

Joint Agreement between the PHE London Coronavirus Response Centre and London Local Authorities for supporting the management of COVID-19 incidents and outbreaks, including those in complex settings

Version: 5

Date: 27 May 2020

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Overview

This joint agreement provides a framework for joint working between the PHE London Coronavirus Response Centre (LCRC) and the public health structures in London Local Authorities (LAs) for managing COVID-19 outbreaks, complex settings and community clusters.

This agreement will be kept under monthly review initially due to the rapidly changing regional situation and guidance, and fluctuating capacity across the system. This document is therefore intended to be flexible and adaptable for local operation due to the different support and capacity arrangements available in local systems in London.

Rationale for the joint agreement

- To have a joint collaborative and co-ordinated approach to supporting London settings including care homes, extra care housing and supported housing, local hospitals, workplaces, prisons, primary care settings, schools, nurseries and homeless hostels in managing COVID-19 outbreaks
- To improve understanding and access to services, reduce transmission, protect the vulnerable and prevent increased demand on healthcare services
- To share outbreak information to facilitate appropriate measures
- To have a Single Point of Contact (SPoC) in LCRC and in each local authority to facilitate data flow, communication and follow up
- To provide consistent advice to settings and local public health teams

Joint approach

The overarching joint approach to managing **complex settings and outbreaks** will be as follows:

- LCRC will receive notification from Tier 2, undertake a risk assessment and give advice and provide information to the setting on management of the outbreak;
- LCRC will manage cases and contacts, and provide advice on testing and infection control;

- LCRC will convene an Incident Management Team (IMT) if required;
- LCRC will inform the relevant local authority SPoC;
- The local authority will follow-up and support the setting to continue to operate whilst managing the outbreak, including, if required, support with infection prevention and control measures and PPE access;
- The local authority will support wider aspects of the response, such as support for any vulnerable contacts who are required to self-isolate, as per London's 6 Point Plan ([Appendix 1](#)) and national 7 themes of outbreak management plans (Appendix 2).

The overarching joint approach to managing **community clusters** will be as follows:

- The local authority or LCRC will receive notification from Tier 2
- The local authority will inform the LCRC SPoC/LCRC will inform the local authority SPoC
- The local authority will convene an IMT
- The local authority will provide support to the community
- LCRC will support the local authority in their risk assessment of and response to an identified community cluster







[Appendix 3](#) provides further information on the joint approach by setting type.

Contact details for Single Point of Contact (SPoC)

SPoC for PHE LCRC is LCRC@phe.gov.uk

SPoC for Brent is TrackandTrace@brent.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – 6 Point Plan for Local Authority wider response (London CEO Task and Finish Group))

 Point 1: Core requirements	 Point 2: Vulnerable groups	 Point 3: Community and economic impact	 Point 4: Local partnership response	 Point 5: Connecting and engaging communities	 Point 6: London regional resilience
Establish a LA Contact Tracing Lead and WG	Identifying potentially vulnerable groups	Understanding local community and economic impact	Partnership engagement	Mitigating low take-up of the national model	Local and regional resilience
Focus on Outbreak Management	Understanding vulnerability	Community Impact Checklist	Joining-up local intelligence with partners	Understanding barriers to engagement	Potential voluntary secondment to LCRC
Establish a local Data Hub	Role of shielding and 'shielding plus' services	Workforce Impact Checklist	Developing joint-action plans with partners	Focus on vulnerable groups and personas	Mutual-aid arrangements
Workplaces and buildings				Baseline and enhanced communications	
Developing a toolkit: In addition to the six-point plan set out above a toolkit of practical guides, structures, role profiles, scripts, and best-practice examples is being developed for LA's to access, co-design and develop,					

Appendix 2 – Local Outbreak Control Plans themes (DHSC)

Local Outbreak Control Plans will centre on 7 themes

- 1 Care homes and schools**
Planning for local outbreaks in care homes and schools (e.g. defining monitoring arrangements, potential scenarios and planning the required response)
- 2 High risk places, locations and communities**
Identifying and planning how to manage high risk places, locations and communities of interest (e.g. defining preventative measures and outbreak management strategies)
- 3 Local testing capacity**
Identifying methods for local testing to ensure a swift response that is accessible to the entire population (e.g. defining how to prioritise and manage deployment, examples may include NHS, pop-up etc).
- 4 Contact tracing in complex settings**
Assessing local and regional contact tracing capability in complex settings (e.g. identifying specific local complex communities, developing assumptions to estimate demand and options to scale capacity)
- 5 Data integration**
Integrating national and local data and scenario planning through the Joint Biosecurity Centre Playbook (e.g., data management planning, including data security, NHS data linkages)
- 6 Vulnerable people**
Supporting vulnerable local people to get help to self-isolate (e.g. facilitating NHS and local support, identifying relevant community groups etc) and ensuring services meet the needs of diverse communities
- 7 Local Boards**
Establishing governance structures led by existing Covid-19 Health Protection Boards in conjunction with local NHS and supported by existing Gold command forums and a new member-led Board to communicate with the general public

Appendix 3 – Summarised roles by setting (LAs and LCRC)

	Setting						
	Care settings	School and Early Years	Workplace	Primary care	Prison/custodial institutions	Homeless and/or hostel	Community cluster
London Coronavirus Response Centre response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receive notification from Tier 2 - Gather information and undertake a risk assessment with the setting - Provide advice and manage cases and contacts, testing and infection control - Provide information materials to the setting - Recommend ongoing control measures - Convene IMT if required - Provide information to DsPH and advice/recommendations for ongoing support 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receive notification from Tier 2 - Support Local Authority in their risk assessment of and response to an identified community cluster
Local authority response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prevention work and respond to enquiries (As per Appendix 1 and 2) - Support vulnerable contacts who are required to self isolate - Liaise with setting to provide ongoing advice and support for testing, communications, infection control and PPE - Participate in IMT if convened by LCRC - Local communications e.g. briefings for Cllrs, local press inquiries, comms with the public - Liaise with CCG, GPs and other healthcare providers to provide ongoing healthcare support to setting 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receive notification from Tier 2 - Convene IMT - Provide support to community which may include translated materials, support to self-isolate, advice and enforcement - Liaise with the local CCG, GPs and other healthcare providers - Local communications (e.g. Cllr briefing, local press inquiries, comms with public)

Appendix 4 – Governance and Key Guiding Principles

PHE will fulfil its statutory duty as outlined below by receiving the notification of outbreaks, undertaking the risk assessment and providing public health advice in accordance with national guidance or local SOPs.

As per this joint agreement and in line with the statutory roles outlined below, local authorities and PHE will conduct follow up of these settings and fulfil their statutory duty for safeguarding and protecting the health of their population.

- PHE has responsibility for protecting the health of the population and providing an integrated approach to protecting public health through close working with the NHS, Local Authorities, emergency services and government agencies. This includes specialist advice and support related to management of outbreaks and incidents of infectious diseases
- The health system has a shared responsibility for the management of outbreaks of COVID-19 in London
- Infection control support for each setting will be provided in line with local arrangements
- Under the Care Act 2014, Local Authorities have responsibilities to safeguard adults in their areas. These responsibilities for adult social care include the provision of support and personal care (as opposed to treatment) to meet needs arising from illness, disability or old age
- Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, Directors of Public Health in upper tier and unitary local authorities have a duty to prepare for and lead the local authority public health response to incidents that present a threat to the public's health
- Medical practitioners have a statutory duty to notify suspected and confirmed cases of notifiable diseases to PHE under the Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010 and the Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2020