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**To:**

Directors of Adult Social Services  
Directors of Children's Services  
Local Authority Emergency Planning Officers

**CC:**

Regional Resilience Teams  
Government Office Children and Learner's teams  
Devolved Administrations

Dear Colleagues,

**Local Authority Social Care Pandemic Flu Self Assessment Survey**

We are writing with details of a social care self-assessment survey that we would like to invite you to participate in.

The Local Government Association issued a similar assessment in April 2009, just before the current Swine Flu Pandemic emerged. Whilst the response rate was low the results enabled us to see that planning on social care pandemic preparedness was underway, although the level of that preparedness differed across the country.

We would like you to help us update our awareness of the current situation in light of the extremely hard work that we know has been undertaken responding to the challenges of the first wave of swine flu. We would like to get as complete a picture as possible so that we can identify areas where there are real challenges, share examples of best practice and develop policies to help LAs ensure their own readiness.

The self assessment survey is short and easy to complete and is optional. We are aware from those LAs that completed the April assessment that they found the process a quick and a useful check of their own plans. The survey has since been developed and refined with input from DH, DCSF and CCS. We expect that it should take around two hours to

complete. A copy of the self assessment for you to complete can be downloaded from:  
[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH\\_107490](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH_107490)

We ask that Emergency Planning Units work with the Directors of Adult and Children's Social Care in their local authority to complete and return the assessment to [pandemicflu@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:pandemicflu@dh.gsi.gov.uk) by Friday, 13th November 2009. Please use 'Social Care Self Assessment' as the email subject heading.

You may already be aware that the Department of Health and the Health Protection Agency have developed Exercise Prometheus. This is a desktop toolkit to help colleagues test local flu resilience. Similar in format to Exercise Coldplay, which many of you will have completed, it uses a mix of news interviews and facilitator injects to take groups of staff from all areas of social care through a series of scenarios. Exercise Prometheus is available from:  
[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_104969](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_104969)

We are also continuing to work on a possible reporting framework for adult and children's social care. This has been designed to minimise the impact on LAs whilst producing a comparable data set to enable a local, regional and national picture of the impact of the pandemic to be produced. We have recently piloted the reporting framework in five local authorities and we will keep you informed of developments as the pilot concludes and is evaluated.

If you have any queries, please contact [pandemicflu@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:pandemicflu@dh.gsi.gov.uk) and quote 'Social Care Self Assessment' in the subject heading.

With thanks for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely



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