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Preface

In recent years, there have been multiple plans in Wales for the investigation and control of communicable disease. All these have contained very similar guidance. Whilst it has been recognised that each individual plan was robust and fit for purpose, the presence of several plans for use in outbreaks has caused confusion as to which plan should be followed. Therefore, at the request of the Welsh Government, a multi-agency working group was convened in 2008 to draw the plans together into one generic template.

This model plan ("The Wales Outbreak Plan") is the result of that work. It should be used as the template for managing all communicable disease outbreaks with public health implications across Wales. It has been developed from the amalgamation of the following plans:

- **Plan for handling Major Outbreaks of Food Poisoning (2004)**
- **The Emergency Framework for health-related incidents and outbreaks in Wales and Herefordshire potentially caused by contaminated drinking water ("Water Framework")** (January 2008) (which in turn replaced the older *Cryptosporidium* plan)
- **Model Plan for the Management of Communicable Disease Outbreaks in Wales (1995 and draft update 2007)**

The "Wales Outbreak Plan" is divided into seven parts. Parts 1 and 2 contain details pertinent to all outbreaks. Parts 3-7 contain the technical operational detail needed for managing specific issues. In the case of cross-border outbreaks, all those led by Wales will be managed in accordance with this plan.

For outbreaks occurring in hospitals the plan for *outbreak management in hospital settings could be followed. However, if a hospital outbreak has any potentially serious public health implications*, then this plan takes precedence in control of the outbreak. Part 6 describes these arrangements.

For outbreaks occurring in prisons, the multi-agency contingency plan for the management of communicable diseases or other health protection incidents in prisons in Wales should normally be followed. The prison plan contains the same principles as the Wales Outbreak plan but includes more specific details in the prison setting. This plan is provided in Part 7.

Within the former "Water Framework", there was a section on managing water incidents which was separate to managing water borne outbreaks, but used the same generic principles. This section has been retained in Part 4: Water Specific Issues.

Acknowledgement