



Media Release

Date: 31 May 2022

Mask wearing no longer mandatory for HSC visitors/staff

From **Thursday 2 June 2022**, the use of masks in health and social care buildings will be stepped down in line with further de-escalation of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) precautions for COVID-19.

From Thursday, visitors and staff will no longer be required to wear masks. Across HSC we will be reverting back to pre-pandemic PPE for patient /Service user care.

Specific areas such as the Emergency Department and Community teams will continue to undertake a clinical triage risk assessment based on patients/service user's individual circumstances.

This step down is in response to the reducing COVID-19 numbers in both the community and hospital (we currently have no patients with Covid 19 in the hospital) along with high vaccination rates and the summer environment (open windows and good ventilation).

Whilst visitors to the health and social care buildings will no longer be required to wear a mask – this is not a mandatory requirement and if they want to continue to wear a mask they can. However, the emphasis remains on good hand hygiene when visiting the hospital and not attending if you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or any other infectious disease.

We will continue to keep the use of masks under review, especially later in the year when we experience winter pressures.

Ends