

## **Resources and General Purposes Committee – 24 May 2021**

### **Item 9 NCL Health and Safety Update**

**This paper provides a summary of current and planned activity in the areas above to provide an update for the Resources and General Purposes Committee. Where the approval/ratification of the Committee is required, this is highlighted at the appropriate points.**

#### **9.1 Risk Assessment Policy and Procedure**

One of the challenges of COVID19 is that it has tested a number of organisational planning and procedural arrangements, particularly in relation to effective risk assessments.

We have an overall Organisational Covid Risk Assessment in place, which has been updated regularly as we move through the levels and stages of the pandemic response. However, our experience of risk assessment at faculty and team level during the Covid period is that, while risk assessments have been carried out and appropriate measures put in place, the current process is considered as cumbersome and lacking in clarity, both of which detract from the purpose of the risk assessment process.

Through our new Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager and in consultation with our Trade Union Health and Safety representatives, we have been working on an updated and expanded Risk Assessment Policy and an updated template for the risk assessment process. These documents have been approved by the Trade Unions and by the Executive Board and will now form the basis of a programme of training for all those involved in the risk assessment process.

#### **9.2 Lateral Flow Testing Programme**

Following a reference to the planned introduction of a lateral flow device (LFD) testing programme for colleges outlined in the Ministerial Letter of XXXXX, the sector has been working with the Scottish Government to make arrangements for this to be implemented. This testing programme is for asymptomatic individuals on campus and is aimed at catching early cases of COVID19.

We now have a stock of test kits and distribution of these has begun across all campuses. To participate in the programme, which is open to staff and students, individuals must provide consent in advance to ensure that they understand the process and to confirm that they will log all results via the Scottish Government portal. Participation in testing is entirely voluntary, but we are encouraging all those working and studying on campus to take part.

Distribution sessions commenced at NCL on Monday 17 May and we have had a good uptake from staff and from students, and we will continue to promote the scheme. Participants are being issued with enough kits to last until the end of June, with stock in reserve to supply further kits to those who wish to continue testing over the summer, or who will be returning to us in August and September as we may be asked to continue LFD testing

#### **9.3 Return to Campus Documentation**

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team have also been updating our return to campus documentation, which is the basis for undertaking individual risk assessments for staff members where there is a need to consider their return to campus. Initial drafts have been considered by the Trade Unions and the Executive Board, and is expected that these will be formally agreed before the end of this month. While numbers on

campus remain low, the revised documentation will ensure that we take appropriate action to support all staff members returning to campus as we plan for the new session.

#### **9.4 Occupational Health Provision**

As members know, we currently employ two part-time Occupational Health Advisers – one covering the Motherwell campus and one supporting Coatbridge and Cumbernauld.

One of our advisers has confirmed that they are leaving us to take up a more senior role elsewhere. While we wish them well, we do not wish to be without this service as we are aware that we have a number of staff who may require this support. To address this, we are in discussion with an external provider with a view to them holding occupational health clinics at our campuses as an interim measure, pending longer term arrangements being agreed. This ensures that support remains available to staff and we also have provision in place for pre-employment screening and HR related work. We expect that this external service will be in place at the end of June.

Brian Gilchrist  
**Assistant Principal**

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