

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

# HUMAN INFLUENZA PANDEMIC PLAN

April 2009  
V2

## **HUMAN INFLUENZA PANDEMIC**

The Department of Health estimates that between 25% and 50% of the population will become ill if there is an influenza pandemic. Staff absences will steadily increase, peaking at around 40% (including carers and other absences). The first wave of the pandemic will last around 15 weeks. Subsequent waves could be more severe. The pandemic will lead to considerable changes in working patterns.

DCMS Directors will have to prioritise work and ensure adequate resources are diverted to key priorities. DCMS will also need to establish an 'Ops Room' to co-ordinate briefing for Ministers attendance at COBR etc. Some business areas will experience not only large scale staff absences but will see significant numbers of their staff allocated to areas of greater need. However, as a result of careful planning in advance, including through BCPs and risk registers, informed decisions are taken and the impact on business is minimised.

### **SCOPE**

Each phase of this document has an associated set of priorities, assumptions and actions that are linked to the World Health Organisations (WHO). Phases 1-3 are largely phases of observation. The current WHO phase is 3. This plan covers Alert Levels (Phases 4-5), the actual Pandemic (Phase 6), and the post pandemic recovery period.

### **PLANNING PRIORITIES**

In a Pandemic situation the threat to DCMS hinges around absenteeism of staff and the subsequent effects on the business, our ability to perform essential services and to fulfil our obligations with regard to staff.

The priorities are to:

- Support Ministers, both in their DCMS role and in their cross-government work.
- Inform, reassure and support the workforce.
- Maintain the ability to meet financial obligations
- Maintain, as far as possible, normal business operations

All business areas have Business Continuity Plans setting out their key tasks and staff responsible/able to complete these tasks.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The DCMS designated point of contact for receiving alerts from Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CSC) are:

Frances MacLeod

020 7211 6007

[Frances.macleod@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Frances.macleod@culture.gsi.gov.uk)

The designated flu contact has responsibility for:

1. Receiving alerts from CSC
2. Communication with CSC and other government departments
3. Advising DCMS Directors and the Pandemic Project Board of alert status
4. Alerting the 'flu networks' of the alert status

The DCMS Pandemic operational co-ordination lead on pandemic response is:

Director of Corporate Services

David Roe

020 7211 6026

[david.roe@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:david.roe@culture.gsi.gov.uk)

Frances MacLeod (Deputy)

020 7211 6007

[frances.macleod@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:frances.macleod@culture.gsi.gov.uk)

He has responsibility for:

1. Invoking the plan for the appropriate alert phase.
2. Informing and updating Management Board of pandemic situation
3. Co-ordinating the DCMS response
4. Reviewing and monitoring the effectiveness of the DCMS plan

#### **COMMUNICATIONS – INTERNAL**

Responsibility for issuing communications to staff will rest with Internal Comms (Penny Dolby 020 7211 6275) in liaison with Human Resources (Busola Osibogun 020 7211 2074). They will use the agreed Internal Communications Strategy to liaise with DCMS staff.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS – EXTERNAL**

Responsibility for external communications rests with Press Office (Toby Sargent 020 7211 6276). They will use the external communications alert network and agreed communications strategy to liaise with all DCMS sponsored bodies.

#### **BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING**

All business areas are responsible for having effective BCPs in place and reviewing/updating them as necessary. Division are also responsible for ensuring sponsored bodies in their sector have appropriate BCPs in place.

Business areas should review contacts (including for their sponsored bodies) on the DCMS Flu Network at least every 3 months.

## PHASE 4 – PANDEMIC ALERT (as notified by CSC)

*Small clusters of human infection but limited spread. Virus not well adapted to human-to human spread. Virus not present in UK*

### Strategy

- Normal operations as far as possible.
- Increased vigilance.

### Priorities

- To provide reassurance to staff without scaremongering.
- To keep up to date with developments
- To ensure DCMS response plan is effective.
- To provide adequate resource for increase in pandemic planning work.
- Divisions to liaise with their sponsored bodies

ACTION	RESPONSE
Acknowledge receipt of Alert notification	Designated flu contacts
Notification to DCMS Directors and Flu Networks	Designated flu contacts
Information update to Management Board	Co-ordinator
Issue staff communications via intranet	Internal Comms/HR
Update Pandemic Website	Designated flu contacts/divisions/comms
Respond to staff questions	HR
Check DCMS Pandemic Plan	Co-ordinator
Review resource for Pandemic Planning	Co-ordinator
Check BCPs	Deputy Directors
Liaison with sponsored bodies re their plans	Deputy Directors

## PHASE 5 – PANDEMIC ALERT (as notified by CSC)

*Large clusters of human infection but localised. Indications that virus is becoming better at adapting to humans – Not present in UK*

### Strategy

- Normal operations as far as possible
- Contain Risks

### Priorities

- To provide information and reassurance to staff
- To keep up to date with developments
- To ensure DCMS response plan is effective.
- To prepare for arrival of pandemic in UK
- Communication to staff of both DCMS planning and Government issued guidance will be essential in maintaining the confidence of staff and the overall resilience of the organisation.
- Liaison with sponsored bodies to ensure they are taking appropriate actions.

ACTION	RESPONSE
Acknowledge receipt of Alert	Designated flu contacts
Notification to DCMS Directors and Flu Networks	Designated flu contacts
Information update to Management Board	Co-ordinator
Issue staff communications via intranet. Consider need for other sources of information	Internal Comms/HR
Update Pandemic Website	Designed flu contacts/divisions/comms
Respond to staff questions/concerns	HR
Place Health Advice notices in appropriate places	Co-ordinator/Health & Safety
Review BCPs. Ensure contingencies are readied or actioned as appropriate.	Deputy Directors/Directors Co-ordinator
Review policy on sick leave, leave without pay, paid leave etc with regard to the pandemic situation. Hold in readiness	HR
Review 'stay at home if ill' advice to ensure it encourages staff not to come to work if feeling ill	HR
Ensure that capability for Home Working is available for home workers identified in divisional business plans. Issue Home working guidelines	IS/HR
Check contingency planning website, phone numbers etc	IS
Decide on dedicated phone number for staff to report illness/bereavement. Prepare handout for staff	HR/IS
Check DCMS Pandemic Plan	Co-ordinator

Review resource for Pandemic Planning (Ops Team etc)	Co-ordinator
	Deputy Directors
Liaison with sponsored bodies re their plans	Deputy Directors

## PHASE 6 – PANDEMIC PHASE – (There are 4 alert levels within this phase)

### Strategy

- Contain Risks
- Protect and Preserve Assets

### Priorities

- Reassure, inform and protect staff
- Business as usual as far as practicable

### Phase 6 - Level One

*Increased sustained transmission in general population – Cases outside the UK*

ACTION	RESPONSE
Acknowledge receipt of Alert	Designated flu contacts
Notification to DCMS Directors and Flu Networks	Designated flu contacts
Information update to Management Board	Co-ordinator
Issue staff communication.	Internal Comms/HR
Respond to staff questions/concerns	HR & Senior Managers
Update Flu Guidance Website	Co-ordinator
Review BCPs, amend as necessary	Deputy Directors
Introduce increased cleaning set out in PPS business plan	Procurement & Property Services
Check Home Working (licences, accessibility etc)	IS
Review Ops Room staff list	Co-ordinator
Set up Ops Room in readiness	Co-ordinator

## Phase 6 - Level Two

### *Sporadic cases in the UK*

#### **Priorities**

- Reassure, inform and protect staff
- Business as usual, as much as possible

#### **Assumptions**

- Pandemic will spread to next level
- Will take 2-3 weeks from first case to widespread
- No vaccine available
- No travel restrictions imposed

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>
Acknowledge receipt of Alert	Designated flu contacts
Notification to DCMS Directors and Flu Networks	Designated flu contacts
Information update to Management Board	Co-ordinator
Issue staff communication.	Internal Comms/HR
Respond to staff questions/concerns	HR & Senior Managers
Update Flu Guidance Website	Co-ordinator
Communication 'stay at home if felling unwell message'	HR/Internal Comms
Issue policy on sick leave, leave without pay, paid leave etc Circulate FAQs to senior managers	HR
Issue dedicated telephone number to call to report illness, berevement	HR
Put sickness level monitoring into place	HR/Deputy Directors
Ops Room Operational	Co-ordinator
Regular meetings of Directors	Co-ordinator/Directors

PHASE 6 – ALERT LEVEL 3

*Outbreak in the UK*

**Priorities**

- **Inform, reassure and support staff**
- **Reduce the transmission of infection**
- **Maintain normal business, as far as possible.**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>
Acknowledge receipt of Alert	Designated flu contacts
Notification to DCMS Directors and Flu Networks	Designated flu contacts
Information update to Management Board	Co-ordinator
Issue staff communication.	Internal Comms/HR
Respond to staff questions/concerns	HR & Senior Managers
Update Flu Guidance Website	Co-ordinator
Communication 'stay at home if feeling unwell message'	HR/Internal Comms
Issue policy on sick leave, leave without pay, paid leave etc Circulate FAQs to senior managers	HR
Issue dedicated telephone number to call to report illness, berevement	HR
Put sickness level monitoring into place	HR/Deputy Directors
Check Ops Team shifts etc working	Co-ordinator
Directors to decide Departmental priorities	Co-ordinator/Directors
Directors to decide on staffing levels for all areas	Co-ordinator/Directors

## PHASE 6 – ALERT LEVEL 4

### *Widespread cases across the UK*

#### Priorities

- Inform, reassure and support staff
- Reduce the transmission of infection
- Maintain our ability to meet legal and financial obligations
- Maintain normal business operations, as far as possible.

#### Assumptions

- High level staff absence.
- Non essential work curtailed
- Directors to decide on departmental priorities
- Sick leave, compassionate leave, unpaid leave and paid leave will be governed by existing policy and procedures.
- No ban on public gatherings, travel within UK.
- Divisional BCP come into effect.

ACTION	RESPONSE
Acknowledge receipt of Alert	Designated flu contacts
Notification to DCMS Directors and Flu Networks	Designated flu contacts
Information update to Management Board	Co-ordinator
Issue staff communication.	Internal Comms/HR
Respond to staff questions/concerns	HR & Senior Managers
Update Flu Guidance Website	Co-ordinator
Continued communication 'stay at home if feeling unwell message'	HR/Internal Comms
Review how policy on sick leave, leave without pay, paid leave etc is working. Take responsibility for any difficult individual cases.	HR
Review how dedicated telephone number to call to report illness, bereavement etc is working	HR
Put sickness level monitoring into place	HR/Deputy Directors
Check Ops Team shifts etc working	Co-ordinator
Review departmental priorities decisions	Co-ordinator/Directors
Review staffing level decisions	Co-ordinator/Directors

## POST PANDEMIC – RECOVERY PLANS

### Strategy

- Resumption of business
- Review of response

### Priorities

- Reinstatement of 'normal business'
- Readiness for possible second wave of pandemic
- Staff welfare

### Assumptions

- End of first wave in UK
- Virus may still be circulating internationally
- Staff levels may not be back to normal
- Some fatalities may have occurred
- Staff may need counselling services

ACTION	RESPONSE
Assess impact on DCMS – report to Management Board	Co-ordinator/Deputy Directors
Assess impact on sponsored bodies – report to Management Board	Co-ordinator/Deputy Directors
Ops Team stood down	Co-ordinator
Bereavement	Line-Manager responsibility for initial contact (HR to provide guidance)
Counselling services	HR
Recruitment of temporary staff to cover where staff not yet able to return to work or possible for staff who have died	Deputy Directors/HR
Review of Pandemic Plan, amend as necessary	Management Board/Co-ordinator
Business areas to review their BCP	Deputy Directors
Resume normal services	All
Continuing watching brief	Co-ordinator