

High Level Risk Register Deep Dive

In keeping with the departmental risk guidance, each quarter a risk from the Departmental High Level Risk Register is to be selected for a more in depth discussion at the Departmental Board. The aim of the discussion is for the Board to consider in more detail the mitigations for a particular risk which might not otherwise be discussed. This quarter the risk of an outbreak of a major infectious disease has been selected for the first of these risk deep dives. This risk is similar to one of the two risks the department holds on the cross government risk register.

Risk Deep Dive Item

The Deep Dive discussion will include:

- An introduction to the risk, mitigation and background led by the supporting Director; and
- Will be followed by a Board discussion focusing on the key questions outlined - set out in the slide 10 (see the last slide).

The key question for the DB is how much money, time and effort do we want to invest in our insurance against these risks?

- The NRA sets out a very severe reasonable worst case scenario for pandemic flu. This drives substantial expenditure on countermeasures and extensive preparedness activity. Is our level of preparedness proportionate given the relative risk or should we scale back to a lower level, as adopted by other countries?
- In the event of a major disease outbreak the DH EPHPP Directorate would very rapidly be overwhelmed. Should we do more to raise awareness of the risk and to plan for immediate mobilisation of a large number of staff (up to 40 or more) to support a major and sustained response or are existing arrangements sufficient?
- The lack of a national forum to support and oversee planning and response in the social care sector poses challenges. Is there more that can be done to provide direction and strengthen co-ordination across the sector and with the NHS?