

MANAGING PANDEMIC (H1N1) 2009 INFLUENZA – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1.	<p><i>Can the Independent Sector access Trust Staff to compensate for falling numbers of Staff?</i></p> <p>Independent Sector Organisations should detail actions they plan to take to manage falling numbers of staff in their Business Continuity Plan. Utilisation of Independent Sector Organisations own staff/retired staff/volunteers/agency staff should be exhausted before approaching Trust for staffing support.</p>
2.	<p><i>What information should be communicated to carers/visitors?</i></p> <p>Guidance on information which can be shared with carers/visitors is available in the guidance ‘Nursing and Residential Home Guidance for Managing Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 Influenza. Information is also available from Public Health leaflets and on the following Websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) – www.rqia.org.uk ● Health Protection Agency (HPA) – www.hpa.org.uk ● Department of Health Social Services & Public Safety (DHSSPS) – www.dhsspsni.gov.uk ● Public Health Agency (PHA) – www.publichealth.hscni.net
3.	<p><i>Will Agency Staff be able to access the Vaccination Programme?</i></p> <p>All staff who have direct contact with patients will have access to the vaccine. Vaccination for staff is to be provided via the Occupational Health Department in your local Trust. Vaccination Programme to commence from 21 October 2009.</p>
4.	<p><i>Will the Independent Sector be able to access training from Trusts – e.g. Infection Control and Anaphylaxis Training?</i></p> <p>Trusts have opened up their training to Independent Sector Organisations.</p> <p>You can contact your Trust for more information as follows:</p>

	<p>WESTERN TRUST: John McGarvey – 02871 345171 john.mcgarvey@westerntrust.hscni.net</p> <p>NORTHERN TRUST: Briege Donaghy – 02825 633718 briege.donaghy@northerntrust.hscni.net</p> <p>BELFAST TRUST: Brian Barry – 02890 634377 brian.barry@belfasttrust.hscni.net</p> <p>SOUTHERN TRUST: Geraldine Harvey – 07734 577851 geraldine.harvey@southerntrust.hscni.net</p> <p>SOUTH EASTERN TRUST: Sarah Browne – 02892 665181 sarah.browne@setrust.hscni.net</p> <p>An E-Learning Programme is also available and information on how to access this is available on the RQIA Website - www.rqia.org.uk – or from Kathy McLaughlin at the Beeches Management Centre (kathy.mclaughlin@beeches.hscni.net), telephone: 02890 644811</p>
5.	<p><i>Will there be payments for the Independent Sector if extra staff are required?</i></p> <p>Independent Sector Organisations need to record and monitor exceptional additional expenditure or loss of income associated with Pandemic Flu. Payment issues can be raised at the Independent Sector Flu Planning Group Meeting through Trust contacts.</p>
6.	<p><i>What about access to Vaccinations and PPE for Criminal Justice Hostels?</i></p> <p>Access to Vaccination and PPE for Criminal Justice Hostels is being addressed.</p>
7.	<p><i>When should relatives be involved?</i></p> <p>Each Independent Sector Organisation will need to decide when to involve relatives and this will be included in your Business Continuity Plan. If relatives are to be involved with patients/clients other than their own relative, they would be required to have a POCVA (Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults) check.</p>

8.	<p><i>Could a group get together to tease out Domiciliary Care Guidance?</i></p> <p>Regional guidance tailored to Domiciliary Care Providers is now available and can be access by contacting RQIA or viewing the websites noted at Question 2.</p>
9.	<p><i>If a facility closes, e.g. a Day Centre, how long does it stay closed?</i></p> <p>Decisions on re-opening facilities will be made following assessment of each situation and will be a joint decision between the Trust and Independent Sector Organisation.</p>
10.	<p><i>What is the minimum staffing level?</i></p> <p>Independent Sector Organisations will, as part of business continuity planning, carry out a risk assessment of the needs of their patients/clients and determine the minimum staffing level they can cope with to keep patients/clients and staff safe.</p>
11.	<p><i>What can relatives provide?</i></p> <p>Relatives can, depending on assessment by the Independent Sector Organisation and in some cases jointly with Trust staff, provide care for their own relative. To provide care for others, the person would have to have a POCVA (Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults) check.</p>
12.	<p><i>If staff take on duties of others, what training would staff need to be functioning at an accepted standard?</i></p> <p>Independent Sector Organisations will, as part of business continuity planning, identify what duties staff can carry out, assess training needs and provide support – supervision required.</p> <p>Guidance and information on training is available on the RQIA Website - www.rqia.org.uk</p>
13.	<p><i>Could there be a checklist for staff to use in an emergency situation, e.g. prompts around risk assessment and recognition of symptoms?</i></p> <p>Checklist is available in the guidance entitled: ‘Nursing and Residential Home Guidance for Managing Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 Influenza’ and ‘Domiciliary Care Providers – Regional Guidance for</p>

	<p>Managing Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 Influenza'. Information is also available on the following websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) – www.rqia.org.uk ● Health Protection Agency (HPA) – www.hpa.org.uk ● Department of Health Social Services & Public Safety (DHSSPS) – www.dhsspsni.gov.uk ● Public Health Agency (PHA) – www.publichealth.hscni.net
14.	<p><i>Should we move towards local suppliers?</i></p> <p>Independent Sector Organisations, in developing their business continuity plans, need to consider this and it would involve checking with existing suppliers to see what plans they have in place to ensure you receive the supplies required.</p>
15.	<p><i>Will there be guidance on wearing uniforms for those who don't currently wear uniforms?</i></p> <p>Guidance is available on the use of PPE and this is available on both the RQIA Website (www.rqia.org.uk) and the Public Health Agency Website (www.publichealth.hscni.net).</p>
16.	<p><i>Where would employers stand in terms of liability where volunteers and relatives are being used to provide care?</i></p> <p>Employers need to ensure relatives and volunteers have had a POCVA check and they also need to take advice from their own Human Resources Adviser on other Employer Liability issues.</p>
17.	<p><i>Can RQIA provide a database of Nurses who could help replace staff who are ill?</i></p> <p>RQIA cannot provide a database of Nurses who could replace staff. They could provide information on where to access Nursing Agencies.</p>
18.	<p><i>Can we have guidance on the difference between swine flu and ordinary flu?</i></p> <p>Information on signs and symptoms of Swine Flu are available in the guidance: 'Nursing and Residential Home Guidance for</p>

	<p>Managing Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 Influenza’ and ‘Domiciliary Care Providers – Regional Guidance for Managing Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 Influenza’.</p> <p>Practitioners are responsible for making the diagnosis. Guidance is also available on the following websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) – www.rqia.org.uk ● Health Protection Agency (HPA) – www.hpa.org.uk ● Department of Health Social Services & Public Safety (DHSSPS) – www.dhsspsni.gov.uk ● Public Health Agency (PHA) – www.publichealth.hscni.net
<p>19.</p>	<p><i>How will we know when staff are safe to return to work?</i></p> <p>Information is available on the RQIA Website (www.rqia.org.uk), where there is guidance and a leaflet on staff returning to work.</p>
<p>20.</p>	<p><i>Can we have guidance on disposal of Clinical Waste, especially for Domiciliary Care, District Nurses transporting Clinical Waste, disposal for Residential facilities?</i></p> <p>The guidance ‘Nursing and Residential Home Guidance for Managing Pandemic (H1N1) Influenza’ and ‘Domiciliary Care Providers – Regional Guidance for Managing Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 Influenza’ (or available from RQIA and websites as detailed at Question 2) and the E-Learning Programme provide advice on Clinical Waste. Independent Sector Organisations, as part of business continuity planning, need to address the collection of waste with their current Service Provider. Councils are already engaged in developing their business continuity plans in respect of this issue.</p>
<p>21.</p>	<p><i>Can we have some clearer guidance about whether asymptomatic staff who have a symptomatic family member should stay off work or not and, if so, for how long?</i></p> <p>The Guidance is that asymptomatic staff should continue to go to work.</p>