

Lessons Learnt from Ex. Taliesin

Resilience of SCG & Operating Arrangements

- The question of agency representation at SCGs at a senior level over a protracted period of time arose
- Important to have a number of deputies appointed who have the associated delegated authority and empowerment to make decisions without the need to refer elsewhere would help ensure continuity of operations in the event of illness or absence of SCG members.
- Deputies to be back briefed frequently to ensure current situational awareness so they are immediately effective should they be called upon to represent organisation at the SCG table.
- LRF plans need to take account of resilience issues and handover issues and impacts as members may change over the period.

Awareness of Plan

- Lack of awareness among some SCGs about the LRF flu plan, and gaps in knowledge among some participants.
- Staff should become familiar with the structure and layout of the flu plan together with their role and responsibilities.

SCG Strategy

- It was noted that there is no overarching strategic aim or a set of supporting objectives in the LRF plans.
- The plans should be amended to have a single sustaining strategic aim with supporting objectives to provide an initial focus for the SCG. These objectives should be adjusted if necessary as the situation unfolds.

SCG Agenda

- All the SCGs prepared effective agendas for their meetings. However, there should be a revision of the plans to include framework agenda's tailored to the specific issues in each Alert level.

Understanding of Pandemic Terminology

- Some LRFs reported that there was an unclear or inaccurate understanding of Pan Flu terminology.
- Confusion existed among some participants between an anti-viral and a vaccine.

- A pan briefing pack/presentation covering all aspects of pandemic flu should be prepared for all staff who may be involved in managing the wider consequences .
- Briefing material should be held ready to be delivered at a pre-determined trigger point.

IT Issues/Conduct of SCG Business

- There have been problems with IT systems that have delayed the efficient spread of information, thereby hindering meetings. Participants at one SCG were unable to be gain knowledge of the latest developments for example.
- The LRFs and SCGs should review their IT systems and platforms to ensure accessibility, functionality, capability, capacity, reliability and usability by member organisations.

Communication Strategy

- It was noted that the LRF plans were inadequate in this area.
- No evident strategy in place amongst the SCGs and in most LRFs the police assumed responsibility for multi agency communications.
- The LRFs need to identify, train and practice a joint agency communications group, in which cell composition, terms of reference, methods of working, key messages and appropriate trigger points are documented.

Creating Situational Awareness

- Situational Awareness is a key requirement for the SCG to aid their understanding of key issues and the 'picture' needs to be updated and maintained constantly.
- The creation of an information management capability and the establishment of a mechanism to brief the whole of the SCG is needed A dedicated multi-agency information management/briefing cell could be set up.

SCG Infrastructure

- In Dyfed-Powys and South Wales LRFs, the facilities provided for the SCGs were not ideal. In South Wales, support teams were located in a number of rooms at South Wales Police HQ and over a protracted period of time the operation of the SCG would be very disruptive to the police HQ function.
- Comprehensive plans need to be set up with possible capital investment in new purpose built facilities. Arrangements to support virtual meetings should be set up and checked.

Recovery Plan

- A recovery plan needs to be set up at the outset of a major incident/crisis

Handover Arrangements

- Handover/takeover arrangements were not applied consistently across participating organisations.
- The LRFs should consider publishing criteria for the conduct of handovers between staff.

Excess Deaths

- There seems to be some concern amongst SCGs as to the usefulness of the LRFs excess deaths plans and that they fail to address all the issues.
- Excess deaths plans to be reviewed and amended to take account of different ways of working together with transportation and logistical requirements for the movement of bodies. The re-use of buildings used for body storage post event is also an issue as is the impact on the supply chain.

Anti-Virals

- The LRFs need to develop and agree detailed plans for the activation and opening arrangements for anti-viral collection points plus security considerations for each.
- The Welsh Assembly Government should make clear its plans for the transportation, storage and distribution of anti-virals and ensure that there are contingencies in place to maintain distribution levels at critical times.

Schools Closure

- National guidance should clarify definition of an 'area' in which schools should be closed.
- The LRF plans should clearly identify the Policy, triggers and responsibilities for school closures including Private schools, Further education institutions and Universities.