Message from Tracey – 14 May 2020

Dear all,

I hope you and your families are staying well in this challenging environment.

On 22 April 2020, the Chief Medical Officer asked us to develop a Public Health Protection Response Plan to advise the Welsh Government on the approach to moving towards and into the recovery phase of the pandemic.

We undertook a rapid consultation process with local authorities and the NHS on a draft plan and submitted final advice to the Welsh Government on 4 May 2020. My thanks goes to everyone who contributed to that advice over a very short time scale. What the team produced was exemplary!

Yesterday afternoon, Vaughan Gething, Minister for Health and Social Services, launched the Welsh Government’s **Test, Trace, Protect** strategy for Wales to lead the country out of the coronavirus pandemic. This has been developed based on our advice to them.

**Overview of the Welsh Government’s Test, Trace, Protect strategy**

“Our Test, Trace, Protect strategy is to enhance health surveillance in the community, undertake effective and extensive contact tracing, and support people to self-isolate where required to do so. Our actions will be informed by international experience and we will maintain strong engagement with the public throughout. **Test, Trace, Protect** will work by:

- Identifying those who have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, enabling them to be tested while isolating from wider family, friends and their community.
- Tracing those individuals who have been in close contact with the symptomatic person, requiring them to take precautions and self-isolate (for 14 days).
- Providing advice and guidance, particularly where the symptomatic individual or their contacts are vulnerable or at greater risk.
- Ensuring that if the individual tests negative and the symptoms are not due to coronavirus, individuals and their contacts can get back to their normal routines as soon as possible.”

**Our role**

Our amazing teams are managing and delivering our current response to the pandemic on a daily basis. Alongside this, we are now rapidly moving towards scaling up our response to implement our role in the **Test, Trace, Protect** strategy. We have established an internal implementation programme and our
functions will need to connect effectively with local authorities, health boards, Welsh Government and other partners at a national, regional and local level.

As you would expect, we will continue to provide leadership and specialist advice on public health approaches. Our role is to define once for Wales approaches to the operation of contact tracing, sampling and testing and population surveillance and to provide expert health protection advice and analysis on the spread of the virus in our communities. Local contact tracing teams will be managed by local authorities and health boards and there will be a regional coordination centre, on a health board footprint, led by these organisations locally with advice and support from us.

I’ll share more information on the next steps with you in one of my usual video messages on Friday but for now, here are some links to the Welsh Government plan and also our Public Health Protection Response Plan. Please note that this was advice commissioned by the Chief Medical Officer and we therefore won’t be publishing it and so I would ask you to please confine it to within the organisation.

**Welsh Government Test, Trace, Protect Plan**

**Public Health Protection Response Plan**

Finally, I want to say an enormous thank you to each and every one of you for being so superb in everything that you’re doing to protect our people in Wales. The country is so very lucky to have such dedicated, professional and committed people working in Public Health Wales.

With very best wishes,

Tracey