellow, School of Public Health, UCC
Bridging The Gap

730. Marcus Gatto, J.D., Boston University Study Abroad, Law and Ethics
731. Dr Patricia Kennedy, St Angela’s College, Sligo
732. Dr Catherine Ann Cullen, writer
733. Dr. Philomena McKenna, retired Anaesthetist, Galway
734. Liz Farsaci, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin
735. Mary Mac Nelis, retired teacher for visually impaired
736. Dr. Ciaran McCullagh, retired Sociology, UCC
737. Dr. Philomena McKenna, retired consultant anaesthetist, Galway. Bernadette D’Arcy.
738. Prof. Jonathan Stock, Department of Music, UCC
739. Aga Wiesyk, Communications, Irish Network Against Racism
740. Dr James M Smith, English Department, Boston College
741. Dominic Thorpe, Artist
742. Dr David Kinlen / GP Trainee, RCSI
743. Prof. Stephen Wilmer, School of Creative Arts, TCD Trinity College Dublin
744. Mary Cronin, Lecturer, School of Public Health, UCC
745. Dr Lorcan Sirr, Technological University Dublin
746. Norman Hagen, Employability Consultant, Ulster University
747. Dr Deirdre Rafferty, Consultant Paediatrician, Mercy University Hospital, Cork
748. Dr. Sinead Mitchell, NUI Galway School of Engineering
749. Dr Maria Parsons, IADT & TUI
750. Maebh Coleman, TU Dublin
751. Barbara Gormley, PhD Pandemic Communication, DCU
752. Dr Ruth Harris, Senior Lecturer in Humanities, TU Dublin
753. Dr Linda Moore, Senior Lecturer in Criminology, Ulster University
754. Dr Maria Parsons, English, Media and Cultural Studies, IADT, Trade Union Representative Teachers’ Union of Ireland (TUI)
755. Maura Kilfeather, International Student Advisor, St. Angela’s College, Sligo
756. Ciarán Ahern, Solicitor
757. Dr Tim Groenland, School of English, UCC
758. Rachel Lynch, MIACP & EUPATI FELLOW Accredited psychotherapist
759. Dr. Veronica Corcodel, Assistant Professor, School of Law and Government, Dublin City University
760. Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn, Health Promotion Research Centre, School of Health Sciences, NUI Galway
761. Dr Paul Candon, Independent researcher (Social Sci/Media), Co Dublin.
762. Carmel Geoghegan, Dementia Ireland
763. Dr Orfhlaith Ni Bhriain, Irish World Academy of music and dance, University of Limerick
764. Dr Fergus Lalor, Chemistry Dept., UCC (Rtd.)
765. Dr Maria Deiana, Queen’s University Belfast
766. Tony Ryan, Emeritus Professor, College of Medicine and Health, UCC
767. Michael Barron, Civil Society Consultant
768. Dr. Katie McElroy, General Practitioner, Kildare
769. Dr John McCabe, Geriatrics SpR Mater Hospital Dublin
770. Dr Fergus McAuliffe, School of Earth Sciences and iCRAE, University College Dublin
771. Prof Helen Phelan, Irish World Academy, University of Limerick
772. Dr Louise Forde, School of Law, UCC
773. Dr. Elena Vaughan, Postdoctoral Researcher, Health Promotion Research Centre, NUI Galway
774. Susan Carton Department of Nursing, Health Sivences and Disability studies, St Angela's College Sligo
775. Dr Emma McEvo, Department of Law, Maynooth University
776. Dr Sara Burke, Assistant Professor of Health Policy, Centre for Health Policy & Management, Trinity College Dublin
777. Dr. Kathy Glavanis-Granthen (retired), Sociology and Criminology, UCC
779. Dr. Una Ni Chaoimh, Dept. of Geography (retired), UCC.
780. Dr. Ailbe Murphy, Artist and Director of Create
781. Prof Ray Murphy, Irish Centre for Human Rights, NUI Galway.
782. Professor Caroline McIntosh, School of Health Sciences, NUI Galway
783. Dr. Elaine Keane, School of Education, NUI Galway
784. Eoghan McConologue, ollamh cúnta le Gnó, Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath
785. Dr Jacqueline O'Toole Lecturer IT Sligo
786. Dr Alan Cusack, School of Law, University of Limerick
787. Ken Mc Cue, Cultural Planner, Sport Against Racism Ireland
788. Clare Bell, TU Dublin
789. Angus O’ Riordan, Language and Literacy Tutor, Spirasi, Youth and Education Service, Dublin Adult Learning Centre
790. Dr Maria O’Brien, School of Communications, Dublin City University
791. Prof. Eamon O’Shea, NUI Galway
792. Professor Shane Darcy, Irish Centre for Human Rights, School of Law, NUI Galway
793. Lewis Mooney BL
794. Virginija Petrauskaite, Trainee Solicitor, KOD Lyons
795. Dr. Roja Fazaeli, Department of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Trinity College Dublin
796. Dr Timmy Frawley, UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems
797. Shane O’Curry, Director INAR Irish Network Against Racism
798. Deirdre Moore, Barrister
799. Gráinne Gilmore BL
800. Dr Caroline Sweeney, School of Law, University of Limerick
801. Lorna Moloney, ACE, University College Cork
802. Dr Carmel Hannan, Department of Sociology, University of Limerick
803. Claire Nolan, School Administrator, School of Information and Communication Studies
804. Dr Emer Clifford, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, UCC
805. Dr. Lorraine McIlrath, Community Knowledge Initiative, NUI Galway
806. Dr Anne B Ryan, Dept of Adult and Community Education, MU
807. Maebh Coleman, TU Dublin
808. Anne Walsh National Youth Council of Ireland
809. Dr Bernadine Brady, UNESCO Child & family Research Centre, NUI Galway
810. Garreth Smith, Department of Humanities, TU Dublin
811. Dr Erika Biagini, Dublin City University
812. Dr. Tanja Kovačić, UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, NUI Galway
813. Maura Kavanagh, Immigration and Human Rights paralegal
814. Dr Paula Devine, Schol of Soc Sciences, Education & Social Work, Queen's University Belfast
815. Dr. Lisa Pursell, School of Health Sciences, NUI Galway
816. Ann Byrne, UCC Library
817. Dr. Garrett Greene, School of Mathematics and Statistics, UCD
818. Dr Kathy Looney, School of Psychology, UCD
819. Liam Herrick, Irish Council for Civil Liberties
820. Dr Colette Kelly, Director Health Promotion Research Centre, NUI Galway
821. Dr Mary Rogan, School of Law, Trinity College Dublin
822. Doireann Ansbro, Irish Council for Civil Liberties
823. Prof. Denis O'Mahony, Dept. of Medicine, UCC
824. Dr Lorraine Burke, School of Psychology, NUIG
825. Dr Harry Browne, School of Media, TU Dublin
826. Dr Nóra Ni Loinsigh, Barrister
827. Dr Tina Kinsella, Department of Design and Visual Arts, IADT
828. Dr. Merike Darmody, Social Research, ESRI
829. Ciara O'Halloran, Civic and Community Engagement, UCC
830. Dr. John Cullen, School of Business, Maynooth University
831. Cllr. Colette Finn, Cork City Council.
832. Prof. Daniel Faas, Department of Sociology, Trinity College Dublin
833. Dr Patricia Brazil, Averil Deverell Lecturer in Law, Trinity College Dublin
834. Dr Louise Gibson Senior Lecturer in Paediatrics UCC
835. Noemi Magugliani (PhD Fellow, Irish Centre for Human Rights)
836. Prof. Susi Geiger, School of Business, UCD and Access for Medicines Irelands
837. Prof. Peter Stone, Political Science, TCD
838. Caroline Burke, dept of Geography, UCD
839. Dr Marguerite Barry, School of Information & Communication studies, UCD
840. Gráinne O’ Connor, educator
841. Ronan Harrington MSc, Research Assistant, School of Microbiology, UCC
842. Dr Pádraic Moran, School of Languages, Literatures & Cultures, NUI Galway
843. Michael Lynn SC
844. Prof Amanda Phelan, School of Nursing & Midwifery, TCD
845. Dr. Aisling de Paor, School of Law and Government, Dublin City University
846. Dr Natasha Remoundou, NUIG
847. Dr Claire Murray, School of Law, University College Cork
848. Robert Crowley BL
849. Aoife Harte, Journalist
850. Ailbhe Smyth, Women’s Studies, UCD (retired)
851. Lindsay Ruigrok, Solicitor (England & Wales)
852. Fionn Bolger, poet
853. Louise Sarsfield Collins, Maynooth University
854. Michael Tobin, School of Humanities, Waterford Institute of Technology
855. Jim Roche, Senior Lecturer, Research on housing, Dublin School of Architecture, TU Dublin.
856. Joanne McHale, Lecturer, Department of Humanities, TU Dublin
857. Dr. Michael Carr, School of Multidisciplinary Technologies, TU Dublin
858. Dr. Gerardene Meade-Murphy, Dept. of Pharmacology and Therapeutics, University College Cork
859. Dr. John Molyneux, Lecturer in Art History (retired) and writer on political theory, history and art history.
860. Dr. Joanne McVeigh, School of Applied Psychology, University College Cork
861. Dr Lauren Kierans BL
862. Barra Ó Seaghdha, writer, & lecturer (SALIS, DCU)
863. Deirbhile Ní Bhrolcháin, Múinteoir, amhránaí
864. Diego Castillo Goncalves, doctoral researcher, School of Law, Trinity College Dublin
865. Elaine Clowthery, Dept of Arts, Matino Institute of Education
866. Joe Holt BL
867. Prof. Marie-Louise Coolahan, School of English & Creative Arts, NUI Galway
868. Dr. Cara Nine, Political & Ethical Philosophy, UCC
869. Dr. Frédérique Vallières, Assistant Professor and Director, Trinity Centre for Global Health (TCD)
870. Mary O Sullivan, Mature Student Officer, University College Cork
871. Linda Horgan, Dept of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy, UCC.
872. Dr. Mark Walsh, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Maynooth University
873. Christine Farrell, DCU Students' Union President 2019/2020
874. Dr. Ethna Regan, School of Theology, Philosophy, and Music, Dublin City University
875. Dr. Ethna Regan, School of Theology, Philosophy, and Music, DCU
876. Callaghan Commons, Vice President for Academic Affairs DCUSU
877. Katie Fay, Vice President for Engagement & Development, DCU Students' Union
878. Sandra Ratcliffe, Lecturer, School of Humanities, TUDublin-Blanchardstown Campus
879. Dr. Deirdre Niamh Duffy, Senior Lecturer in Social Care, Manchester Metropolitan University
880. Aisling Fagan, DCU Students’ Union Vice President for Welfare and Equality
882. Dr Kamal Abouhajar, Consultant Anaesthetist, MRHM
883. Cindy O’Shea, School of Applied Social Studies, UCC
884. Michael Conlon SC
885. Dr Kayla Rush, School of Theology, Philosophy, and Music, Dublin City University
886. Dr Janos Fiala-Butora, Centre for Disability Law and Policy, NUI Galway
887. Nessa Darcy, Community Officer, Discovery Gospel Choir
888. John Malcolm Anderson, Software Engineer/ Corporate Social Responsibility, Verizon Media
889. Dr Joanna Hofer-Robinson, School of English, University College Cork
890. Dr Sarah Otten, Carlow College, St Patrick's
891. Amy Stapleton, youth trainer with Voices of Refugees in Europe, PhD researcher in TCD
892. Dr. Kylie Jarrett, Maynooth University
893. Dr Brian Murphy, Access Foundation Programme, Technological University Dublin
894. Dr Ruari-Santiago McBride, School of Education, University of Limerick
895. Dr. Dragana Jurišić, School of Communications, DCU
896. Dr Aogán Mulcahy, Sociology, UCD
897. Dr Bernadette Cronin, Department of Theatre, University College Cork
898. Dr Melanie L. Marshall, School of Film, Music, and Theatre, University College Cork
899. Anwen Tormey, PhD Candidate, U. of Chicago
900. Dr Christine Gaffney, ISS21, University College Cork
901. Dr Cara Connolly MB FRCSI MCh FRCS Plast
902. Dr Ellen Crushell, Dean, Faculty of Paediatrics, Royal College of Physicians of Ireland
903. Clare Muireann Murphy, Storyteller and Artist, Bristol UK
904. Dr Martin Marjoram, Lecturer, Dept of Science, TU Dublin
905. Francesco Edoardo Chessa, PhD candidate
906. Dr Mary Galvin, Department of Design Innovation, Maynooth University
907. Mark Doyle, WIT School of Humanities
908. Dr. Niloufar Omid, Lecturer in Human Rights for Advocates, Huston School of Film & Digital Media, NUI Galway
909. Dr. Thomas Murray, Higher Education Programme Director, An Cosán
910. Dr. Conor Little, Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Limerick
911. Dr John McFarland consultant psychiatrist Mid West Mental Health Services.
912. Thomas Erbsloh, Community Worker
913. Dr Ruth Brennan, Marie Skłodowska Curie Individual Fellow, Trinity Centre for Environmental Humanities, Trinity College Dublin
914. Bernie D'ArCY Public Speaker. Human Rights Activist
915. Dr Ronan McDermott, UCD Centre for Humanitarian Action
916. Sheila Lonergan, School of Engineering, Univeristy College Cork
917. Dr Jennifer Symonds, School of Education, University College Dublin
918. Temmuz S. Gürbüz, Huston School of Film, NUI Galway
919. Fiona Crowley, Amnesty International Ireland
920. Tim Hanley LLM, Campaigns Officer, Amnesty International Ireland
921. Colm O'Gorman, Executive Director, Amnesty International Ireland
922. Dr. Caroline Crowley, Crowley Research (independent social research services), West Cork
923. Dr Seamus Taylor, Department of Applied Social Studies, Maynooth University
924. Aisling Walsh, PhD Candidate at the School of Sociology & Politics NUI Galway
925. Dr. Niamh Cummins, School of Allied Health, University of Limerick
926. Dr. Cian McCafferty, Department of Anatomy & Neuroscience, University College Cork
927. Lorraine Tansey, NUI Galway
928. Dara Kerins, NUI Galway
929. Dr Angelina Espinoza, Marie-Curie E! Fellow, BIS Dept., University College Cork
930. Dr Uinsionn Mac Dubhghaill, Discipline of Journalism and Communication, NUI Galway
931. Alastair Nightingale, Department of Psychology, University of Limerick.
932. Colette Kelleher, Former Senator
Re: Direct Provision, Social Distancing and Human Rights

Liam Thornton <liam.thornton@ucd.ie> 26 May 2020 at 06:22

To: colm.brophy@oireachtas.ie, colm.burke@oireachtas.ie, jennifer.carrollmacneill@oireachtas.ie, matt.carthy@oireachtas.ie, michael.collins@oireachtas.ie, david.cullinane@oireachtas.ie, pearse.doherty@oireachtas.ie, stephen.donnelly@oireachtas.ie, norma.foley@oireachtas.ie, john.mcguinness@oireachtas.ie, Michael.McNamara@oireachtas.ie, fergus.odowd@oireachtas.ie, louise.oreilly@oireachtas.ie, matt.shanahan@oireachtas.ie, roisin.shortall@oireachtas.ie, Brid Smith <brid.smith@oireachtas.ie>, duncan.smith@oireachtas.ie, ossian.smyth@oireachtas.ie

Bcc: maeveorourke@gmail.com

Dear Chairperson and Members of the Special Committee on Covid-19 Response,

On April 01 2020, 932 experts in health systems, public health, social policy, law, human rights, migration and racism wrote to various Government ministers and State health officials on international protection applicants and direct provision. In line with the Government's own advice, we requested that people in direct provision be provided with:

(a) own-door accommodation;
(b) individualised access to sanitation and eating facilities to every family unit and single person in the international protection system.

I attach the full letter and list of signatories below.

It is with enormous regret, that months into the Covid-19 pandemic response, such necessary and appropriate actions have not been undertaken.

With the potential for a further wave of Covid-19 at any time, I urge the Committee to ask Department of Justice and Equality and Health Service Executive officials what planning is underway to ensure people resident in direct provision centres will be permitted to follow clear government social distancing advice. It is essential that such planning occur with all due haste.

Do not hesitate to contact me should further information be requested.

Is mise le meas,
Liam

Please note I am working remotely and am best contacted through email.

| Dr Liam Thornton | Associate Professor in Law | UCD Student Consultations: Please email liam.thornton@ucd.ie to request an online appointment.
| E: liam.thornton@ucd.ie |
Web: www.liamthornton.ie

Open Letter to Government re_social distancing and direct provision-2.pdf
196K
Dear Liam,

Many thanks for contacting me in relation to this very important issue. There can be no doubt that those living in direct provision, no more than those in our prison system, are at increased risk if the Covid19 virus comes into the centre. This issue is of particular concern when we consider the many people living in such centres (or in emergency accommodation) who would be classed as vulnerable.

We have raised this matter directly with Minister Flanagan and I am attaching a letter sent by the Fianna Fáil Justice Spokesperson, Jim O’Callaghan, to Minister Flanagan on behalf of the party. We have been advised that all centres (including emergency accommodation centres) are being assessed by the HSE as to how they could manage an outbreak in the relevant setting. Each centre has been asked to generate a self-isolation capability. As you correctly point out, it is essential that cocooning measures for the most vulnerable are put in place without delay.

I appreciate that this is not enough but please rest assured that Fianna Fáil is doing its utmost to assist in finding a solution to this problem.

Thanks again for contacting me.

Regards,

Micheál Martin
Dear Government Ministers and State Officials,

Please find attached a letter with a final list of over 850 signatories from persons who are experts in the fields of medicine, nursing, public health, law, human rights, migration etc regarding social distancing and direct provision.

In summary, we implore you to act now, to provide own-door accommodation and individualised access to sanitation and eating facilities to every family unit and single person in the international protection system, given that such action is practicable at this time.

Take Care,

Liam

Please note I am working remotely and am best contacted through email.

[Dr Liam Thornton | Lecturer in Law | UCD Student Consultations: Fridays 2pm to 4pm- Please email liam.thornton@ucd.ie to request an online appointment.

| E: liam.thornton@ucd.ie

Web: www.liamthornton.ie


COVID-19 and DP (1).docx

14K
6th April 2020

Re: Direct Provision and Covid 19

Minister’s Reference: DJE-MO-01765-2020

Dear Mr. Thornton,

Firstly I would like to thank you for taking the time to contact me regarding international protection applicants (also known as asylum seekers) and the measures I am taking to ensure their safety during the COVID-19 crisis. It is heartening to see the many messages of support and concern for applicants being received during these very difficult times.

Please be assured that myself, Minister of State Stanton and our officials take the safety and wellbeing of all international protection applicants extremely seriously. An intensive operation is underway within my Department to manage aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic within our sector.

Planning at a National Level

At national level, planning for the management of the health response to the COVID-19 pandemic is being led by the HSE which, as you may have seen in the daily updates, is mobilising an ambitious plan. My Department is working closely with the HSE as part of the Government team responding to the crisis and we are sharing information with one another all of the time.

The International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS) of my Department, formerly known as the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA), is working closely with the HSE and in particular their National Social Inclusion team and is following all its advice.

IPAS will continue to respond to all medical advices received working with the HSE in a collaborative and proactive manner. In that regard, a dedicated team has also been established in IPAS to manage issues relating to COVID-19 in accommodation centres (including in emergency accommodation locations). This unit is in constant contact with all of our premises.

Minister Stanton and I recognise that the centre managers and their staff are providing an essential frontline service away from their own homes and families during this uncertain time and we commended their dedication and their commitment to protecting the welfare and safety of residents.

Departments Response - Accommodation Centres and COVID-19

There are a number of measures underway to support contingency planning and preparedness in accommodation centres for COVID-19 and I would like to share some of this information with you.
Intensive work has been underway in the Department since the emergence of the COVID-19 crisis to ensure that to the best of our ability, we protect the health and welfare of asylum seekers and refugees availing of direct provision services. The assessment is that dedicated Direct Provision Centres are safer environments than emergency accommodation.

Our officials have now secured over 650 additional beds which will provide valuable additional accommodation to support the measures required for vulnerable residents; the provision of offsite accommodation for self-isolation; and will help with social distancing measures by reducing overall numbers in some existing centres. This is a critical part of our overall strategy to protect our residents. My Department has now procured a total of five hotels to provide additional accommodation.

The new accommodation will, in the main, be located in Dublin, Galway and Cork. These facilities will supplement new mainstream centres which have opened recently in Tullamore, Rossliare Harbour and Caherciveen following tendering processes. Since the start of the year, over 1,350 bed spaces have been procured enabling older centres to close and to move residents from emergency accommodation locations to dedicated centres, where cross agency services to residents can more effectively be provided. We have now brought the emergency locations which have no other guests into the supported environment of dedicated centres in order to provide greater support to residents and managers of the accommodation.

The new accommodation that we have procured means that we can help these centres where social distancing is obviously more challenging by reducing the overall number of residents they are accommodating. We are ensuring that no more than 3 people are sharing a room (similar to a small sized family unit) in any of our centres during this public health crisis. Residents will start to see the impact of these measures very quickly.

Transfers to the new accommodation has already begun and will continue in the coming days. However at all times, we are guided by the HSE and the National Public Health Emergency Team and we will continue to do everything possible to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all applicants.

Contingency Planning

All current accommodation centres including former and current emergency centres have completed contingency plans for COVID-19. These plans are regularly reviewed by IPAS in light of appropriate advice from the HSE to promote shared learning and best practice across centres. The nine HSE Community Healthcare Organisations (CHO) regions have assessed all centres where people are living in congregated settings to establish their state of readiness and provide appropriate advice to assist us.

I can also tell you that the Department is in constant contact with centre managers and accommodation providers, who have been made fully aware of the HSE advice on social distancing. Residents have also been made aware of the need for social distancing, good hand hygiene and coughing/sneezing etiquette. Information and posters have been distributed to all centres and translations of public health information have also been provided. Centre managers have been advised to increase the standard and frequency of cleaning throughout the centres, paying particular attention to communal areas.

Each centre manager has had to make sure their centre has adequate supplies of cleaning products, sanitiser, tissues and wipes. Hygiene products are distributed to international protection applicants as required. My Department has procured a large volume of hand sanitiser for residents and staff across our network of centres that have been distributed by courier to all of our centres.

Each centre has been asked where possible to generate a self-isolation capability for use by persons suspected to have the virus. Any COVID-19 suspected or confirmed case, outbreak or contacts are managed by Public Health which also advises on follow up actions including control measures such as isolation. My Department, of course, does not hold medical information related to our residents. It would not be appropriate that we would hold confidential medical information. This information is held by the HSE and local GPs and we are and will be guided by them.

Social Distancing and Self- Isolation

In terms of social distancing, centres without self-catering facilities have already been implementing measures to move to takeaway services as opposed to communal dining or have introduced staggered mealtimes to reduce contacts. We have temporarily closed our centres to visitors. The additional accommodation that we have procured in recent days and weeks also means that we can reduce overall numbers of residents in some centres to further support social distancing. We are ensuring that no more than 3 people are sharing a room (similar to a small sized family unit) in any of our centres during this public health crisis.

Offsite self-isolation means that we can support people who are suspected of having the virus or who have the virus but with mild symptoms away from their centre. Once they are fully recovered they can then return to their centre with no risk to any other resident. Our first location for self-isolation is in Dublin. We have procured a hotel, which will provide places for 100 people. The HSE will provide the onsite health care supports, and I am delighted to say that the Peter McVerry Trust has agreed to provide the necessary social care and supports for the people staying there.

Now that we have an agreed model with the HSE, this approach can be replicated in any location where we need it and we are working to identify the optimum locations for such additional facilities.
Cocooning and Older Residents

All of our older residents who are aged 65 or older are currently cocooned alone or are cocooning with their family members.

The HSE is also advising cocooning measures for anyone within the six categories of very serious medical illnesses published by the HSE last Friday evening. The measures we have announced will allow us to provide further supports for such people, where needed, based on individual assessments currently being made by the HSE National Social Inclusion team.

Residents who do not need cocooning measures in line with HSE guidelines can of course take brief daily exercise within 2km of the centre and we encourage them to do so. This is important for maintaining good physical and mental health especially for families with children who are unused to spending long periods indoors.

Information for Residents

Our website www.accommodationcentres.ie has been adapted to include a new section where public health information and trusted online information sources have been consolidated and we are encouraging all residents to visit the site.

My Department is also putting in place a national clinical telephone service providing public health advice to IPAS, centre management and residents. In addition, it will provide an online GP service to any residents who have not yet been allocated a GP by the HSE or who have a GP but are unable to make contact with them. This online GP service will also make the arrangements for testing, where required.

Complaints and Transfers

It must be stated that where a resident has a complaint or requires information they should first seek to engage with the manager of their accommodation centre. It is also open to residents to make a formal complaint to the IPAS directly on any matter that has not been resolved by the management.

We take complaints from residents very seriously and all residents are made fully aware of their ability to contact the Department at any time, in confidence, and have been provided with the appropriate contact details. In addition complaints may be made directly to the Office of the Ombudsman or the Children's Ombudsman.

I should also say that we totally reject any suggestion that sanctions, such as transfers, are implemented against a resident as a result of complaint. Any transfers that take place from one location to another are a normal part of the Department’s commitment to move residents to the most appropriate accommodation centre as soon as places become available.

Families are prioritised for these transfers especially where own-door accommodation becomes available. While it may be the case that such transfers may entail moving to a different region at short notice, this relates solely to availability of appropriate spaces in the dedicated accommodation centre for the particular person or family and the need to utilise the temporary accommodation for new protection applicants.

Conclusion

Finally, I hope that this information will provide you with some reassurance of the proactive steps that my Department in close cooperation with the HSE is taking to ensure the safety of all international protection applicants. I would again like to thank you for taking the time to contact me on this very important issue and to assure you that myself, Minister Stanton and our officials will continue to treat the COVID-19 pandemic as an urgent priority.

Yours sincerely,

_________________________
Charlie Flanagan, T.D.
Minister for Justice & Equality
Dear Liam

Please see below correspondence that Micheál has received from Minister Flanagan.

Best regards,

Ashley
The new accommodation that we have procured means that we can help these centres where social distancing is obviously more challenging by reducing the overall number of residents they are accommodating. We are ensuring that no more than 3 people are sharing a room (similar to a small sized family unit) in any of our centres during this public health crisis. Residents will start to see the impact of these measures very quickly.

The HSE is also advising cocooning measures for anyone within the six categories of very serious medical illnesses published by the HSE last Friday evening. The measures we have announced will allow us to provide further supports for such people, where needed, based on individual assessments currently being made by the HSE National Social Inclusion team. In this respect, I advise that the mother with the sick child in Ciuin House wishing to seek her own door accommodation should contact IPAS directly. She may do so by emailing their helpline: ipasinbox@justice.ie

Transfers to the new accommodation has already begun and will continue in the coming days. However at all times, we are guided by the HSE and the National Public Health Emergency Team and we will continue to do everything possible to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all applicants.

All current accommodation centres including former and current emergency centres have completed contingency plans for COVID-19. These plans are regularly reviewed by IPAS in light of appropriate advice from the HSE to promote shared learning and best practice across centres. The nine HSE Community Healthcare Organisations (CHO) regions have assessed all centres where people are living in congregated settings to establish their state of readiness and provide appropriate advice to assist us.

I can also tell you that the Department is in constant contact with centre managers and accommodation providers, who have been made aware of the HSE advice on social distancing. Residents have also been made aware of the need for social distancing, good hand hygiene and coughing/sneezing etiquette. Information and posters have been distributed to all centres and translations of public health information have also been provided. Centre managers have been advised to increase the standard and frequency of cleaning throughout the centres, paying particular attention to communal areas.

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Now that we have an agreed model with the HSE, this approach can be replicated in any location where we need it and we are working to identify the optimum locations for such additional facilities.

Our website www.accommodationcentres.ie has been adapted to include a new section where public health information and trusted online information sources have been consolidated and we are encouraging all residents to visit the site. My Department is also putting in place a national clinical telephone service providing public health advice to IPAS, centre management and residents. In addition, it will provide an online GP service to any residents who have not yet been allocated a GP by the HSE or who have a GP but are unable to make contact with them. This online GP service will also make the arrangements for testing, where required.

Finally, I hope that this information will provide you with some reassurance of the proactive steps that my Department in close cooperation with the HSE is taking to ensure the safety of all international protection applicants including those living in Ciuin House, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim. I would again like to thank you for taking the time to contact me on this very important issue and to assure you that myself, Minister Stanton and our officials will continue to treat the COVID-19 pandemic as an urgent priority.

Yours sincerely,

Charlie Flanagan, T.D.
Minister for Justice & Equality

From: Liam Thornton <liam.thornton@ucd.ie>
Sent: Wednesday 1 April 2020 13:09:45
To: Liam Thornton
Subject: Re: Urgent- Social Distancing and Direct Provision

Dear Deputy,

Further to my correspondence with you yesterday, please find attached the letter to government on the direct provision system and Covid-19, with over 850 signatures from a range of experts, requesting, in summary,

"...to provide own-door accommodation and individualised access to sanitation and eating facilities to every family unit and single person in the international protection system, given that such action is practicable at this time."
The full letter and the signatories are attached to this email.

Take care,

Liam

--------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Liam Thornton <liam.thornton@ucd.ie>
Date: Wed, 1 Apr 2020 at 12:54
Subject: Re: Urgent- Social Distancing and Direct Provision
To: <Leo.varadkar@oireachtas.ie>, <Charles.flanagan@oireachtas.ie>, <simon.harris@oireachtas.ie>, <Eoghan.murphy@oireachtas.ie>, <regina.doherty@oireachtas.ie>, <Katherine.zappone@oireachtas.ie>, <paschal.donohoe@oireachtas.ie>, <David.stanton@oireachtas.ie>, <finian.mcgrath@oireachtas.ie>, <info@health.gov.ie>, INFO <info@justice.ie>

Dear Government Ministers and State Officials,

Please find attached a letter with a final list of over 850 signatories from persons who are experts in the fields of medicine, nursing, public health, law, human rights, migration etc regarding social distancing and direct provision.

In summary, we implore you to act now, to provide own-door accommodation and individualised access to sanitation and eating facilities to every family unit and single person in the international protection system, given that such action is practicable at this time.

Take Care,

Liam

Please note I am working remotely and am best contacted through email.

| Dr Liam Thornton | Lecturer in Law | UCD Student Consultations: Fridays 2pm to 4pm- Please email liam.thornton@ucd.ie to request an online appointment. |
| E: liam.thornton@ucd.ie |
| Web: www.liamthornton.ie |

[Quoted text hidden]