

Stay safe together while staying two metres apart

Dr Shane Farrelly MFOM Occupational Health Specialist

## **COVID-19-Ensuring Employer Readiness for Employee Phased Return to Work**

### **12 Point Plan**

1. A clear statement and protocol from the employer to state that those employees with symptoms / suspected symptoms are positively encouraged to stay at home / isolate. No recriminations or penalties for doing the right thing. Ideally fully paid.
2. A full risk based identification of vulnerable employees (pre-existing conditions, respiratory issues or underlying cardiac or other conditions). Need a plan to work from safe or redeploy these people.
3. Social and physical distancing plan to include office, workplace, circulation space, external areas, canteen (staggered breaks), washrooms (urinals and sinks) etc. Physical shields maybe needed at adjacent workstations. OH risk assessment to be carried out.
4. An ongoing resourced testing program on site (? frequency, ability to immediately refer suspected cases to fast track external testing)
5. Comprehensive data protection plan. Link to Government contact tracing programme.
6. Consider family supports for employees who test positive or where a family member of an employee tests positive. Key is supporting the employee to be present and productive at work.
7. Forward planning of appropriate PPE. The level and type of PPE will have to be reviewed to include the additional risk of the virus. We clearly cannot have everybody wearing N95 masks so risk assessment especially for proximity working will be necessary.

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8. Additional resources and a protocol will be needed for high risk common touch areas to be cleaned and disinfected. This should not be over the top but appropriate based on risk assessment.

9. Mass temperature screening at entrances has been shown to be only partially effective. An alternative specialised and individual measurement workstation should be provided both at the gatehouse and available internally for employees to access during the day.

10. Appropriate clinical waste disposal for used PPE and wipe down materials needs to be provided.

11. Business travel other than direct customer contact should cease (to be further reviewed). No additional expatriate movements permitted. Protocol for customer contact needed including when entering onto customer premises.

12. Survey all employees and tasks to determine where home or remote working is feasible. Provide appropriate training and tools.

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