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| | <u>Agenda Item:13</u> |
| Report to: | Local COVID Outbreak Engagement Board |
| Date: | 1st October 2020 |
| TITLE: | PUBLIC QUESTIONS SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE |
| Written Question Recipient Details | # HealthNow Alliance |

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| Report Type: | Written Question |
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| 1. Purpose: |
| 1.1 To consider a response to a Public Written Question (details included within section 3 of this report). |

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| 2. Recommendation |
| 2.1 The Board is asked to consider the Public Written Question and respond accordingly. |

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| 3. Written Question Details |
| 3.1 We would like to highlight an issue about access to COVID-19 testing raised at a recent #HealthNow Alliance meeting. #HealthNow is a partnership project between Crisis, Groundswell and Shelter that works to address health inequalities faced by people experiencing homelessness. In Birmingham, the #HealthNow Alliance meets monthly to discuss health issues and responses affecting people experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 crisis. These meetings are attended by peers with experience of homelessness, healthcare commissioners and providers, representatives from Public Health and voluntary sector organisations. |
| 3.2 Some Alliance members have raised concerns that homeless communities face system barriers to accessing COVID-19 testing and using the Test and Trace service. As experts by experience and representatives from local homelessness services, we came together to discuss alternative testing models that could overcome these barriers. Our suggestions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supplying hostels with self-test kits and training staff to teach residents to self-test. - Provision of tests or self-test kits through day services, the Homeless Health Exchange, outreach services and other community hubs. |

- Utilising #HealthNow peer researchers and peer advocates to consult with homeless communities about how testing/ Test and Trace would work best for them. Peers could accompany people to test sites or provide information about testing facilities.

3.3 We are encouraged to hear that our suggestions align with Public Health's plans. However, we would like to request the following:

1. An update on the Public Health Plans for test and trace for people experiencing homelessness.
2. A response to the suggestion that peers could carry out an exercise to rapidly collect views of local people.
3. Confirmation that Test Kits will be provided to local hostels and day services and that training can be provided to support tests.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Appendices

The following people have been involved in the preparation of this Written Question:

Carly Jones, Chief Executive of SIFA Fireside

Vicky Hines, Shelter Hub Manager Birmingham

Matthew Green, Director of Crisis Skylight Birmingham

Lee Foxall, #HealthNow Peer Researcher and Expert by Experience

Daniel Wood, #HealthNow Peer Researcher and Expert by Experience

Kevin Jones, Crisis Progression Coach and Expert by Experience

Frances Schofield, #HealthNow Coordinator