

**Update for LRF and wider partners in relation to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in China:
13th February 2020**

All information relevant to the date above and that date only

Context

Verbal briefing are provided at a weekly meeting with LRF chairs and coordinators, organised by Welsh Government. This will be held each Thursday at 4.30pm at Cathays Park. The PHW representative should attend with CMO Policy lead (Chrishan Kamalan) and the Central Resilience team (Bon Westcott and NR)

LRF coordinators are provided with a daily email from the Public Health Wales communication team following the 3pm update of the Public Health Wales statement on Novel Coronavirus outbreak in China. This email provides a link to the latest statement with discussion of any new items of relevance to the LRF. This information is then cascaded through established LRF communication channels to members.

Content

The language used in this narrative is consistent with that in the PHE/DH press releases and the PHW website. NB this requires daily review and update.

Based on the World Health Organization's declaration that this is a public health emergency of international concern, the UK Chief Medical Officers have maintained the risk to the public from novel coronavirus at moderate. This permits the government to plan for all eventualities. The risk to individuals remains low. The UK and Wales remain in the position of managing risk, implementing planned response and testing our systems.

Based on current evidence, novel coronavirus (COVID-19) presents with flu-like symptoms including a fever, a cough, or difficulty breathing. The current evidence is that most cases appear to be mild. Those who have died in Wuhan appear to have had pre-existing health conditions.

There are a number of elements that have changed since Wales LRFs last received a verbal update on 07/02/2020

On the 11th February 2020 the WHO renamed 2019-nCoV as COVID-19. The name is taken from the words corono, virus and disease with 2019 representing the year it emerged as it was first reported to the WHO on 31st December 2019. The new name does not refer to a specific geographical location to prevent stigmatising areas and to provide a standard format for international use.

On the 10th February 2020, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock, announced strengthened legal powers to enforce public health protection and reduce the risk of further human-to-human transmission by keeping individuals in isolation where public health professionals believe there is a reasonable risk an individual may have the virus. The Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 were implemented with immediate effect to impose restrictions on any individual considered by a health professional (public health consultant) to be at risk of spreading the virus. The regulations apply to any individuals seeking to leave supported isolation before their 14 days quarantining period is complete. The regulations also apply to future cases during the current coronavirus incident where an individual who may be infected or contaminated could present a risk to public health. The legislation is applied only in England at present. It has not been replicated in Wales or other devolved nations at the current time.

Situational update:

The WHO have reported, as of 13th February 2020, 46550 confirmed cases of COVID-2019 in China. Overnight on the 12th February, 14,840 cases were reported including 13,332 clinically diagnosed cases from the Hubei Province in China. This is the first time that China has reported clinical diagnosed cases in addition to laboratory confirmed cases. For consistency the numbers of laboratory confirmed cases only are reported within this brief.

There have been 447 confirmed cases outside of China across 24 countries. A total of nine cases have been confirmed in England as of 13th February 2020. The first two cases had a history of travel from Mainland China. They have since been discharged from a HCID unit in Newcastle. A cluster of cases have been identified following contact tracing of the third identified case who acquired the virus through contact with a confirmed case during a business trip to Singapore. This has resulted in significant contact tracing within the Brighton area, including of healthcare professionals and their co-workers and patients.

In relation to Wales, as of 13th February 2020, there are currently no confirmed cases of coronavirus in Wales. PHW have not be commenting on the numbers of patients who are being assessed or submitted for testing, however we can confirm that over 100 possible cases have been tested, all had negative results. It is likely that there will be confirmed cases in Wales at some point in the future. Details in relation to both positive confirmed cases and negative cases, and the numbers of residents tested in the UK will be published on the Department of Health and Social Care website and these will be updated every day at 2pm. Wales will not be commenting on either the geography or clinical wellbeing of individual cases.

Repatriation of UK Nationals

A final flight of over 100 UK citizens were repatriated from Wuhan landing in RAF Brize Norton on the 9th February 2020. The passengers were taken by coach to the Kents Hill park conference centre, Milton Keynes. They will remain in this accommodation for 14 days following arrival in the UK. The eighty-three individuals held in Arrowe Park Hospital following the first evacuation flight have all tested negative for COVID-19. They will be able to leave their accommodation on 13th February 2020.

Returning travellers

The guidance in relation to returning travellers from China and other specified areas and countries remains the same since the last update provided. Individuals who have travelled from **Wuhan City and Hubei** province to the UK within the last 14 days are being given advice, **whether they have any of the described symptoms or not** to remain at home, self-isolate and to phone dedicated numbers for NHS Direct and NHS 111. They are advised to not go to healthcare facilities, either or primary or secondary care, but to self-isolate at home.

Individuals who have returned from **China** or other specified areas or countries that include **Hong Kong, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand** in the last 14 days **and have the relevant symptoms** are similarly to self-isolate and to phone the same telephone numbers for further advice and assessment. These areas have been identified because of the volume of air travel from affected areas, understanding of other travel routes and number of reported cases. This list will be kept under review.

Returning healthcare workers

Guidance for healthcare providers with staff who have travelled to China and other specified areas or countries has been issued by PHE. The guidance has been released due to the importance of a healthcare worker not attending a healthcare setting if there is a risk they could spread COVID-19. The definition of healthcare worker (HCW) includes those who work in healthcare setting within and outside the NHS who may come into contact with patients, including clinical administration staff and care home staff. It is advised that healthcare providers consult this guidance with details of action that should be taken for healthcare workers returning from China and other specified areas/countries. It is recommended that all returning HCW report to their line manager and occupational health team with further actions dependent on their travel within the area/country of interest and if they are currently symptomatic.

This guidance was updated on 12th February 2020 and now includes healthcare workers who are contacts of a possible case. It is advised that HCW who are contacts of possible cases should remain off work until test results are available.

Travel Guidance from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) continues to encourage British citizens within China to return to the UK. PHE continue to have public health teams at airports with direct flights to provide public health advice and guidance to returning travellers. As Cardiff Airport does not have direct flights from China or other specified areas or countries no public health teams are currently present in this airport. However, public health information has been issued to all UK airports for people travelling to and from China and other specified areas and countries. China has also introduced port-of-exit screening so people already exhibiting symptoms are not allowed to leave the country.

Community testing

Within Wales a community testing model has been implemented. Trained teams within each health board are undertaking, when home isolation has been identified as appropriate, testing in possible cases home environment. The aim to prevent attendance at acute hospital settings of possible cases of COVID-19. Due to the successful implementation of this model the requirements for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including FFP3 masks have increased. Supplies of PPE are under review by Welsh Government to ensure adequate supplies are available.

Home isolation:

All travellers from Wuhan and Hubei Province are requested to isolate at home for 14 days following their return to the UK even if they do not currently display any symptoms.

Travellers from elsewhere in China or other specified areas or countries are also request to isolate at home if they display symptoms. Symptomatic travellers are requested to contact NHS 111 or NHS Direct for further assessment. If they are identified as a possible case then home isolation may be advised dependent on their clinical assessment. Home isolation requires the individual to remain isolated in their home environment and if sharing their home with other family members or friends to reduce contact with household members. Guidance is available for both possible cases and their home contacts on PHE website, with frequently asked questions such as undertaking their usual activities, including accompanying children to school.

First responder guidance

Public Health England with support from the public health agencies of the devolved nations have developed interim guidance for first responders that has been published by PHE on 11th February 2020. This includes specific advice on assisting someone who is symptomatic and suspected of having COVID-19 infection including the use of personal protective equipment and recommendations for undertaking cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Specific guidance for police, Border Force and Immigration Enforcement officers is provided with recommendations that clinical assessments of any possible cases should not be undertaken and NHS Direct or NHS 111 contacted.

Public Health Wales

We have 3 organisational response levels (Normal Business, Enhanced and Major Incident). Our current response level is **'Enhanced'**. This enables the organisation to mobilise our resources both in and out of hours, in particular to support a) our specific public health/health protection statutory functions (our normal business) and the novel coronavirus incident. PHW employs a range of specialist and generalist professionals including generalists in public health employed to provide services both in and out of hours. For this enhanced incident, PHW has appointed a Strategic Director and an Incident Director, with alternates. Today the SD is Dr Quentin Sandifer and the ID is Dr Giri Shankar. The established battle rhythm for this incident includes:

- Daily PHE IMT each morning (including weekends)
- Daily PHW IMT (with a silver group support group) each afternoon (including weekends)
- Daily meeting between PHW and Office of CMO (WG)

In relation to the wider NHS in Wales there have been a number of meetings. The Health Boards (represented by Directors of Public Health, Medical Directors and Chief Operating Officers) attend a weekly meeting with Public Health Wales to plan and implement arrangements for community testing and the provision of appropriate assessment and isolation facilities within acute hospital settings. Public Health Wales has been working with WAST and LHBs to establish appropriate facilities within each hospital setting that are staffed by healthcare professionals appropriately trained in personal protective equipment.