

Item 21 – Health Protection Forum Highlight Report (September 2022)

1.1 Context

The Health Protection Forum (HPF) is currently meeting monthly to discuss and seek assurance on health protection arrangements from local health protection system stakeholders. The HPF discusses screening, immunisation, communicable and non-communicable diseases.

1.2 Current Circumstance

The HPF has set a plan for meeting topics for the 2022 meetings, alternating general meetings with subject-specific meetings on a bi-monthly cycle:

HPF meeting	Content
January 2022	General HPF meeting
February 2022	General HPF meeting
March 2022	Focused – Commonwealth Games
April 2022	General HPF meeting
May 2022	Focused – Screening and Immunisations
June 2022	General HPF meeting (Cancelled)
July 2022	Focused – Oral Health
August 2022	General HPF meeting
September 2022	Focused – Environmental Health & Non-Communicable Disease
October 2022	General HPF meeting
November 2022	Focused – Infection Prevention & Control
December 2022	General HPF meeting
January 2023	Focused – Communicable Disease

Recent discussions at the HPF have included:

- a. Challenging health protection cases (including TB, blood-borne viruses, and other communicable diseases or environmental hazards situations); a complex TB management review has been completed and next steps recommended; an action plan to improve system working is being developed. A TB and housing framework for cases with no recourse to public funds is already in place, and options to support cases with other infectious diseases and housing needs are being explored.
- b. Learning and observations from the current Monkey Pox outbreak are discussed, and complexities related to local cases are informing work plans and inter-agency working arrangements.
- c. Vaccination and screening programme uptake activity; specifically ensuring that the local partners are developing and implementing plans to maintain and increase uptake rates. The local Immunisation Programme Board has several sub-groups that some members of the HPF attend to facilitate effective inter-organisational system-wide approaches.
- d. There have been updates and focussed discussions on the health protection arrangements for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth

Games – this included the regional and local UK Health Security Agency planning and the Birmingham City Council Health Protection teams planning. A safe Games was planned for, and ultimately delivered.

- e. Local data, issues, priorities, possible interventions, and plans for oral health have been presented and discussed. This focus and work is ongoing and current and future projects will provide update reports to future HPF meetings.
- f. Future options for the delivery of infection prevention and control services across the Birmingham and Solihull (ICS) footprint after the two existing covid-focussed commissioned service contracts conclude. The public health teams are working with the ICB to ensure that an effective community service can address the gaps in community provision.

1.3 Next Steps and Delivery

- a. The HPF members and Public Health team are planning a health protection report to provide a more detailed update to the Health and Wellbeing Board at the March 2023 meeting.
- b. Delivery of recommendations and actions identified in the 2022 HPF report to the Health and Wellbeing Board is continuously monitored.
- c. Planning for the 2022/23 seasonal flu vaccination programme is ongoing and being led by the Immunisation Programme Board (BSol).
- d. The Autumn SARS-CoV2 (Covid-19) vaccination programme is also being planned and delivered by the NHS, with key updates being provided to the HPF.
- e. Winter planning and preparedness to respond to a possible increase in covid-19 and seasonal flu cases and outbreaks is ongoing with partners.
- f. Work to implement new protocols for the response to Covid-19 as national and local responses change is ongoing and will continue in the Autumn and Winter.