

PANDEMIC FLU: SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT UPDATE TO CROSS GOVERNMENT PANDEMIC FLU READINESS BOARD (PFRB)

Introduction

- 1) The Scottish Government (SG) has worked closely with UKG and other DAs as part of a programme of work to increase and improve pandemic flu readiness across all 4 UK Nations. The following update has been prepared for the cross government PFRB meeting on 23 January 2020.

SG Workstreams

- 2) SG operated a programme of 6 workstreams (compared to 5 UK workstreams) extending across various portfolios. These are:
 1. Health and social care (inc Moral and Ethical)
 2. Legislative
 3. Excess Deaths
 4. Sector Resilience
 5. Communications
 6. SG Preparedness
- 3) At the meeting of the PFRB in November 2018 it was agreed to sign-off Excess Deaths and Sector Resilience from the programme and handover to policy areas as part of routine business. Soon after, SG Preparedness was also handed over to Security and Business Continuity unit. It was agreed that all 3 workstreams should remain under the focus of the PFRB to help ensure tasks are fully completed and SG commitments are met.
- 4) The remaining workstreams: Health and Social Care (inc Moral & Ethical); Legislative; and Communications are at varying stages of progress with work extending into 2020 in line with cross government workstream activities and revised workplan.
- 5) **Health and Social Care** (inc Moral & Ethical): SG reviewed and updated guidance for health & social care in Scotland. Guidance issued for consultation (limited to key stakeholders) in September 2019 and the final version is expected to issue in early 2020.
 - a) Moral & Ethical: we have worked closely with our Deputy CMO and across government in reviewing M&E guidance; establishing MEAG. etc.
- 6) **Legislative**: Following extensive discussions with SG policy areas and legal advisors, only 3 Scottish clauses (relating to **devolved** issues) remain for inclusion in the UK Bill:
 - Closure of schools and colleges;
 - Indemnification of health professionals; and
 - Mental healthNote: Several legislative asks being introduced in other UK nations were NOT deemed necessary in Scotland. Examples being “death certification” and

“registration of death” and where Scottish legislation already allowed for the flexibilities being sought.

- 7) SG has contributed to the supporting documentation associated with the UK Bill to explain the position in Scotland for each element of the Bill. A further review of which be undertaken once the final draft Bill is available.
- 8) We have also worked with UKG and other DA's on developing robust procedures to introduce the UK Pan Flu Bill in the respective parliaments however have been unable to complete these procedures to date. This will be considered further as part of Outstanding Work set out below.
- 9) **Communications:** SG engaged and contributed to the review of the four-nations Comms Strategy. Additionally, we developed a “SG Comms Activation Plan” to formalise the specific SG comms structures which will be activated to ensure an effective cross-communications response, including links to UK Gov and Scottish resilience Public Communications Groups.

Ministerial Engagement

- 10) Scottish Ministers will be updated on the work of the PFRB and PFPB as appropriate over the coming months. **In order to do so it is essential that SG (and other DAs) are fully, and timeously, involved in submission and updates which issue to UK Ministers, NCS, etc.**

Conclusion / Looking Ahead

- 11) As with other UK nations we remain committed to completing all areas of outstanding work in order to improve readiness and preparedness across Scotland, as part of the joint UK wide approach. The SG PFPB will continue to monitor progress and the transition of outstanding work to policy areas as part of normal business (when deemed appropriate to do so).
- 12) Details of the work yet to be undertaken is set out in Annex A.

Chris Taylor
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Annex A

Outstanding Work Delivery Plan

Workstream	Outstanding Tasks	Revised Timescales	Comments
General	Refresh 2011 UK Pandemic Flu guidance	Summer 2020	UKG lead with input from SG and other DAs. This work was delayed and will now be undertaken in 2020. UKG see this as the main opportunity to involve Ministers of all 4 nations.
General	Testing and Exercising	Summer 2020	UK exercising under consideration as part of 2020 outstanding work.
Health and Social Care	Issue final version of "Guidance for health & social care in Scotland"	31 March 2020	Guidance issued for consultation in September 2019. Responses currently being analysed with view to publish document in 2020.
Moral & Ethical	SG to contribute to the development of the Moral and Ethical guidance / MEAG.	TBC	UKG Moral & Ethical guidance was updated in Nov 2017. Paper 5 of Nov 2018 meeting of the CG PFRB covered this. (Submission expected to go to UK Ministers early 2020)
Legislation	Mental Health clauses	31 Jan 2020	Mental Health PINs issued, clauses being drafted by PCO and due end Jan 2020
Legislation	Explanatory Notes / Assessment of Impact documents	31 March 2020 (estimated)	Once draft Bill is finalised all nations to review Exp Notes and Ass of Impact documents for accuracy.
Legislation	Parliamentary process / LCM documentation, etc	April – September 2019	Once draft Bill is finalised, SG Parliamentary Liaison Unit to discuss process and timelines with Scottish Parliament colleagues.
Comms	Contribution to further UK Communications work, and support to other SG workstreams	30 April 2020	We stand ready to fully participate in the UK Comms groups as and when they are reactivated, and to provide communications advice to other SG workstreams (for instance exercise planning) as required.

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