



Date: 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020

To: Directors of Nursing  
CC ADPH

Dear Colleague

### **Winter Planning: Support to Children and Families**

Thank you for all that you are doing in prioritisation and planning as we enter winter with the challenge of rising COVID-19 cases.

We are writing to provide advice in respect of management of services to families as part of this planning. It is now known that the indirect impact of COVID-19 has been significant for pregnant women, children, young people and families. There have been increases in safeguarding concerns, domestic abuse, child and maternal mental health problems as well as lost learning time for all children, impacting on outcomes for safety and wellbeing.

Sustaining support for families' needs to be a priority if short and long term harms are to be prevented, identified and mitigated.

Therefore, we advise that **professionals supporting children and families, such as health visitors, school nurses, designated safeguarding officers and nurses supporting children with special educational needs should not be redeployed to other services and should be supported to provide services through in pregnancy, early years (0-19) and to the most vulnerable families.**

Where these public health and specialist nurses have specific skills and experience that is required locally (for example, training in ITU) then individual discussions should take place, and if these individuals are redeployed this should be for shortest possible time.

Local authorities and directors of public health as commissioners of the service are very clear that this a 'front line' activity that needs to be maintained through the winter.

Yours sincerely,



Public Health  
England

Prof Viv Bennett CBE  
Chief Nurse & Director Maternity & Early Years  
Head of World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre for Public Health Nursing and  
Midwifery  
Public Health England

Ruth May  
Chief Nursing Officer for England  
NHS England and Improvement

Councillor Ian Hudspeth  
Chairman  
Community Wellbeing Board  
Local Government Association