Health Budget Oversight Group (HBOG)
20 March 2020
Held by Conference Call

Representatives from the Health Service Executive, Department of Health and Department of Public Expenditure & Reform.

- 1,700 tests are currently taking place daily.
- Repetition and duplication of costings were noted but remain in the total figure for now. No estimate put on the cost but it was noted that:
- There are other items yet to be formally requested,
- Many savings outlined in NSP 2020 will now be difficult if not impossible to achieve (could be up to €200m);
- The costs were recognised as gross COVID-19 costs rather than the net requirement of the Budget. However no estimate can be made on this difference at this point in time.
- It has been confirmed the modular beds will not now proceed and the acquisition of all private hospital capacity (placeholder figure) will be the subject of separate analysis.
- The issue of how the funding should be sanctioned following a Government Decision was also discussed:
- DoH and HSE were advocating for a single universal sanction.
- DPER, whilst not wanting to sanction "bed by bed" stated this would need further reflection and consideration.
- In terms of spending areas not currently included in the AP, the DoH highlighted:
    a. Increased GMS/GPVC eligibility: The numbers who will qualify for medical cards after losing employment or suffering income reductions;
    b. Additional ventilators
    c. Private Nursing Homes (to be elaborated).
- All parties are to return further (and final) observations on this 'budgeting' phase by Monday AM. The HSE asked that these not include questions where work is already underway such as ICU bed locations and the issue of identifying duplications.