

**Senior Official Meeting with the Welsh Government – Pandemic Influenza**  
**Preparedness 13.00-15.00 on 14 June**

**Background**

On 15<sup>th</sup> January, [NR] and Nick Adkin wrote to seniors in the Devolved Administrations to:

- thank them for their input into the PFRB / pandemic influenza preparedness programme; and
- arrange a meeting to discuss progress made in the last twelve months and agree how we can continue to work collaboratively on key issues going forward.

**Attendees**

- Frank Atherton - Chief Medical Officer, Welsh Government
- Irfon Rees - Deputy Director, Public Health, Welsh Government
- [NR] - Emergency Planning Advisor, Welsh Government
- Reg Kilpatrick - Director for Local Government, Welsh Government
- [NR] - Deputy Head of Community Safety Division, Local Government Dept, Welsh Government

**Annotated Agenda**

**1. Welcome, Introductions and Meeting Objectives (10 minutes)**

The meeting is intended to discuss cross-UK pandemic influenza preparedness activity. Specifically it is intended to:

- provide an update on the biennial review of the National Risk Assessment and the Reasonable Worst Case Scenario / planning assumptions for pandemic influenza;
- update on the work to enhance pandemic influenza preparedness at a national level in the last twelve months and better understand complementary / concurrent activity undertaken by the Devolved Administrations; and
- discuss the deliverables in year two of the programme including finalising national arrangements and supporting the continued enhancement of local arrangements across the four nations.

**2. Biennial review of the National Risk Assessment for pandemic influenza, the Reasonable Worst Case Scenario and planning assumptions (15 minutes)**

DHSC ([NR]) to provide update on the current review of the reasonable worst case scenario for pandemic influenza as part of the biennial review of the National Risk Assessment and outline likely changes e.g. increase in the number of excess deaths due population increase and changes to the planning assumption in light of the review of staff absence conducted by Go Science. Welsh Government is particularly keen to understand more about the latest planning assumptions / risk picture. DHSC to also summarise the current risk landscape e.g. H7N9.

If required, CCS can provide more detail on the timing for finalising the updated NRA.

### **3. Year One Work Programme Recap - enhancing national arrangements (15 minutes)**

This is an opportunity to:

- a) talk through workstreams of interest; and
- b) seek an update from the Devolved Administrations on complementary / corresponding activity.

In the last 12 months we have developed:

- improved plans of the health sector to flex systems and resources to expand beyond normal capacity levels;
- clear plans to prioritise and augment adult social care and community health care during a pandemic response;
- a comprehensive appraisal of the capability in England to manage excess deaths and updated the approach to planning for excess deaths;
- updated planning assumptions for workforce absence and stress-tested plans from Lead Government Departments which have responsibility for particular sectors, covering both the peak and duration of workforce absence;
- UK Government policy content for a draft Pandemic Influenza Bill\*, to be held internally and taken through Parliament if required, to support the response to a severe pandemic. We have also worked closely with colleagues in the Devolved Administrations to seek to develop a one-UK approach;
- a comprehensive four nations pandemic influenza health-focused communications strategy; and
- options to ensure Government thinking is supported by moral and ethical advice.

\*A more detailed discussion on progress with the Bill will be useful. The deadline for policy consensus was the end of May. Wales has completed this work although consideration of school closure powers is ongoing in light of further work by DfE. A four nation discussion led by DfE is scheduled to take place on 15 June.

### **4. Next Year Two Work Programme - finalisation of national arrangements and continued enhancement of local arrangements (50 minutes)**

A letter was sent to NSC (THRC) Ministers on 6 April. Welsh Government does not sit on NSC (THRC). A copy of the annex to the letter on further work in year 2 is at Annex. A. Welsh Government colleagues are likely to ask about:

- the plan for revising the 2013 LRF Pandemic Influenza Guidance (England and Wales) and the four nation 2011 Strategy;
- proposed Ministerial engagement on the PFRB programme and the refresh of the Strategy. This may broaden out into a wider discussion on Devolved Admin representation on NSC (THRC).

- the next steps on the four nation's health focused Comms Strategy. The Welsh Government has produced a detailed Wales specific annex to the Comms Strategy and their comms contact has been fully engaged. The Welsh CMO is content with the Health Comms Strategy. Scottish Government are not, however, content with their material being annexed and want an integrated approach. (DN: [NR] to brief [NR] more fully on this matter following the Comms Network call on 11 June.)

There will also be the opportunity to discuss how we maintain preparedness beyond year 2 of the PFRB.

## **5. Ways of Working across the four nations (20 minutes)**

While the Devolved Administrations will continue to be invited to our workstream meetings and the Pandemic Influenza Readiness Board. It is increasingly important to assure the preparation across the four nations, while recognising that the decision-making and reporting on devolved matters is the responsibility of each of the Devolved Administrations.

- Is there anything we can do to further the four nation collaboration?
- How do we maximise four way sharing of information so we can learn from each other as much as possible?
- Is there any topics that need further discussion at the four nation CMO meeting? (NB: Ministerial engagement to be picked up under Item 4.)

## **6. AOB and next steps (10 minutes)**

**Annex A Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Next Steps**

<b>Workstream</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Lead Department</b>	<b>Supporting Department(s)</b>
<b>Finalisation of national arrangements</b>			
1 - Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service-facing surge and triage guidance to enable appropriate frontline decisions about patient care during a pandemic.</li> </ul>	Department of Health and Social Care	NHS England Public Health England Devolved Administrations
2 - Community Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service-facing guidance for delivering adult social care and community care during a pandemic.</li> </ul>	Department of Health and Social Care	NHS England Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Civil Contingencies Secretariat, Cabinet Office Care Quality Commission Devolved Administrations
3 - Sector Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focused actions arising to further assure the resilience of key sectors.</li> <li>Refreshing the Pandemic Influenza Business Checklist.</li> </ul>	Civil Contingencies Secretariat, Cabinet Office	Department for Education Home Office Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service / Ministry of Justice Department of Health and Social Care Public Health England Health and Safety Executive Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Ministry of Defence Foreign Office Cabinet Office Government Office for Science Devolved Administrations

			<p>Department for Work and Pensions Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy</p> <p><i>All departments are responsible for maintaining and further enhancing the resilience of their sectors to workforce absence as a result of pandemic influenza. For critical national infrastructure this will be supported by the annual Sector Security and Resilience Plans.</i></p>
4 - Planning for a significant increase in mortality during a pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance on specific aspects of the death management process.</li> <li>Development of options for additional measures by which central government could provide additional support to local responders.</li> </ul>	Civil Contingencies Secretariat, Cabinet Office (coordinating in the absence of a lead department)	<p>Ministry of Justice Home Office Ministry of Defence Department of Health and Social Care Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Health and Safety Executive Human Tissue Authority Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Devolved Administrations</p>
5a - UK wide draft internally-held Pandemic Influenza Bill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare / finalise draft clauses covering the UK Government and Devolved Administration content.</li> </ul>	Department of Health and Social Care	<p>Civil Contingencies Secretariat, Cabinet Office Department for Education HM Treasury Ministry of Justice Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare supporting Bill documentation.</li> <li>• Develop a review mechanism to keep the content up to date.</li> </ul>		General Register Office Home Office Devolved Administrations
5b - Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved four nations health communications strategy.</li> <li>• Coherent and planned cross-Government communications messages during a pandemic.</li> </ul>	Department of Health and Social Care Communications	Devolved Administrations Public Health England Cabinet Office Communications All Other Government Departments
5c - Moral and Ethical Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement arrangements to provide moral and ethical advice during a pandemic.</li> </ul>	Civil Contingencies Secretariat, Cabinet Office and Department of Health and Social Care	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Public Health England NHS England Government Office for Science Devolved Administrations
<b>Products to support the continued enhancement of local arrangements</b>			
	Refreshing the 2011 UK Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Strategy.	Department of Health and Social Care	All Other Government Departments Devolved Administrations
	Developing a Pandemic Influenza Resilience Standard for local responders (in England).	Civil Contingencies Secretariat, Cabinet Office and Department of Health and Social Care	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Public Health England NHS England Devolved Administrations

	Reconfiguring public and local responder facing information / guidance on pandemic influenza on gov.uk and Resilience Direct.	Department of Health and Social Care	<p>Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government NHS England Public Health England Health and Safety Executive Civil Contingencies Secretariat, Cabinet Office</p> <p><i>Some input may be required from other Departments that own current public facing pandemic influenza guidance.</i></p>
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