

COVID-19 HIGHLIGHT REPORT

SERVICE AREA:	Public health
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KEY ACTIVITY HEADLINES

- Provision of public health advice and guidance to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum (LRF) multi-agency COVID-19 Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG)
- Administration of and provision of public health advice and guidance to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough LRF multi-agency COVID-19 Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG)
- Co-chairing the Cambs & Peterborough LRF Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Cell
- Preparation of service specific PPE guidance for all LRF organisations in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough following release of updated Public Health England guidance
- Jointly leading a stocktake of vulnerable/socially excluded population groups and COVID-19 related needs and issues with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, working across LRF partner agencies and reporting to the LRF Community Reference Group.
- Work with the COVID-19 Community Hub to support implementation of the LRF vulnerable people's protocol
- Work in development with the COVID-19 Community Hub and districts on public health guidance for volunteers
- Public health analysts involved in ongoing work with the LRF Intelligence Cell on modelling - including linking to regional Public Health England resources.
- Working with CCG, CPFT, Voluntary sector and Communications Team to develop a multi-agency COVID-19 mental health and wellbeing plan and campaign.
- Provision of public health advice and guidance to Cambridgeshire County Council/Peterborough City Council (CCC/PCC) COVID-19 Joint Management Team Gold Group and the Silver Tactical working group.
- Provision of public health advice and guidance to both Council's People and Communities Management Team and Service Directors on various issues, e.g. PPE, PHE Care Home guidance.
- Preparation of guidance on infection control and COVID-19 protocols for rough sleeper accommodation (Peterborough City Council)
- Work with the communications team on a feature article for local print/online media, to encourage people to follow the Stay Home guidance – including quotes from Director of Public Health, NHS Trust medical directors, GP and Councillors; two further DPH video blogs.
- Provision of public health advice and answering of queries for Council staff through the AskDrLiz e-mail helpline
- Ongoing work with providers of contracted public health programmes to monitor contracts and support with management of COVID-19 related issues.
- Ongoing work to finalise delay in the transfer of recently tendered public health contracts (Sexual Health prevention, Integrated Lifestyles Services) to new providers, and to extend current contracts, due to COVID-19 situation.
- Maintain regional links with the East of England Public Health England Team and joint Public Health England/NHS England regional incident management. Acting as a conduit for escalation of public health queries and issues to regional PHE team.
- Attend Public Health England led multi-agency incident meetings for specific local COVID-19 outbreaks of concern, as local representative.

RISKS / CHALLENGES (AND MITIGATION)

Key Risks

- Not all population groups may have access to and understanding of public health messages and guidance.

This risk is being mitigated through close working between the Councils' communication team, cohesion lead, and public health to ensure that key public health messages are conveyed through different routes and different languages. Also through the wider LRF 'Warn and Inform' group, which brings in communication leads from district councils, police, and other agencies.

- Vulnerable/socially excluded population groups may find it hard to socially distance/self isolate or their welfare may be impacted by COVID-19 in other ways.

This risk is being mitigated through a variety of measures often taken a local (district) level. A stocktake of the current needs and issues for vulnerable/socially excluded population groups is now starting, jointly led by public health and the office of the police and crime commissioner. This will work with a wide range of organisations, and report into the LRF Community Reference Group.

- Potential risk of spread within residential institutions with vulnerable populations e.g. care homes, prisons (further national guidance for care homes was provided 3/4/20).

This risk is being mitigated through prisons and care homes reporting COVID-19 cases to the Public Health England Health Protection Team, which provides advice on measures to prevent further spread of the virus. Also through local authority and CCG commissioners staying in close touch with Care Homes and supporting them appropriately.

Challenges

- Rolling out new national guidance on personal protective equipment (PPE) – requires further staff training, and modelling of changes in needs for PPE as a result of the guidance.

This challenge has been mitigated by the work of the LRF PPE cell, including public health staff preparing organisation/service specific summaries of the new national PPE guidance.

- Planning for the pandemic peak – including impact on staff absence

This risk has been mitigated through ongoing review of number of cases and service use by the LRF Intelligence Cell to identify trends, and by daily updates on staffing by key LRF organisations.

WORKFORCE UPDATE

- All public health staff now working from home
- Public health consultant workforce has two vacancies out of five posts – both vacancies filled but scheduled to start in May.
- Good interim cover being provided by two retired public health consultants returned to work part-time, and one academic PH consultant working as a volunteer for two days a week.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (increase in costs / reduction in income)

- Some limited financial impact through extension of public health contracts, where some savings had been planned as part of implementation of new contracts.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Joint work with Comms team and Cohesion team on public health communications plan and toolkit, including ongoing promotion of the 'Stay at Home' and core hygiene messaging, mental health and wellbeing, and promoting communication with diverse communities.