



E: Christine.McLaughlin@gov.scot

Chief Executives
HR Directors
Directors of Finance

25 March 2022

Dear colleagues,

Test and Protect Transition – Supporting Staff

The publication of the Test and Protect Transition Plan on Tuesday 15 March set out the timelines for moving away from population-wide testing aimed at reducing transmission, towards a more targeted approach to testing, contact tracing and isolation.

I recognise all of these changes will have an impact on the entirety of the Test and Protect system and overall workforce and the number of staff required to continue to provide the proportionate service, including in health boards.

The Scottish Government is committed to supporting NHS Boards to explore all possible options to redeploy staff, through recognised processes and in-line with contractual obligations, within your own board, in other boards or in broader opportunities across the public and private sector where available and are amenable to individuals.

However, I recognise this will not always be feasible and it is possible that some contracts may require to be concluded early and/ or staff supported to move into other opportunities in the wider public or private sector.

I previously wrote to you with a commitment that funding would be available to extend (to 30th September 2022) for some contracts solely associated with Test and Protect work. However, given the change in our strategic intent for Test and Protect this extension is no longer required for this purpose. I would also want to clarify that separate funding arrangements are in place for PCR testing in NHS laboratories.

Where it is not possible to successfully redeploy these staff within the NHS workforce and costs emerge in respect of the early conclusion of contracts, the Scottish Government will provide the relevant financial support for all such circumstances in respect of Test and Protect staff.

I would ask for your continued support to ensure that we manage this situation well and with due respect to all staff involved who have worked so hard throughout this programme, whilst minimising the overall financial impact. This includes implementing the normal redeployment policy tools and source alternative employment for displaced Test and Protect staff, ensuring redeployment, where possible, into existing established funded posts that are currently



vacant or newly funded posts in the normal manner and in partnership with Trade Unions and Professional Association colleagues.

Work is underway with all NHS boards to establish baseline data on the number of staff affected, contract types and the estimated rate of redeployment which may be achievable and this will in turn determine the financial impact.

Whilst respecting the role of individual Boards to manage this process, the Test & Protect Transition Board will retain an overview of the total workforce impact in terms of redeployment and the financial impact, as well understanding any significant variation in approach or financial impact.

I would also draw your attention to the [letter](#) issued on 3 April 2020 by the Scottish Government which varied the provisions set out in the [Use of Fixed-Term Contracts within NHS Scotland PIN Policy](#). It stated specifically in situations where staff had been brought in to the service on fixed-term contracts to assist with dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, that this suspended the need for them to be placed on the redeployment register at the end of their contract.

However, given the change in circumstances and on the basis that many staff brought in as part of the initial response to the pandemic have now been working in the service for some time, I would like to clarify that this variation does not prevent staff being redeployed, where appropriate. As such, and in line with the terms of this letter, we expect Boards to implement the normal redeployment policy tools and source alternative employment for displaced Test and Protect staff.

As we move through the transition phase, we will continue to work in partnership with NHS Boards and other employers to ensure we all collectively do everything we can to identify appropriate opportunities and to support every member of staff impacted by the changes.

Yours sincerely



CHRISTINE McLAUGHLIN
Director of Test & Protect

DAVID MILLER
Chief People Officer