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**Monday 20 April 2020**

**New guidance established for volunteer PPE makers**

Hertfordshire residents and businesses have risen to the huge challenge of tackling the coronavirus COVID-19, with many thousands of volunteers going out of their way to support their friends, neighbours, health and social care staff and public servants.

To help protect front-line staff from contracting the virus, a number of schools, companies and individuals have come forward with offers of personal protective equipment (PPE). People have been giving their time and their skills to make, supply and often donate these essential items to a wide variety of staff who could come into contact with the virus.

Now the organisations coordinating the county’s response to coronavirus have put together an online guide, available at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/covid19ppe](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/covid19ppe) to help ensure that PPE meets the necessary standards to keep people safe.

**Professor Jim McManus, Director of Public Health, Hertfordshire County Council:**

“We are extremely grateful to everyone who has offered to manufacture, supply or donate personal protective equipment to front-line workers across Hertfordshire. The people we want to support work in a range of settings and need specific types of PPE to suit their work. For example, the type of face masks required varies, depending on the contact staff have with patients as well as the severity of symptoms they are dealing with.

“To avoid disappointment and to help speed up the process of dealing with PPE enquiries and offers of support, please visit our [web page](https://preview-hcc.cloud.contensis.com/services/health-in-herts/professionals/covid19-ppe.aspx#DynamicJumpMenuManager_2_Anchor_2)s, which will give you the information and specifications you need before you get started.”

**Cllr Tim Hutchings, Hertfordshire County Councillor, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Prevention:**

“Whilst we have existing supply lines and some PPE stock from central government the unprecedented situation we find ourselves in means that we must continue to bolster our supplies, in doing so we need to be mindful that PPE regulations apply equally to products that are sold or donated”.

“There are experts available for anyone who requires help to ensure that their product will be safe to use. In most instances there will be no charge for this business advice. Your local Trading Standards service can help you to develop your ideas into a product that can be used in the fight against COVID-19 and save lives.”

Hertfordshire County Council and the Health and Safety Executive are very keen to support PPE manufacturers through the product safety assessment process. To discuss what you can manufacture, please email the team at [**tradingstandards@hertfordshire.gov.uk**](mailto:tradingstandards@hertfordshire.gov.uk). Further enquiries should be directed to [PPEinfo@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:PPEinfo@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

**For any media enquiries, please contact:**

Lorna Hamblin, Communications and Engagement Manager, Hertfordshire and west Essex Sustainability and Transformation Partnership

[lorna.hamblin@nhs.net](mailto:lorna.hamblin@nhs.net)

Mobile: 077662 47067

**Notes to editors:**

* The Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF), a partnership of over 60 organisations including the emergency services, your local councils, health services and volunteers, is the local body which helps plan, train and respond to emergencies together. LRF representatives are working hard to review the availability and supply of PPE for all health and care providers, across Hertfordshire, to ensure that it is being distributed appropriately.
* The LRF’s new webpage is [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/covid19ppe](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/covid19ppe)