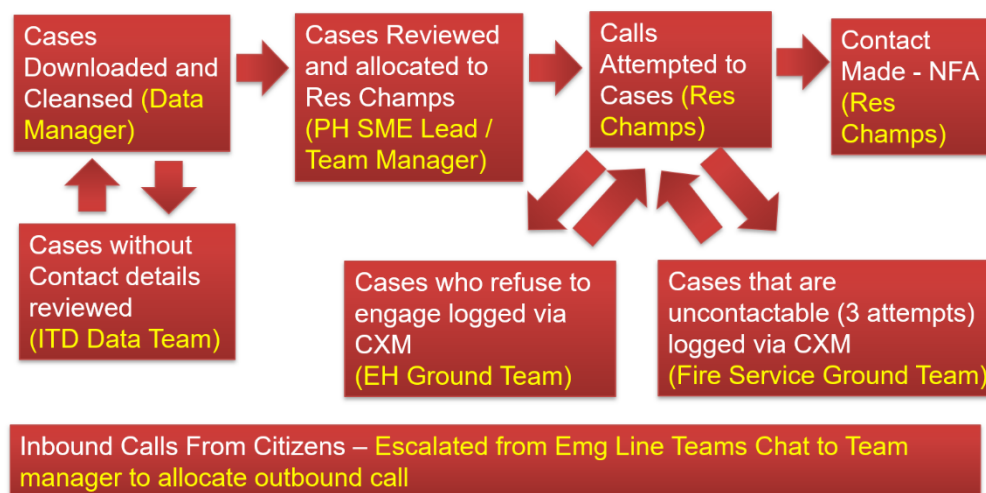


## Annex M . Local Contact Tracing

### Overview of structure for Birmingham Case Tracing Service

#### High Level Process



BCC Contact Tracing Service has steadily increased its geographical coverage and is now covering all Birmingham wards. The initial engagement is by telephone and if this fails then there is escalation to face to face follow up.

A team providing face-to-face visits is currently in place for the following positive cases:

- Those who cannot be reached by telephone (3 attempts, including voicemail and texts). These are referred to Environmental Health for follow-up (approx. 2-3 cases/day at present)
- Those who refuse to co-operate/self-isolate. These are referred to Environmental Health for follow-up visits (approx. 2 cases/day) and if necessary, escalated to the police.

BCC contribute to and are part of the national reference site supporting the ongoing development of the current national Contact Tracing System (CTAS) for managing the case interviews and the new Integrated Tracing System (ITS) that is due to replace CTAS in April 2021 (date to be confirmed).

BCC is developing the local contact tracing system working with local partner agencies with the aim of having a more efficient local community contact tracing system.

#### Local 0

To further support the tracing of positive cases faster, Birmingham has signed up to the 'Local 0 (Zero)' pilot programme which will launch on 6 April 2021. This will enable us to conduct contact tracing of positive cases after approximately 1 hour. The benefit of the programme is that it enables us to engage more with citizens, offering any required welfare help and support or processing Test and Trace grant payments. It is expected that this will help to overcome the barriers that tend to stop people isolating. When commenced we will be expected to meet or exceed the completion figures that have been reached by the national call handlers (currently estimated as 300 cases daily). Currently, as case rates have been falling, there is sufficient capacity within the contact tracing team

to cope with the demands of the pilot. However, as the national restrictions are loosened and possibly case incidence increases there may be a need for more staff. Funding is available should this be necessary.

BCC is working to establish a local door- to – door contact tracing team (Community Contact Tracing Team) to identify and support members of public where we are unable to contact them by phone. The team will consist of trained local people who are fluent in the most spoken languages within Birmingham. This will increase our capacity and enable all contact tracing to be undertaken adequately at the local level when required.

### **Outbreak Investigation and Rapid Response (OIRR)**

The national approach to contact tracing is rapidly developing. Outbreak Investigation and Rapid Response (OIRR) is a new approach which has been recently introduced and refers to a systematic and speedy process for identifying and managing clusters and outbreaks of Covid whereby chains of transmission are broken and further spread of the infection prevented.

This is done by leveraging common exposure reports, postcode coincidences and other intelligence provided by NHS Test and Trace and Public Health England. These common exposure and data sources are extracted daily by the BCC test and trace data team to prioritise settings and direct to areas where more detailed intervention is required.

Common exposure reports are developed from ‘backward’ contact tracing information (the period 3 to 7 days before symptoms or being tested), and show where cases may have acquired their infection. Postcode coincidence reports are developed from ‘forwards’ contact tracing information (the period 2 days before the infectious period), and show where cases may have acquired their infection.

The BCC Surveillance team utilise this information with Enforcement to deploy covid marshals or enforcement officers to review covid safety in potential transmission settings and assess the level of risk. This approach has been used successfully to identify potential poor practice in retail settings contributing to transmission and to highlight to NHS Midlands the potential need to investigate NHS setting risk management of visitors and out-patient attendees.

Looking ahead we will continue to develop and evolve our approach. Over the spring and early summer we are modelling the resource implications of further devolution of contact tracing and the capacity flow modelling of maintaining Covid-0 if case rates rise or surge.

## **Enduring Transmission**

It is our priority to address the issue of enduring transmission. Enduring transmission occurs when the transmission of Covid-19 infection persists in a specific area or setting. As long as the virus continues to circulate in any community, there is a greater risk of mutation.

Taking action on enduring transmission is also important to help reduce the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on our most under-served communities, who are already at greatest risk of the burden of ill health due to COVID-19.

Our local approach to tackling enduring transmission will be intelligence led. The available granular intelligence and surveillance will allow daily monitoring of infections and testing at the ward level. We will continue proactive engagement with businesses/workplaces. Evidence during the last lockdown showed that a high proportion of people were leaving home to work. Areas identified where public health control measures and non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) are either not in place or not understood, will have targeted communications sent directly to these settings as well as in wider social media platforms. Continuation and promotion of self-isolation payments will also play an important role in tackling this.

BCC has put systems in place to address enduring transmission of Covid-19 identified through local line list case rate trend analysis. Analysis of the data available enables daily monitoring and interpretation of local transmission. The use of intelligence and understanding of the local context will enable us to understand enduring transmission in our communities and defined settings such as care homes and high-risk workplaces. BCC will work with our communities to determine and understand the reasons behind this pattern.

Enforcement