



Northern Periphery and  
Arctic Programme  
2014-2020



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# NPA Covid-19 Response (CoRe)



## Citizen Summary



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NHS Highland

## NPA Covid-19 Response Project (CoRe)



In March 2020, when COVID-19 was classed as a global pandemic by the World Health Organisation it garnered international attention and a worldwide call to action. Led by Dr David Heaney, an informal group of health experts known as the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme (NPA) Response Group identified the need for research, collaboration and dissemination of information throughout the NPA member countries and associated partners. The members had experience of working on research and provision of healthcare in remote rural areas of northern Europe, however this was the first time a group of this size with such a wide geographical spread and range of expertise had worked together.




This group reported their findings to the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme (NPA), in Copenhagen, Denmark.


In the Spring of 2020 the NPA launched the **NPA Covid-19 Response funding call**

The Covid-19 Umbrella project (**CoRe**) with an aim to oversee the activity in the thematic projects and disseminate the results of the work was funded.

In addition the NPA allocated funding to **thematic projects** focusing on six key areas:

<p>Theme A - Clinical Aspects</p> 	<p><b>COVIDWATCH-EU-NPA</b>  <b>Project Lead:</b> Dr Liam Glynn, University of Limerick, Ireland <a href="mailto:Liam.Glynn@ul.ie">Liam.Glynn@ul.ie</a>  <b>Partners and Associated Partners:</b> University of Tromsø, Norway; Akureyi Hospital, Iceland; Lakehead University Hospital, Northern Ontario, Canada; NHS Highland; University of Eastern Finland; and the University of New England.  <b>Main Aims:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Provide continuous reporting of comparative clinical data across NPA regions.</li> <li>2) Map the public health responses/interventions across the NPA regions (e.g. national lockdowns, rolling out of vaccine and care, impact on health care services).</li> </ol>
<p>Theme B - Health and well being</p> 	<p><b>Project Lead:</b> Prof Gerry Leavey, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland <a href="mailto:g.leavey@ulster.ac.uk">g.leavey@ulster.ac.uk</a>  <b>Partners and Associated Partners:</b> Bamford Centre for Health and Wellbeing, Ulster University; Prof Joan Condell, Ulster University; NHS Highland  <b>Main Aims:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Assessment of how COVID-19 has affected NPA members' health and wellbeing.</li> <li>2) Examination of impact COVID-19 has had on the provision of rural mental health care service provision.</li> </ol>

<p>Theme C - Technology solutions</p> 	<p><b>TechSolns project</b></p> <p><b>Project Lead:</b> Prof Joan Condell, Ulster University, Northern Ireland <a href="mailto:j.condell@ulster.ac.uk">j.condell@ulster.ac.uk</a></p> <p><b>Partners:</b> Tech Care (Nemlia LLC), Faroe Islands; University of Oulu, Finland; Centre for Rural Medicine, Sweden.</p> <p><b>Associated Partners:</b> Medecines Optimisation Innovation Centre (MOIC), Northern Ireland; University of Limerick, Ireland; Healthcare Analytics Ltd, Northern Ireland; Interactive Health Ltd, Scotland; Kraydel Ltd, Northern Ireland; Centria University of Applied Sciences, Finland; Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Tromso, Norway; NHS Highland, Scotland.</p> <p><b>Main Aim:</b> To look at how technology was successfully (or unsuccessfully) implemented during the pandemic through conducting mini-interviews and collating press articles of COVID-19 technological solutions from credible sources to use as case studies.</p>
<p>Theme D - Citizen engagement / Community response</p> 	<p><b>Project Lead:</b> Anette Fosse, <a href="mailto:anettfos@online.no">anettfos@online.no</a></p> <p><b>Research Partners and Associated Partners:</b> Kainuu Regional Council; University of Oulu, Finland; Rural Area Partnership, Northern Ireland; NHS Western Isles, Scotland; Leitrim County Council, Ireland; British Red Cross, Shetland, Scotland; Baltic Sea Cluster Development Centre, Denmark; Derry City &amp; Strabane District Council, Northern Ireland; Faroese Agricultural Agency, Faroe Islands.</p> <p><b>Project Aim:</b> To examine the impact, resilience, and responses to COVID-19 in the NPA regions at a community level, and recommend actions, including NPA project initiatives.</p>
<p>Theme E - Economic themes</p> 	<p><b>Project Lead:</b> Thomas Fisher, CoDel, Scotland <a href="mailto:thomas.fisher@mailbox.org">thomas.fisher@mailbox.org</a></p> <p><b>Partners and Associated Partners:</b> CoDel, Outer Hebrides, Scotland; Nordregio; University of East Finland Department of Social Sciences; The Baltic Sea Cluster Development Centre, Denmark; Steve Westbrook &amp; Associates, Scotland; Katinka Svanberg; Mid Sweden University; Búnaðarstovan, Faroe Islands; Sermersooq Business, Greenland; Innovative Experiences, Norway; Austurbrú, East Iceland; NHS Highland, Scotland; Ulster University, Northern Ireland; and the University of Limerick, Ireland.</p> <p><b>Project Aims:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To assess the economic impact of COVID-19 on health sector systems and specific economic sectors; and,</li> <li>2) To ascertain the cross or intersectional economic impacts of COVID-19. Special consideration is given to the younger generation, who in the past, have tended to move away from rural areas.</li> </ol>

<p>Theme F – Emerging Themes</p> 	<p><b>AET project</b></p> <p><b>Project Lead:</b> Alan White, Highland Health Ventures Ltd, Scotland  <a href="mailto:alan@highlandhealth.ventures">alan@highlandhealth.ventures</a></p> <p><b>Partners and Associated Partners:</b> NHS Highland, Scotland; Highland Health Ventures LTD, Scotland; Ulster University, Northern Ireland; Tampere University of Applied Science, Finland; Norrlands Universitetssjukhus – Norrland University Hospital, Nus, Sweden.</p> <p><b>Project Aim:</b> To examine the experiences of care home staff, university staff and students during the COVID-19 pandemic and how these relate to society as a whole.</p>
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## The CoRe project

Project Lead: Lee Heaney, NHS Highland, Scotland [lee.heaney@nhs.scot](mailto:lee.heaney@nhs.scot)

Partners and Associate Partner: University of Eastern Finland, University of New England, Maine

### The main aims of the CoRe project were to:

- Liaise and communicate with the NPA Covid-19 response group
- Manage and have oversight of work of the thematic projects ensuring consistency with the rationale of the NPA Covid-19 response.
- To facilitate the continuation of communication, sharing of knowledge and to foster new relationships and partnerships between the organisations involved.
- Report progress to the Joint Secretariat
- Act as spokesperson towards the programme, target groups and other interested institutional or non-institutional parties;
- Collect and collate all the new knowledge produced by the thematic projects and organise it in a way that can inform the future NPA projects as well as the programming process of the NPA 2021-202

During the period from July 2020 to May 2021 the CoRe project team communicated regularly with all thematic projects both formally and informally. CoRe Management Meetings were held and were attended by all thematic project leads, the CoRe project team and a representative from the Joint Secretariat. Project leads presented their progress and discussions were encouraged between all participants to share knowledge and best practice.

Briefing documents showing the progress of the work were produced and distributed.

The CoRe project team provided support to all thematic projects during the lifetime of their projects and also during the reporting phase. Mentoring was given to partners who were less experienced in NPA projects. Advice and tools to disseminate finding were also given including reporting templates and branding guidelines.

## Dissemination

An important part of the work of the CoRe project was to publicise the work and disseminate the findings of the Covid response project. Below are some of the activities which have taken place.

### 15th Arctic Frontiers conference “Building Bridges” - 3 February 2021

- The story and experience of the NPA Covid-19 response group was presented by Kirsti Mijnhijmer, NPA Head of Secretariat during the plenary “**Arctic responses to Covid-19**”.

### Nordic Talk - 29 September 2021

- Prof. Liam Glynn from the Covidwatch-EU-NPA project, Thomas Fisher and Theona Morrison from the Economic Impact project together with their colleagues from Nordregio delivered a Nordic Talk on the theme of **Redefining Peripherality**

### University of Eastern Finland "Conference of Effectiveness 2021" - 5 October 2021

- A poster video presentation of the work of Covidwatch-EU-NPA project was presented by Anndra Dumo,UEF

### EU Regions Week - 14 October 2021

- The work of the CoRe and thematic projects were presented in a workshop at EU Regions Week 2021.

### NPA Annual conference - 27 October 2021

- Findings and recommendations will be presented and discussed at the NPA Annual Conference

### Videos

- Two videos have been produced. One featuring the work of the Covid Response group and one highlighting the results of the CoRe thematic project results

### CoRe website

- A website has been created to highlight the findings and conclusions of the CoRe work.

**For more information including Reports, Citizen Summaries and videos for the CoRe and Thematic projects please visit the CoRe website:**

**<https://core.interreg-npa.eu/>**

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