



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

Briefing note to Members, week ending 28 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

Regional activity

News that Birmingham has been placed on the government's watch list over its infection rate has led to an increased focus on the region, with public health officials and senior managers from Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire updated on the situation in Birmingham throughout the week. Enhanced measures agreed with the government allows Birmingham City Council to close businesses which are not following guidance on preventing the spread of Covid-19. Birmingham saw its rate of cases fall to 24.6 from 31 per 100,000 people (recorded on 25 August) with a decision expected on any further action on 28 August.

Beacon update

Each of the beacon authorities have now completed stress testing of their local arrangements. Learning from these exercises will be shared across the beacon and will be incorporated within the reviews of the Local Implementation Plans and CSW Outbreak Control Plan, currently underway. In parallel the three authorities continue to develop their arrangements for responding to outbreaks, such as through current work to identify local testing sites.

It is evident there are clusters of household transmission and communications will be focused on reiterating the messaging around good hygiene – through local, regional and national campaigns. While the focus recently has been on test and trace, it is essential that the importance of hand washing, for example, is emphasised.

Rates across the region continue to fluctuate daily and are being monitored by local teams. However, for the seven days to 25 August, the rates per 100k population as recorded in PHE's West Midlands Epidemiology Summary were:

Coventry	18.5	Rugby	10.3
Solihull	8.4	Warwick	7.0
North Warwickshire	4.6	Stratford on Avon	7.1
Nuneaton & Bedworth	9.3		

Work continues to review and refine our arrangements and plans around lockdown restrictions in light of changes in guidance. Each authority continues to work both proactively and reactively, guided by data and local intelligence, to deliver their local test and trace response with a number of different approaches being adopted in local areas which will inform both Beacon and national practice.

Work is now underway to review local sites for testing (Solihull and Warwickshire) following identification of testing centre for Coventry and representatives from the beacon's Epidemiology and Intelligence cell took part in a session with the Joint Biosecurity Centre advising on the type of research/intelligence that should be developed at the JBC, and how it would be made most useful for local authorities.

Communications and engagement

A wealth of communication and community engagement activity is underway across the three beacon authorities to provide public reassurance as we approach the return of universities and schools. Discussions are also underway with the West Midlands Combined Authority around the potential for a regional campaign.

Communications leads have also been working to ensuring readiness to respond if enhanced measures are introduced across the region.

The Beacon has also sought to reinforce messages around quarantining following holidays as well as targeting messages to particular wards and communities. Work continues to expand the community engagement offer across the Beacon through the use of community champions and award of funding to community organisations.

Priority actions

- Ongoing messaging around return of schools and universities (including use of face coverings), quarantining after holidays and ward specific targeted messaging
- Continue to review local sites for testing
- Learning from stress tests of local outbreak plans to feed into refresh of local implementation plans and CSW Outbreak Control Plan
- Coventry and Warwickshire testing providers commence activities

Meetings taking place next week (28 August to 8 September)

- 01.09.20 Solihull Health and Wellbeing Board Covid-19 sub-group
- 01.09.20 Solihull Health Protection Board
- 02.09.20 Warwickshire Covid-19 Mobilisation Group
- 02.09.20 COVID SCG WMids and Warwickshire
- 04.09.20 Coventry Test and Trace Member Briefing