

COVID-19 Notice

Friday 03 April 2020



Air Ambulance NI HEMS team helping at The Frontline

Air Ambulance Northern Ireland and Northern Ireland Ambulance Service have reached the difficult decision to temporarily suspend the Helicopter Emergency Medical Service with effect from 19.00 today, 3rd April.

The temporary suspension of the service has come about in order to free up key clinical staff to be redeployed to use their specific skills and expertise in critical care during the current public health emergency. The suspension of the service will be reviewed on an ongoing basis with all parties committed to recommencing the service immediately when the staff can be reallocated.

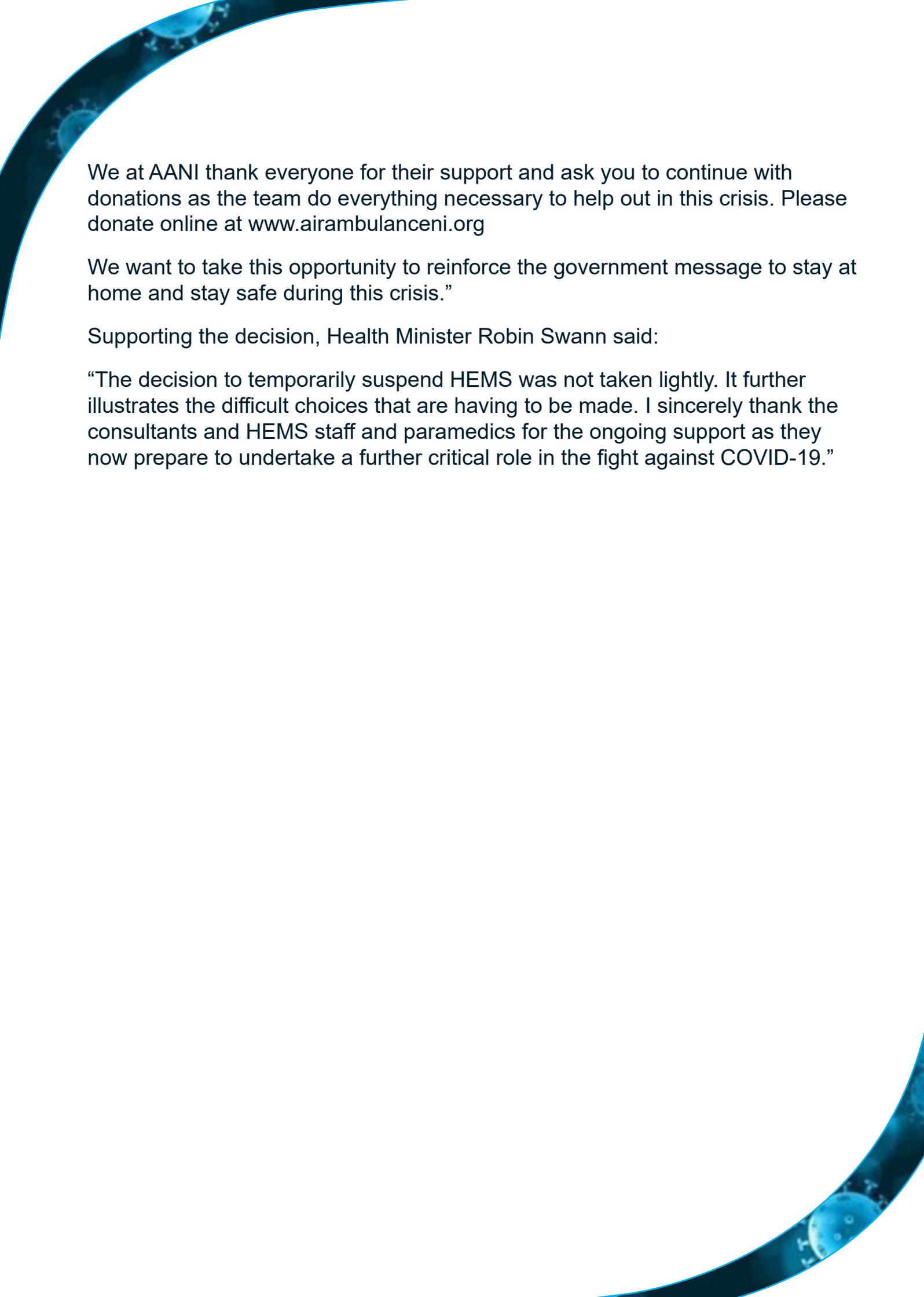
Michael Bloomfield, NIAS Chief Executive said:

“For the past 32 months the HEMS team has provided critical pre-hospital care at trauma incidents across Northern Ireland, saving lives, brains and limbs. From today, the HEMS service will be suspended. This has been a difficult decision to take however having the highly skilled members of this team at the frontline is crucial to support our community in the most appropriate way during the extraordinary challenges we are facing in managing the pandemic. I would like to thank every member of the team for the incredible work they do and look forward to seeing them return to that role as soon as possible.”

Ray Foran, Chairperson of Air Ambulance NI added;

“Please be assured that this is a temporary measure. We are actively working with our colleagues in NIAS to identify other ways in which we can support patient care as the pandemic develops and other ways in which our aircraft might be deployed in support of the national response.

The public have been a crucial part of the Air Ambulance NI journey providing vital funding to the charity to ensure daily operations are possible.



We at AANI thank everyone for their support and ask you to continue with donations as the team do everything necessary to help out in this crisis. Please donate online at www.airambulanceni.org

We want to take this opportunity to reinforce the government message to stay at home and stay safe during this crisis.”

Supporting the decision, Health Minister Robin Swann said:

“The decision to temporarily suspend HEMS was not taken lightly. It further illustrates the difficult choices that are having to be made. I sincerely thank the consultants and HEMS staff and paramedics for the ongoing support as they now prepare to undertake a further critical role in the fight against COVID-19.”