

SERIOUS COMMUNICABLE DISEASES RESPONSE PLAN

Introduction

This Plan has been developed to assist the School to respond to situations when a member of the School community (staff or student) or visitor staying in a Hall of Residence is suspected of, or has been diagnosed with, a serious communicable disease. It is intended for use when there is a public health need to protect those who have been in contact with the individual who is been ill, or to prevent further infection from a contaminated source (as in the case of food poisoning).

Formal arrangements are necessary because of the potential for rapid spread of infection within a relatively close community, and the interruption this would cause.

The Plan sets out the actions to be taken in order to:

- ensure good communication between the School and the Health Protection Units;
- provide the School's staff and students with appropriate advice on the management of communicable diseases;
- ensure appropriate support arrangements for students and staff are put in place;
- provide adequate channels of communication with staff, students, visitors and the public.

This Plan is complementary to the Sickness Absence Policy for staff, and to the School Regulations concerning student absence due to illness. It also complements LSE's Major Incident Initial Response Plan.

The plan will be used when a member of staff or a student at the School is notified by Public Health England (PHE) or a registered medical practitioner that there is, or there is suspected to be, a case of a notifiable disease among one or more of the following groups:

- a) One or more cases of a suspected serious communicable disease involving students or staff resident in LSE Halls;
- b) One or more cases of a suspected serious communicable disease involving visitors/guests staying in Halls of Residence;
- c) One or more cases of a suspected serious communicable disease involving students attending the LSE (but not in an LSE Hall of Residence) or staff working at the LSE (but not in a Hall of Residence);
- d) One or more cases of suspected serious communicable diseases involving babies or children attending LSE's Nursery.

A flowchart of key actions of the Plan is set out in **Appendix A**.

Background to Public Health Arrangements

In England, there is a well-established public health system giving public authorities powers and duties to prevent and control risks to human health from infection or contamination. Currently, Public Health England (PHE) is the body responsible for taking a lead in responding to notifications of notifiable diseases. In London it operates through Health Protection Teams (HPTs) based on geographical areas¹. All registered medical practitioners are required to notify PHE where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a patient has a notifiable disease.

A list of notifiable diseases is provided in **Appendix C**.

Public authorities expect co-operation from the wider, non-medical, community in containing infections to protect health, and can if necessary apply to a Justice of the Peace to compel cooperation. This would only be done where there is a potential for significant harm to human health or risk of spread to others.

Among the information PHE may require is details of close contacts of the individual, their addresses (home and university), people with whom they have socialised. This is needed in order to investigate the cause of the infection or to radicate the infecting strain among the network of close contacts. If requested, such information must be provided to PHE to enable public health action to be taken. Such a requirement over-rides Data Protection considerations.

In certain instances, such as a probable case of meningitis, public health action needs to be started before there is a definite diagnosis.

¹ See Appendix B for details of the relevant Health Protection Teams.

Activation of the Serious Communicable Diseases Response Plan

Initial Notification

A member of LSE staff or student who is informed of a presumed or diagnosed serious communicable disease by PHE, HPT or medical practitioner, should gather as much of the following information:

- Name of the individual who is ill
- Where they are (e.g. which hospital, which Hall)
- What the disease is
- Details of who is calling (e.g. name, position, organisation, telephone number, email address)

They must immediately communicate this information to the Head of Health and Safety or her deputy. Their contact details outside normal working hours are held by Security and by members of the Gold and Silver Teams under the LSE Major Incident Initial Response Plan (MIIRP). If neither the Head of Health and Safety or her deputy can be contacted, the member of staff or student first notified of the communicable disease should notify the *Director of Governance, Legal and Planning (GLPD) or his deputy, the Business Continuity Manager. (*Also the Director of Business Continuity.)

Whichever of the four people identified above (the Head of Health and Safety, or her deputy, or the Director of GLPD or the BC Manager) is first contacted, they will initially act as **Incident Co-ordinator**.

The Incident Co-ordinator will contact PHE, HPT or relevant medical practitioner to find out further information on the incident, and what actions are required of the School.

Having established this information, the Incident Co-ordinator will notify the On Call Gold Team Member. These are identified in the LSE Major Incident Initial Response Plan.

The On Call Gold Team Member will activate the Serious Communicable Disease Response Plan by contacting members of staff to form an Incident Control Team. Membership of the Incident Control Team will vary depending on the profile of the person who is ill with a communicable disease. *See **Appendix D** for suggested membership of the Team in different circumstances.*

Roles and Responsibilities

Incident Coordinator

1. Primary contact point between the School and PHE/HPT;
2. Ensures On Call Gold Team Member has the appropriate information on which to act;
3. Works with members of the Incident Control Team;
4. Ensures that there is an appropriate response to the public health incident, including tracing contacts, arranging appropriate assistance to PHE for administering vaccinations, and implementing infection control measures recommended by PHE.

On Call Gold Team Member

1. Coordinates the work of the Incident Control Team;
2. Ensures (through the Incident Control Team) that there is appropriate communication between the School, the School community, the individual who is unwell and their family;
3. Ensures that sickness absence is notified to the appropriate Service;
4. Reports to the Director's Management Team as appropriate.

Incident Control Team

1. Develops and implements a communication strategy;
2. Manages all internal and external communications regarding the incident;
3. Establishes a telephone helpline where this is deemed appropriate;
4. Arranges for counselling and other support for students and staff where this is necessary;
5. Will ensure cooperation with external agencies (e.g. coroner's office, foreign embassies, funeral directors) as directed by the family in the case of a fatality.

GLOSSARY

Serious Communicable disease – in the context of this procedure means a life threatening disease or an disease that can result in long term or permanent consequences on health, that can be passed from person to person, animal to person, and that is air, water or food borne.

Outbreak - An incident in which two or more people experiencing a similar infectious illness are linked in time/place

Suspected case. – a case of acute illness displaying symptoms consistent with clinical definition of a communicable disease.

Probable case - a case with symptoms consistent with the clinical definition of a suspect case linked to one or more confirmed cases.

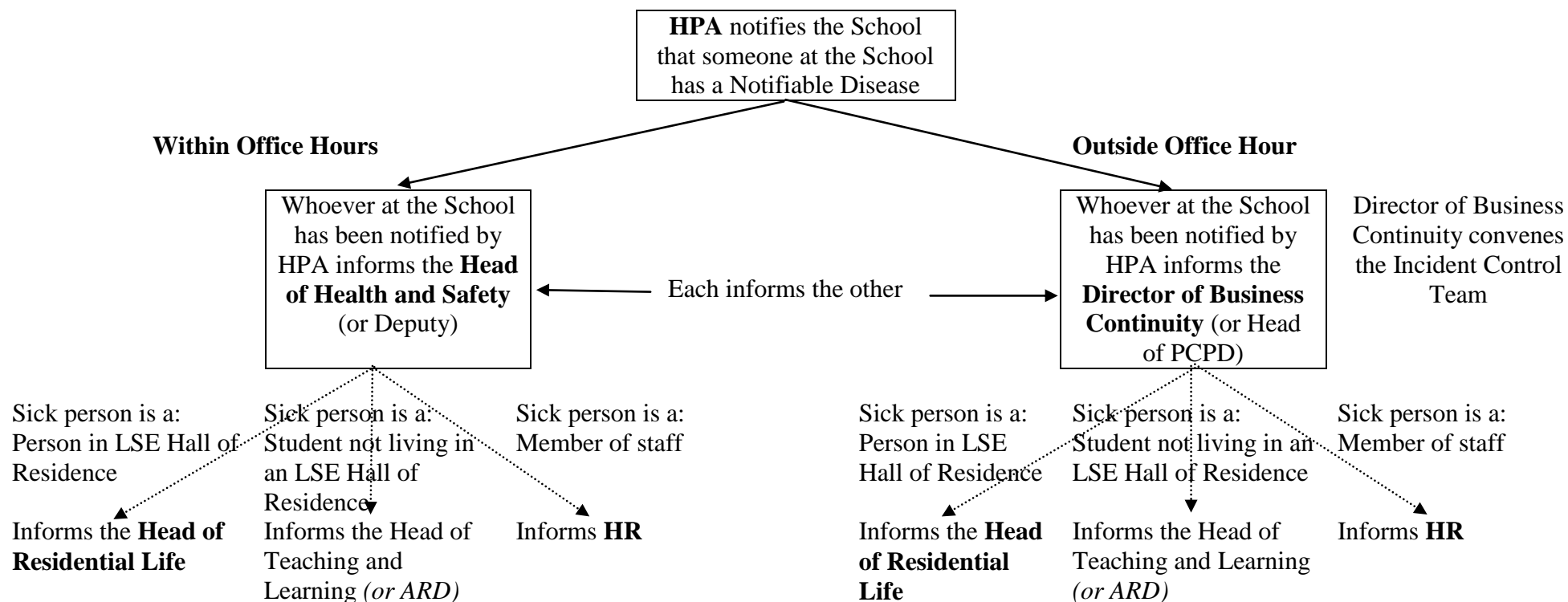
Confirmed case - A confirmed case is one consistent with the clinical definition for suspected case with laboratory confirmation.

Flow chart of Action following notification of a Serious Communicable Disease

SCD = Serious Communicable Disease

PHE = Public Health England

HPT = Health Protection Team



Contact details for Public Health England, and Health Protection Teams

Public Health England (PHE) provides support to health professionals in communicable disease and infection control. Their aim is to contain diseases by preventing their communication. They can provide the School with advice on matters such as identifying contacts of a person who has contracted a communicable disease and other infection control measures to prevent the spread through the School population. In London the PHE is organised into local Health Protection Teams covering different geographical areas.

PHE is the first point of contact for advice following a suspected case of a serious communicable disease. Health Protection Teams will provide further advice and support on a local basis.

HPE London	151 Buckingham Palace Road London SW1W 9SZ	Tel: 020 7811 7000 Fax: 020 7811 7750
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HPT	CONTACT DETAILS	HALLS & LOCATIONS COVERED
North West London Health Protection Team 61 Colindale Avenue London NW9 5EQ	Tel: 020 8327 7181 Fax: 020 8327 7206 Out of hours phone number: 01895 238282	Grosvenor House (including Nursery) Northumberland Ave. Houghton Street Campus
North East and North Central London Health Protection Team 151 Buckingham Palace Road London SW1W 9SZ	Tel: 020 7811 7100 (health protection) Fax: 020 7811 7756 Email: necl.team@phe.gov.uk Out of hours contact details: Tel: 07623 541 417	High Holborn Carr Saunders Rosebery Avenue Passfield Lillian Knowles
South East London Health Protection Team 1 Lower Marsh London SE1 7NT	Tel: 020 3049 4338 Fax 020 7633 9734 Email: phe.selhpt@nhs.net Out of hours: Tel: 0844 822 2888 and ask for SELPH1 or 0844 822 2888 and ask for SELPH2	Bankside Butlers Wharf Sidney Webb

LIST OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES

Diseases notifiable (to Local Authority Proper Officers) under the Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010:

- Acute encephalitis
- Acute infectious hepatitis
- Acute meningitis
- Acute poliomyelitis
- Anthrax
- Botulism
- Brucellosis
- Cholera
- Diphtheria
- Enteric fever (typhoid or paratyphoid fever)
- Food poisoning
- Haemolytic uraemic syndrome (HUS)
- Infectious bloody diarrhoea
- Invasive group A streptococcal disease
- Legionnaires' Disease
- Leprosy
- Malaria
- Measles
- Meningococcal septicaemia
- Mumps
- Plague
- Rabies
- Rubella
- SARS
- Scarlet fever
- Smallpox
- Tetanus
- Tuberculosis
- Typhus
- Viral haemorrhagic fever (VHF) e.g Ebola
- Whooping cough
- Yellow fever

These and other diseases that may present significant risk to human health may be reported under Other Significant Disease category.

Doctors in England and Wales have a statutory duty to notify a 'Proper Officer' of the Local Authority or local Health Protection Team (HPT) of suspected cases of certain infectious diseases. The attending Registered Medical Practitioner (RMP), should fill out a notification certificate immediately on diagnosis of a suspected notifiable disease and should not wait for laboratory confirmation of the suspected infection or contamination before notification. The certificate should be sent to the Proper Officer within three days or verbally within 24 hours if the case is considered urgent.

All Proper Officers are required to pass on the entire notification to PHE within three days of a case being notified, or within 24 hours for cases deemed urgent. HPTs are the primary recipient within PHE of clinical notifications from Proper Officers.

SUGGESTED MEMBERSHIP OF INCIDENT CONTROL TEAMS

(Note: the Incident Coordinator, On Call Gold Team Member and Head of Communications would be members of the Incident Control Team in all cases).

Student or member of staff in a Hall of Residence (or visitor during term time)

- Director of Residential Services
- Head of Residential Life
- Warden/Senior Student for the Hall of Residence
- Academic Registrar
- Director of Teaching and Learning Centre
- Residential Service Manager (for that Cluster)
- Director of HR

LSE Student or member of LSE staff in independently owned and managed halls or inter-collegiate halls.

- Director of Residential Services
- Head of Residential Life

Visitor staying in a Hall of Residence (outside term time)

- Director of Residential Services
- Residential Service Manager (for that Cluster)

Student not in a Hall of Residence

- Academic Registrar
- Director of Teaching and Learning Centre

Member of staff, not in a Hall of Residence

- Head of Communications
- Director of HR
- Member of staff Line manager

Child or member of staff in the Early Years Centre

- Director of Employee Wellbeing
- Residential Service Manager (for that Cluster)
- Early Years Centre manager