

St Helens Borough Council Outbreak Management Plan

Appendix 1: Outbreak control information

a. Outbreak Control Team (OCT) members

Usual members

- Local Authority Director of Public Health (or nominated deputy)
- Health Protection Public Health Consultant
- Local Authority Environmental Health Practitioner
- PHE Consultant in Communicable Disease Control/Consultant in Health Protection or Consultant Epidemiologist
- Consultant Microbiologist/Virologist
- Communications Manager
- Administrative Support

Additional members (this is not an exhaustive list)

- PHE Consultant Epidemiologist
- PHE Health Protection Surveillance/Information Officer
- PHE Data Analyst/Statistician
- PHE Health Protection Nurse/Practitioner
- PHE Director (if relevant)
- PHE Emergency Preparedness Manager
- NHS England Strategic Commander
- NHS Community Provider Coordinator
- CCG Representative
- North West Ambulance Service
- Local Authority or provider service Infection Prevention and Control Nurse
- General Practitioner
- Consultant Physician
- Immunisation Coordinator
- Pharmaceutical Advisers
- Legal Adviser (PHE or Local Authority (LA) as appropriate)

Others who may be called upon to attend include representatives from:

- Health & Safety Executive
- Care Quality Commission
- Ofsted
- Relevant institution e.g. school, university, business

b. Roles and responsibilities

These tasks may vary according to the nature of circumstances of the outbreak.

Local Authority Director of Public Health

- Have overall responsibility for the health of the population including the surveillance, prevention and control of communicable diseases and infections.
- To be represented on the OCT either in person or through an appropriate deputy.
- Work with the NHS England Regional Team and CCGs to ensure the release of relevant local resources required to manage the outbreak.
- Keeping elected members, People's Board and senior management informed of the outbreak as appropriate.
- Where agreed, act as the Public Health Lead for the local authority in relation to providing response.

PHE Consultant in Communicable Disease Control/Consultant in Health Protection/Consultant Epidemiologist on behalf of PHE Centre

- To declare an outbreak following appropriate consultation.
- To convene the OCT and ensure membership is appropriate.
- To chair the OCT where this is a community associated outbreak unless a different Chair has been agreed by the OCT.
- To make arrangements for the OCT to receive administrative support.
- To identify what additional resources/personnel might be needed e.g. public health practitioners or IT systems.
- Depending on the nature and scale of the incident, to inform the relevant PHE director and ensure PHE briefings are prepared as outlined in the IERP (Incident and Emergency Response Plan).
- To ensure the initial responses and investigation is begun and actions documented within 24 hours of the time the potential outbreak has been recognised.
- To provide epidemiological advice relevant to the outbreak and support analysis and interpretation of data.
- To ensure that an incident room is set up if required at an appropriate venue having regards to the nature of the outbreak.
- To arrange, in conjunction with environmental health colleagues and/or infection control colleagues, for appropriate identifications and follow up of any contacts.
- To ensure that appropriate control measures for contacts and others at risk are recommended and to arrange this through the relevant commissioner if necessary; this includes isolation advice and support as required.
- To identify the need for advice from relevant experts and request advice as appropriate.
- Liaise with clinicians (primary or secondary care) over need for specific testing and management of cases.
- To agree with the OCT who will lead the media response.
- To ensure appropriate bodies and officers are kept informed and updated.
- Where appropriate to liaise with colleagues in adjacent PHE Centres where more than one PHE Centre is involved or may be involved.
- To coordinate the written final report on the outbreak and to ensure that the outbreak recommendations are acted upon.
- To ensure the constructive debrief is held and lessons learned disseminated and acted upon as necessary.

- To ensure all documentation relating to the outbreak is correctly managed and disseminated, incorporating information governance and data protection requirements.
- The above tasks may vary according to the nature or circumstances of the outbreak.

Local Authority Environmental Health Practitioner (representative of Chief Environmental Health Officer [or equivalent])

- Attend OCT meetings, or be represented by a suitable deputy who will report directly back.
- Investigate potential sources of the outbreak and secure relevant improvements as appropriate where the LA is the enforcing authority e.g. for food safety, health and safety, health protection. Where the health and safety enforcement falls to the Health and Safety Executive, the LA should advise the OCT. Actions in relation to investigation and control include:
 - be responsible for arranging the collection and transport of appropriate specimens to the laboratory for screening of patients, contacts and staff;
 - undertake appropriate food, water and environmental sampling and be responsible for the collection and transport of food samples, to a suitable microbiology laboratory;
 - undertake site visit as necessary;
 - be responsible for ensuring the infection control advice is implemented by the potential/suspected source of the outbreak, using relevant legal powers as necessary and working closely with PHE staff or relevant local authority or provider service Infection Prevention and Control Team;
 - ensure the normal arrangements for the collection and disposal of clinical waste remain appropriate. If necessary, discuss with OCT and contractors as to the changes required;
 - be responsible for informing relevant food and non-food businesses of hazards when appropriate;
 - to arrange, as necessary, for the identification, removal and safe disposal of contaminated (or potentially contaminated) food;
 - to ensure continuity of evidence;
 - provide help and advice with the epidemiological aspects of the outbreak, including the investigation of cases (and contacts where appropriate).

Testing Lead

- Present to the OCT relevant testing information relating to the outbreak.
- Identify resources to enable testing to be undertaken speedily and efficiently and to report on this to the OCT.
- Provide mechanisms for out of hours communications with the CCDC (Consultant in Communicable Disease Control), OCT, the public and other stakeholders as appropriate.
- Ensure regular briefing of LA field staff.

Lead Press Officer

The designated Lead Press Officer will be nominated by the OCT and may be from any of the key organisations; their role is listed below:

- Provide advice to the OCT on media relations.
- Contribute to the preparation of press releases and statements
- Ensure such material is circulated appropriately, including to all members of the OCT and relevant others as agreed by the OCT.

- In collaboration with other press officers of all key organisations and the OCT nominated media spokesperson, organise press conferences and media briefings as appropriate.
- Be the initial point of contact for all media enquiries.

NB. The designated media spokesperson refers to the person nominated by the OCT and press officers of the relevant organisations would be expected to work closely with this person

Administrative Support

- Take accurate and detailed minutes of OCT meetings including a record of actions and the individual or organisation responsible.
- Timely circulation of minutes to members of the OCT.
- Organisation and circulation of dates for OCT meetings or associated activities.
- Act as task manager for incidents where this is required.
- Other administrative support as required.

c. OCT Terms of Reference

The terms of reference should be agreed upon at the first meeting and recorded accordingly. Suggested terms of reference are:

- Review the epidemiological, microbiological and environmental evidence and verify an outbreak is occurring.
- Regularly conduct a full risk assessment whilst the outbreak is on-going.
- Develop a strategy to deal with the outbreak and allocate responsibilities based on the risk assessment.
- Determine the level of the outbreak according to the PHE National Incident Response Plan and Concept of Operations documents (NIRP and CONOPs).
- Ensure that appropriate control measures are implemented to prevent further primary and secondary cases.
- Agree appropriate further epidemiological, microbiological, environmental and food chain investigations.
- Communicate with other professionals, the media and the public as required providing accurate and timely information.
- Determine when the outbreak can be considered over, based on on-going risk assessment and taking account of risk management actions.
- Make recommendations regarding the development of systems and procedures to prevent a future occurrence of similar incidents and where feasible enact these.
- Produce reports, at least one of which will be the final report containing lessons learnt.