



FROM: NR

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES POLICY BRANCH

6 MARCH 2020

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DAVID STERLING

COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS: SECTORAL RESILIENCE

- Issue:** The impact of a ‘reasonable worst case’ COVID -19 outbreak on essential service provision and critical infrastructure.
- Timing:** Urgent – you had requested an update for use at X on Monday 9 March.
- Recommendation:** It is recommended that you;
- note the initial issues, associated impacts and potential mitigations identified by NI Departments for their sectors; and
 - note the further work to develop this and that an update on this will be provided next week.

Background

1. A four nations approach is being taken to prepare for an outbreak of COVID-19. Preparations are being made on the basis of a Reasonable Worst Case Scenario (RWCS). The RWCS is based on emerging scientific advice and is subject to regular review as more becomes known about this novel virus.

Currently the RWCS provides for an infection rate of 80% with only some of those infected having severe symptoms; a fatality rate of 1% and a workforce absentee rate of 17-20% in the peak weeks. In addition, it is estimated that should there be sustained transmission in the community that an epidemic in the UK would peak within 2 - 3 months.

2. To date the UK has been in the 'containment' phase of the outbreak response in which a small number of cases are isolated and treated and daily life continues on a 'business as usual' basis. However, given the escalating spread of the virus the UK is transitioning into the 'delay' phase where a combination of measures which disrupt the normal functioning of daily life may need to be put in place to reduce the spread of the virus.
3. The absentee rate of 17-20%, the excess deaths and the potential implementation of 'delay' measures will impact on essential service provision.

Sectoral Resilience

4. TEO commissioned input from the NI Departments on the potential impact of Covid -19 on the essential services and critical infrastructure for their sectors. The table at **Annex A** sets out at high level the key areas of concern, associated impacts and potential mitigations to address these (please note this workstream focuses on the wider non health issues – the health sector is being managed separately by DOH).
5. A workshop with Departments and other key stakeholders was jointly hosted by TEO and DOH on Friday 6 March. This provided space to consider further the high level areas of concern and to begin to map out interdependencies. We will provide you with a more detailed picture, informed by the outputs from the workshop next week

Recommendation

7. It is recommended that you:

- **note the initial issues, associated impacts and potential mitigations identified by NI Departments for their sectors; and**
- **note the further work to develop this and that an update on this will be provided next week.**

PD

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Chris McNabb

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