



The National Test and Trace service – Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Beacon

Briefing note to Members, week ending 21 August 2020

A weekly round-up of news, issues and updates from the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Beacon team. Keep up to date and find more background information about our work at www.staysafecsw.info

Test and Trace – national activity

News this week of the replacement of Public Health England with a National Institute of Health Protection had dominated the national programme. Baroness Dido Harding, who runs Test and Trace in England, is to be the interim chief. The change proposes to merge test and trace functions with some of PHE's work and the Joint Biosecurity Centre, making it the lead body for the future prevention of infectious diseases. Matt Hancock MP's statement on the changes can be [read here](#), and Government's statement on the National Institute of Health Protection [here](#).

Local Testing Units (LTU)

As the community testing programme adapts, LTUs have come into play to offer a more accessible testing offer to people without vehicle access to a designated site. LTUs can be based in a building, such as is happening in Foleshill in Coventry. They are intended to offer a much longer-term testing capability, with a minimum stay of 1 month, but a preference for 3-6 months in a location. This provides some new challenges in terms of identifying sites with the capacity to host for an extended period of time and that are in the sort of location that people in need of a test can easily walk to. The good news is that authority areas can apply to have multiple LTUs, and the timing of their introduction enables us to think about how we can take a more holistic approach to seasonal pressures and the larger health protection picture.

Beacon update

The picture of cases at the present time reflects a smaller number of outbreaks and a steady flow of individual incidents. We are seeing the beginning of a pattern of transmission within households and family groups. At 18 August, the rates per 100k population for the last 7 days were as follows:

Coventry	19.11	Rugby	11.02
Solihull	8.78	Warwick	4.17
North Warwickshire	7.66	Stratford on Avon	3.07
Nuneaton & Bedworth	11.55		

For context, Oldham was the highest at 70.01; Leicester 42.91; Birmingham 25.84.

Work has begun to refresh our [single outbreak control plan](#) to take account of guidance changes and local learning since its publication at the end of June. We're updating the local implementation plans as we go.

Scenario-based stress testing of local plans has been taking place in each of the areas over the last couple of weeks, with great involvement from key stakeholders. This work has helped review and revise our planning for better responses to incidents and outbreaks, particularly in more complex settings and in light of the so-called 'rising tide'.

Work is continuing on the identification of lockdown and enforcement triggers, with a proposal for a single set of triggers being reviewed for viability by the three authority areas. We are using headings set out in the Contain Framework to guide us: area of concern; area of enhanced support; area of intervention. Our recent experience of outbreaks in the beacon area has taught us that there are settings in which the additional powers made available through the Contain Framework are challenging to apply. Relationships and negotiation are key tools to brokering outbreak management measures, particularly in large outbreaks in certain types of business premises and public places.

The large outbreak at Greencore in Northampton has enhanced local conversations this week as we have sought to identify and act on potential implications for the beacon area. Warwickshire shares a border with Northamptonshire so we have been keen to understand the composition and characteristics of the individuals involved in the outbreak. Information shared by Northampton Public Health suggests that the workers are very local to the area, with limited commuting from outside the area, placing Warwickshire outside the direct chain of impact. Car sharing and use of public transport are key features of the workforce at Greencore, very much reflecting the recent widespread focus on increasing health protection messages to these groups of people. The beacon has already identified group commuters as a communication priority.

Following last week's trial in Nuneaton and Bedworth of backward contact tracing, we have been able to review the effectiveness of the approach. Backward contact tracing looks at the previous 10 days' contacts for any person testing positive for Covid-19, to identify possible sources of infection. The approach is also useful in being able to check how robust local processes for infection prevention and management are, and to identify where activity might be improved. The trial was able to provide reassurance that our local processes had worked, and that we hadn't missed any potential opportunities to intervene earlier.

Priority actions

- Continue development of CSW contact tracing model
- Agree triggers for enforcement/lockdown
- Progress lockdown plan
- Continue operational and programme recruitment

Meetings taking place next week (24 to 28 August)

- 24 August – Solihull Health and Wellbeing Board Covid-19 sub-group
- 24 August – Solihull Health Protection Board
- 25 August – Coventry Covid-19 mobilisation group
- 25 August – Coventry stress test 2 meeting
- 26 August – West Mids regional Covid update meeting
- 26 August – Warwickshire Covid-19 mobilisation group
- 27 August – Warwickshire Health Protection Board
- 28 August – Sub-regional Advisory Board