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Please see below a personal message for our Chief Officer, Susanne Millar where she talks about the importance of reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic and how we also need to continue to keep ourselves and others safe. She also thanks our staff for their extraordinary efforts in continuing to keep the health and social care needs of our city supported.

### **COVID-19 Message from Susanne Millar**

Hello, for those of you who don't know me, I'm Susanne Millar. I'm the chief officer for the health and social care partnership here in Glasgow city. I'm really delighted to be speaking to you albeit through the medium of video, as has been the case for a number of months now.

A couple of things that I wanted to talk to folk about today, I'm hoping that people are now familiar with the partnership briefings that we're sending out across staff and a range of stakeholders. We're hoping through the partnership briefings that you do get a sense of the work that we're doing here in health and social care in the city. We're really keen to hear from folk about the work that's going on in the city, so please make sure you get in contact with the team here if there is anything in particular that you would want to highlight. I'm really proud of the range of work that you can see through the briefings, the partnership briefings,

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that we are sending out. If you have any ideas about what else you might want to know about, please get in touch.

The videos that we've been making as a senior team over the last 17 / 18 months have been the way in which we've tried to communicate with staff and beyond with partners, with our elected members, with our own IJB Board. Initially it was a really strange way to try and communicate with people, I'm really used to being able to get out and about and to meet people, particularly staff on the front-line within the health and social care partnership to really get a sense of how people are and what we might do within the partnership to make sure that we are supporting our front-line staff to do the best job that they can and that they enjoy their work that they do for us. Through these videos, myself and other members of the senior team here have been keeping in touch with our own staff and with a range of partners to make sure that we continue to connect with people, even through this medium.

One of the things I wanted to talk about today in terms of where we are now, is really a sense of reflection. We've had some sessions within the health and social care partnership to reflect on the last 18 months and it's really difficult to find words to properly describe the experience we've been through within the Health and Social Care Partnership and continuing to deliver vital services across this unprecedented time in terms of the challenges we faced managing through the COVID pandemic. I'm hoping that people have and or do take the time to reflect properly. The impact on our working lives, on our personal lives has been absolutely immense and hopefully, for some of us, we are managing to find some re-connection with families, with friends, with work colleagues and some kind of normality around about our daily

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lives. But we do need to make sure that we take some time to reflect the impact the last 18 months has had on us. Sometimes it can be difficult to carve out that time. I know for a lot of people, some of that reflection could be painful because I know that some people will have experienced loss and bereavement over the last 17 / 18 months, whilst at the same time, particularly working for us, working in that frontline and managing all of the challenges that came with holding onto your family and holding onto your work life and your personal life. The time to reflect the impact that's had on people, it's time that we need to carve out for each other. And again, particularly for our staff, some of that experience of talking to staff about the reflection and about the impact have been hugely emotionally and really powerful because sometimes it's not until we talk to one another about what the last 18 months have felt like and how they've impacted on us, can we really understand the impact that they've had on us personally and professionally. So please do take the time to talk to one another and to reflect. Particularly for our own staff if there is anything else that you feel that that we can do as a Partnership to make sure that you have that time to reflect, I would really encourage you to let us know, let your manager know, let the senior team know, let myself know how else we can support you. I think the next period for us is about taking that time to reconnect trying to bring some structure and some normality to our lives, professionally and personally. And some of that, taking some joy in the lives that we have professionally and personally and some of that reflection about the last 18 months.

One of the things that is particularly challenging just now has been with the recent surges in COVID, we are reminded that COVID is still with us. It's still in in our communities, it's still impacting on our families, in our schools and in our communities and in our services. So again, I would

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encourage people to continue to take all the measures that you can in terms of vaccination, in terms of testing, following the rules in terms of face coverings to make sure that we continue to keep ourselves and each other safe.

Lastly, I have genuinely ran out of words to describe the pride and my gratitude for the work that our staff in the Health and Social Care Partnership have done over the last 18 months. There are almost no words left to describe the commitment, the loyalty and the resilience in our workforce. But I do try and make sure that I don't make one of these videos without recognising that. I think it's hugely important that staff hear from myself and the senior team that we are incredibly proud, we are inspired and we're hugely grateful for all that you have done in the last 18 months, and particularly for the way that you have undertaken the jobs that we've had to do in the Health and Social Care Partnership. One of the biggest things for me to watch and reflect on and experience has been the human connections that people have made. The humanity that's been really obvious from our frontline staff and managers in terms of the work that they've done. The humanity that's come across our organisation including the business support functions, the finance functions, the admin functions and how we've come together and I would be particularly keen to make sure that the human connection that we've made with each other and with the people that we work for and with, is something that we retain. I think our jobs can be done at the best when they are done with that humanity and with that connection with the people of this city. So it is only left for me to say again thanks very much for all that you do and that you are and to encourage moving forward with that range of partners to reflect on the last 18 months, to take the

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good bits with us and to be at peace with the bits that we want to leave behind in terms of our experiences.

Thanks very much.

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