From the Chief Medical Officer
Dr Michael McBride

Department of Health
An Roinn Sláinte
Männystrie O Poustie
www.health-ni.gov.uk

HSS(MD) 30/2020

FOR ACTION
Chief Executives, Public Health Agency/Health and Social Care Board/HSC Trusts/ NIAS (for onward circulation to staff caring for children)
GP Medical Advisers, Health and Social Care Board
All General Practitioners and GP Locums (for onward distribution to practice staff)
OOHs Medical Managers (for onward distribution to staff)

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FULL CIRCULATION LIST

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST
BT4 3SQ

Tel: 028 9052 0563
Email: Michael.McBride@health-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref: HSS(MD) 30/2020
Date: 2 May 2020

Dear Colleague

MULTISYSTEM INFLAMMATORY SYNDROME IN CHILDREN TEMPORALLY ASSOCIATED WITH COVID-19

Background

Most children are asymptomatic or exhibit mild symptoms from COVID-19 infection. However, in the last two months a small number of children have been identified who develop a significant systemic inflammatory response. Affected children may require paediatric intensive care and input from paediatric infectious diseases, cardiology, and rheumatology.

This rare syndrome shares common features with other paediatric inflammatory conditions including: Kawasaki disease, staphylococcal and streptococcal toxic shock syndromes, bacterial sepsis and macrophage activation syndromes. It can also present with unusual abdominal symptoms with excessive inflammatory markers.

Guidance on the identification and management of suspected cases has been issued by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.
https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/guidance-paediatric-multisystem-inflammatory-syndrome-temporally-associated-covid-19

Early recognition by paediatricians and specialist referral including to critical care is essential.

Case definition

1. A child presenting with persistent fever, inflammation (neutrophilia, elevated CRP and lymphopaenia) and evidence of single or multi-organ dysfunction (shock, cardiac, respiratory, renal, gastrointestinal or neurological disorder) with additional features (see listed according to highest frequency in Appendix 1 of RCPCH guidance). This may include children fulfilling full or partial criteria for Kawasaki disease.

2. Exclusion of any other microbial cause, including bacterial sepsis, staphylococcal or streptococcal shock syndromes, infections associated with myocarditis such as enterovirus (waiting for results of these investigations should not delay seeking expert advice).

3. SARS-CoV-2 PCR testing may be positive or negative

All stable children should be discussed as soon as possible with specialist services to ensure prompt treatment (paediatric infectious disease/cardiology/rheumatology). There should be a low threshold for referral to Paediatric Intensive Care using normal pathways.

Yours sincerely

DR MICHAEL McBRIDE
Chief Medical Officer

Circulation List

Director of Public Health/Medical Director, Public Health Agency (*for onward distribution to all relevant health protection staff*)
Assistant Director Public Health (Health Protection), Public Health Agency
Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency
Assistant Director of Pharmacy and Medicines Management, Health and Social Care Board *(for onward distribution to Community Pharmacies)*
Directors of Pharmacy HSC Trusts
Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB
Family Practitioner Service Leads, Health and Social Care Board *(for cascade to GP Out of Hours services)*
Medical Directors, HSC Trusts *(for onward distribution to all Consultants, Occupational Health Physicians and School Medical Leads)*
Nursing Directors, HSC Trusts *(for onward distribution to all Community Nurses, and Midwives)*
Directors of Children's Services, HSC Trusts
RQIA (*for onward transmission to all independent providers including independent hospitals*)
Medicines Management Pharmacists, HSC Board *(for cascade to prescribing advisers)*
Regional Medicines Information Service, Belfast HSC Trust
Regional Pharmaceutical Procurement Service, Northern HSC Trust
Professor Donna Fitzsimons, Head of School of Nursing and Midwifery QUB
Professor Sonja McIlfatrick, Head of School of Nursing, University of Ulster
Caroline Lee, CEC
Donna Gallagher, Open University
Professor Paul McCarron, Head of School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, UU
Professor Carmel Hughes, Head of School, School of Pharmacy, QUB
Professor Colin Adair, Director of the NI Centre for Pharmacy Learning and Development, QUB
Joe Brogan, Assistant Director of Integrated Care, HSCB
Unions
Michael Donaldson *(for distribution to all General Dental Practitioners))*

This letter is available on the Department of Health website at https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/professional-medical-and-environmental-health-advice/hssmd-letters-and-urgent-communications