

# Health Protection Agency

## Pandemic Influenza Contingency Plan



Planning Checklist: Chief Executive's  
Office and the Influenza & Respiratory  
Virus Programme Board



# HPA actions during an Influenza Pandemic by WHO Phase and UK Alert Level

## Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist

This edited version of the HPA Pandemic Influenza Contingency Plan has been produced to be used as a performance management tool by the Chief Executives Office (CEO), the Influenza and Respiratory Virus Programme Board (IRVPB) and the International Office (IO).

It includes only those actions which are the responsibility of the CEO, IRVPB and IO.

Similar documents are being produced for the other Divisions and Centres across the Agency with responsibilities during the WHO Pandemic Phases and UK Alert Levels.

You should use this document as a tool to ensure you are able to respond at each of the WHO Phases and UK Alert Levels.

The full plan, including background information and details of the WHO Phases and UK Alert Levels, is available on the HPA website at:

[http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics\\_az/influenza/pandemic/fluplan.htm](http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/influenza/pandemic/fluplan.htm)

## Roles and responsibilities of the Chief Executive's Office

The CEO's Office will provide strategic coordination and guidance to the HPA's response to a pandemic and liaise with the WHO and central government. The CEO's Office will move the HPA through UK Alert Levels within WHO Phase 6. During WHO Phase 6 strategic coordination of the HPA-wide response will be provided by the CEO's Office in conjunction with the Core Strategic Group, and advice received from the CEO's Pandemic Influenza Advisory Group

## Roles and responsibilities of the International Office

The International Office (IO) has a corporate role to support Agency international liaison and will provide a focal point for international contacts and queries. In addition the IO will coordinate international requests for Agency expertise and review Agency international commitments during the pandemic.

## How to use this as a Performance Management Tool

Complete the third column under each phase with red, amber or green to indicate your level of preparedness:

Red = Action not started

Amber = Action in progress or partially completed

Green = Action completed

Review your pandemic preparedness regularly as planning progresses.

Please contact your local Health Emergency Planning Adviser if you have any queries about implementing the Plan, or the HPA Pandemic Influenza Office ([pandemic.flu@hpa.org.uk](mailto:pandemic.flu@hpa.org.uk)) with scientific queries.

# 1. Actions\* during the WHO Phases 1 & 2

WHO PHASES 1 & 2: INTERPANDEMIC PERIOD		
<b>Definition</b>		
<b>Phase 1</b>		
No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. An influenza virus subtype that has caused human infection may be present in animals. If present in animals, the risk of human infection or disease is considered to be low.		
<b>Phase 2</b>		
No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. However, a circulating animal influenza virus subtype poses a substantial risk of human disease.		

Action	Implementer	Red/Amber/Green
Ensure the HPA is prepared to respond to an influenza pandemic (includes maintenance of other essential non-flu work and reprioritisation)	CEO	
Coordinate the HPA's expert advice to Cabinet Office Working Group via DH as lead Department	Head of IRVPB	
Monitor and coordinate Agency responses to international requests for Agency briefings and expertise on pandemic influenza in conjunction with PFO, the Centres and LaRS	Head of International Office	

# 3<sup>1</sup>. Actions during the WHO Phase 3: Pandemic Alert Period

WHO PHASE 3: PANDEMIC ALERT PERIOD		
<b>Definition</b>		
Human infection(s) with a new subtype, but no new human-to-human spread, or at most rare instances of spread to a close contact		

Action	Implementer	Red/Amber/Green
Consider the implication of the phase change upon the HPA and ensure that all appropriate actions have been taken or are in hand	CEO	
Ensure avian influenza database is supported across the HPA	Head of IT	
Monitor and coordinate Agency responses to international requests for Agency briefings and expertise on pandemic influenza in conjunction with PFO, the Centres and LaRS	Head of International Office	

\* The actions listed in each phase assume that the actions in the previous phase have been implemented. Where a phase or phases are passed over eg a move from Phase 4 direct to Phase 6, the actions in the intermediary phases should also be implemented.

<sup>1</sup> The section numbering moves directly to 3 in order to match WHO Phases

## 4. Actions during the WHO Phase 4: Pandemic Alert Period

### WHO PHASE 4: PANDEMIC ALERT PERIOD

#### **Definition**

Small cluster(s) with limited human-to-human transmission but spread is highly localised, suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans

Action	Implementer	Red/Amber/Green
Consider the need to establish Core Strategic Group to assess potential impact of heightened alert state on HPA business continuity and resource options to deliver plan	CEO	
Ensure support for avian influenza database is maintained	Head of IT	
Identify mechanisms for re-deployment of staff from 'non-influenza' areas and prepare staff for imminent deployment	Head of Human Resources	
Agree priority international contacts for the Agency in a pandemic and identify non-essential international activities to be curtailed/ postponed	CEO/Head of International Office	

## 5. Actions during the WHO Phase 5: Pandemic Alert Period

### WHO PHASE 5: PANDEMIC ALERT PERIOD

#### **Definition**

Large cluster(s) but human-to-human spread still localised, suggesting that the virus is becoming increasingly better adapted to humans, but may not yet be fully transmissible (substantial pandemic risk)

Action	Implementer	Red/Amber/Green
Establish CEOs Pandemic Influenza Advisory Group from within membership of the IRVPB	CEO / Head of IRVPB	
Establish Core Strategic Group (if not already done at Phase 4) to assess potential impact of pandemic on HPA business continuity and resource options	CEO / Head of IRVPB	
Establish daily 'battle rhythm'	CEO / Head of IRVPB	
Establish routine for briefing Cabinet Office Briefing Room (COBR) and other government departments	CEO / Head of IRVPB	
Plan HPA input into DH and Cabinet Office and allocate these roles	CEO / Head of IRVPB	
Provide DH with scientific input from Head of Influenza Laboratory, Head of Modelling, Head of Respiratory Division and Head of Pandemic Influenza Office to inform development of national policies on vaccine policy, use of neuraminidase inhibitors, and other public health and social interventions	CEO / Head of IRVPB	

Set up a liaison cell at DH Major Incident Coordination Centre	CEO / Head of IRVPB	
Identify mechanisms for re-deployment of staff from 'non-influenza' areas and prepare staff for imminent deployment	CEO / Head of Human Resources	
Consider implication of and repercussions of cancellation of all annual leave	CEO / Head of Human Resources	
Through WHO, ECDC and EISS, gather epidemiological, clinical and virological information about cases occurring in countries where transmission is already taking place	Head of IRVPB	
Participate in WHO/EISS-led discussions and activities	Head of IRVPB	
Identify mechanisms for supporting staff required to work extended hours during phase 5 and 6	Head of Human Resources	
Prepare to divert IT resources to ensure that all systems are prioritised to support pandemic influenza response	Head of IT	
Ensure all key HPA staff are offered vaccination with avian influenza vaccine if stipulated in national policy and criteria for vaccination clearly explained	HPA Occupational Health services	
Plan curtailment or postponement of non-essential international activities	Head of International Office	

## 6.1<sup>2</sup>. Actions during the WHO Phase 6: Pandemic Period, UK Alert Level 1

### PHASE 6: PANDEMIC PERIOD, UK ALERT LEVEL 1

#### **Definition**

Pandemic phase: increased and sustained transmission in the general population

#### **Alert Level 1**

Virus/cases only outside the UK

Action	Implementer	Red/Amber/Green
Finalise and publish HPA pandemic response organogram including designation of key staff alternates	CEO	
Implement Pandemic Influenza Command and Control arrangements	CEO	
Finalise policy and issue prophylactic antiviral drugs via occupational health to selected HPA laboratory staff in line with COSHH other regulations	CEO	
Liaise with government and other agencies to assess response options	CEO / Head of IRVPB	
Review and update briefing requirements of COBR and other government departments	CEO / Head of IRVPB	

<sup>2</sup> In WHO Phase 6, the second digit of the section numbering denotes the UK Alert Level

Enhance Core Strategic Group (CSG)	CEO / Head of Emergency Response	
Coordinate HPA tactical responses through daily teleconference and Situation Reports	CEO / National Emergency Coordination Centre	
Activate National Emergency Response Framework and National Emergency Co-ordinating Centre	CSG Chair	
Establish a daily 'battle rhythm' for meetings and information flows to meet HPA and government needs	CSG Chair	
Support CEO office and PFO in international liaison	Head of International Office	

## 6.2 Actions during the WHO Phase 6: Pandemic Period, UK Alert Level 2

### PHASE 6: PANDEMIC PERIOD, UK ALERT LEVEL 2

#### **Definition**

Pandemic phase: increased and sustained transmission in the general population  
Alert Level 2  
Virus isolated in the UK

Action	Implementer	Red/Amber/Green
Ensure administration and support arrangements are in place so that relief staff can be deployed seamlessly from CEPR and CRCE to support pandemic response functions in different HPA centres	Head of Human Resources	
Ensure logistical arrangements are in place for overnight housing of staff temporarily required to mount a 24/7 response	Head of Human Resources	
Support CEO office and PFO in international liaison	Head of International Office	

## 6.3. Actions during the WHO Phase 6: Pandemic Period, UK Alert Levels 3 & 4

### PHASE 6: PANDEMIC PERIOD, UK ALERT LEVEL 3 and 4

#### **Definition**

Pandemic phase: increased and sustained transmission in the general population

#### **Alert Level 3**

Outbreak(s) in the UK

#### **Alert Level 4**

Widespread pandemic activity in the UK

Action	Implementer	Red/Amber/Green
Review experience to date in dealing with the resource demands within HPA and the profile of experience from countries that have suffered / are suffering the pandemic and refine strategy	CEO / National Emergency Coordination Centre / Head of International Office	

Work with Government to ensure that appropriate data and advice is supplied and to act as the conduit for downward tasking	CEO / National Emergency Coordination Centre	
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## 6.4 Actions during the WHO Phase 6: End of the First Pandemic Wave

### PHASE 6: END OF FIRST PANDEMIC WAVE

#### **Definition**

End of first pandemic wave; return to inter-pandemic period

Action	Implementer	Red/Amber/Green
Consider deployment of HPA resources/expertise to support countries still affected	CEO / Head of International Office	
National Emergency Coordinating Centre will coordinate the HPA internal debrief including experiences of the interfaces with government. It will produce a Strategic Overview of the effectiveness of the HPA's plans, identify lessons to be learned and propose to the CEO revision of plans as appropriate for the possible second wave	CEO / National Emergency Coordinating Centre	
Monitor progress of current R&D and the need for further activities	Respiratory R&D Lead/ LaRS R&D Lead	
Ensure adequate down time and recovery for affected HPA staff	Head of Human Resources	

## 6.5 Actions during the WHO Phase 6: Second or Subsequent Waves

### PHASE 6: SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT WAVES

#### **Definition**

Based on past experience, a second wave of outbreaks caused by the new virus may be expected to occur in many countries

Action	Implementer	Red/Amber/Green
Reconvene the and National Emergency Coordination Centre as needed	CEO	
Reactivate HPA actions at UK Alert Levels 2-4 as appropriate across all centres and LaRS	CEO	
Review actions taken and adapt existing plans in the light of lessons learned	CEO	
Review international liaison and identify lessons learned	Head of International Office	

## 7. Actions during the Post-Pandemic Period

### POST-PANDEMIC PERIOD

#### **Definition**

WHO will announce when the pandemic period is over. In the UK the pandemic will be deemed to have ceased when the epidemiological indices have returned to background levels

#### **Key planning assumptions**

- This or a similar virus is likely to remain in circulation
- It may take months or even several years for some national services to recover

Action	Implementer	Red/Amber/Green
Take stock of the pandemic's impact on the HPA and implement actions to return HPA to business as usual	CEO	
Assessment of overall health impact of pandemic	CEO	
Ensure adequate down time and recovery for all HPA staff	Head of Human Resources	
Support re-activation of Agency international activities which had been affected by the pandemic	Head of International Office	