PPE STOCKS. NEW ‘HOSPITALS‘

The Government has ordered an urgent national audit of personal protective equipment, body bags, swabs and infection control products

Local Resilience Forum planners were earlier this week asked to share stock levels and daily consumption rates of the items at ambulance, Acute Trusts and in primary care and other services by 9pm on Tuesday.

They were asked to indicate whether each figure represented a “major” or “minor” supply problem, or no problem at all The audit request came from a Ministry of Defence planner at the resilience and emergencies division of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

As well as Trusts, Resilience Forum staff were asked to share stock levels among adult social care services, numbers of mortuary staff, other local authority staff, police, prisons, fire and rescue services and funeral directors.

The email also asked planners if local services had access to PPE supplies above their immediate need and whether local authorities were in discussions with any private PPE suppliers.

# Field hospitals being set up across England

* Plans seem to be emerging for new field hospitals throughout England Large events centres in Harrogate and Kent being considered A raft of sports centres also earmarked
* [No official confirmation from NHSE] but the following venues are confirmed field hospital sites:
* Harrogate Convention Centre: the scale and functions will be set out by NHS England in the coming days,
* Leisure centres in Cumbria, including the Whitehaven Sports Centre, The Sands Centre in Carlisle, Penrith Leisure Centre and Kendal Leisure Centre – adding an extra 500 beds to the local system. Work on these temporary hospitals begins today (1 April).

This is despite a refusal to confirm these moves centrally, and confusion at senior levels in some areas about whether they will go ahead and where.

A range of other venues are also under consideration including:

* Kent Event Centre, near Maidstone, was inspected by army logistics staff on Tuesday. *A* decision is due on Thursday. The venue is the largest conference centre in the county and located between the M2 and M20, making it easily accessible by road and has large amounts of car parking on site.
* Gatwick and Heathrow airports, where the drop in air traffic has left large areas unused.
* The Brighton Centre, run by Brighton and Hove Council, is said to have been under consideration.
* A site in Chineham, near Basingstoke, Hampshire, according to a report.
* The East of England is expected to be served by a site in South Hertfordshire and a site in either Cambridge or Norwich.

Talks are understood to be under way in several other parts of England.

So far, NHS England has only *officially* confirmed plans for temporary “Nightingale hospitals” in London, Manchester and near Birmingham. One NHS chief executive involved in discussions said there was ongoing debate about demand modelling, clinical models, and whether the big city hospitals could be expected to serve other large parts of the country.