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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This is a humanitarian crisis for the homeless population and is being treated as such. Priority action across Local Authorities and GMCA is focused on people who are rough sleeping or in shared space emergency accommodation (Group A). Immediate action is being taken on the following:   * **Alternative accommodation that can support safe distancing and self-isolation** * **Access to food, essential welfare items and medicines** * **Drug dependency support and policy to meet extreme challenge of stay at home restrictions**  ****A GM wide procedure for triage into alternative accommodation is imminent. Today, please follow your existing Local Authority pathways.**** We need your immediate help with a ‘Wave 1’ response to assemble food packs and essential items including toiletries.  This will be part of the civil contingency services, but we cannot guarantee that this will be able to immediately meet the need of homeless people immediately.  My advice for frontline VCSE homelessness organisations:   * **You are keyworkers. Your children can go to school. You can go to work.** * **It is essential that you observe strict social distancing at work. Stay at home if you are in a high risk group. Stay at home if distancing at work is not possible.** * **Please start to organise as non-face to face services urgently.** * **How we support people has to change. Face to face support is no longer going to be safe. Whilst extremely challenging, it is better to focus efforts on moving to this position as fast as possible.** * **We will draw on the sector to deliver new forms of support to people moved into alternative accommodation.** * **This is a challenging message for day centres, but our people need your support more than ever, just in a different form.**   We will support you with this.   **Molly Bishop** Strategic Lead for Homelessness Public Service Reform Team | | | |