

What are Local Outbreak Plans?

The Government has instructed upper tier councils such as Sefton Borough Council to develop Local Outbreak Control Plans.

Sefton's sets out the measures that would be required to

- identify and contain a local COVID-19 outbreak;
- protect the public's health;
- protect our health and care systems:

supports the recovery of our economy.

Who oversees Sefton's Local Outbreak Plan?

Like all upper tier councils, Sefton has been required to set up:

- an Outbreak Management Stakeholder Board at a political level chaired by the Leader of Sefton Council
- a COVID- 19 Outbreak Management (Health Protection) Board at a strategic level, chaired by the Council's interim Director of Public Health with representation from partners including Health, Public Health England and the Voluntary Sector, to ensure a co-ordinated approach.

Both new Boards will be responsive to changes during the pandemic and will make quick recommendations and/or decisions on prevention and protection measures for the local population of Sefton.

What is an 'outbreak'?

An outbreak is defined as two or more cases that have tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) within the same 14-day period, in people who either work or have visited a setting.

In a residential care setting the definition is two or more symptomatic cases (or laboratory confirmed) within the same 14-day period.

How might a possible COVID-19 outbreak be identified?

Notification of a suspected or confirmed outbreak could come from a range of sources including:

- NHS Test and Trace;

- Public Health England;
- Community Infection Prevention and Control Service;
- Health and Social Care Providers;
- NHS Organisations;
- Local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs);
- Workplaces;
- A direct report to the Council.

Who else would be notified about a possible COVID-19 outbreak?

Information about suspected outbreaks will be shared with North-West Public Health England health protection team, Sefton Council public health team and the Community infection prevention and control team, as required and with reference to local and national guidance.

If a COVID-19 outbreak were identified, what would happen?

The response to a confirmed COVID-19 outbreak would be based on:

- control measures – contact tracing and advice regarding individual and household isolation, which should be implemented as soon an outbreak is suspected;
- risk assessment - to determine whether there is a need to escalate and establish an Outbreak Control Team*.

*Most outbreaks are dealt with as part of normal service provision, using existing guidance and standard operating procedures, and do not require an Outbreak Control Team.

If a COVID-19 outbreak were identified in a care home, what would be likely to happen?

Care homes experiencing an outbreak would be supported in line with the latest national guidance for care homes and adult social care.

Any Care home with outbreaks or single case will receive advice and guidance on measures required to manage an outbreak, including

- advice about isolation of suspected and confirmed cases and contacts;
- protecting vulnerable residents from exposure;
- use of PPE;

- environmental cleaning.

The North-West Public Health England Care Home COVID-19 Resource Pack would be used to implement:

- infection prevention and control measures;
- correct use of personal protective equipment;
- early recognition and reporting of symptomatic staff or residents.

Sefton's Care Home Group will continue to offer support to care homes in relation to the challenges presented by COVID-19 including:

- supply of PPE;
- staffing level issues:
- quality of care:
- education and training, including infection prevention and control training.

If a COVID-19 outbreak were identified in a school, what would be likely to happen?

North-West Public Health England will manage outbreaks in schools, with support from the community infection prevention and control team and Sefton Council.

Schools experiencing an outbreak would be offered support in implementing national COVID-19 guidance and using the North-West Public Health England Care Home COVID-19 Resource Pack for infection prevention and control measures.

Testing in schools will be carried out in line with the local testing strategy (Merseyside and Cheshire) and parents and guardians will be encouraged to seek testing for children who are symptomatic.

An Outbreak Control Team would be set up in the event of a complex outbreaks affecting large numbers of pupils or school staff.

What other places, locations and communities have been identified as of high-risk in addition to Care Homes and Schools?

In drawing up the Plan, the following categories have also been identified:

- Children's homes;
- Places of detention

- Workplaces including:
 - Council workplaces such as libraries, leisure centres, offices;
 - Private commercial premises – retail offices, leisure services (clubs, gyms, hairdressers etc), cinemas, outdoor event centres (racecourse, sports venues) catering establishments;
- Tourist attractions;
- Faith settings;
- Hospitals;
- Primary care locations such as GP surgeries;
- Mental health and community trusts;
- Hospices;
- Transport hubs and ports;

- Vulnerable residents:
 - Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME)

- Local complex communities:
 - Asylum seekers and refugees;
 - Migrant workers;
 - People who use drugs;
 - Roma, gypsies and traveller communities;
 - Rough sleepers;
 - Sex workers;

Testing and Tracing is vital to managing an outbreak among these places, locations and communities, which have been identified in a joint needs assessment by Sefton Council and the CCGs.

The aim would be to prioritise and provide swift access to testing, which could include:

- delivering tests to vulnerable individuals;
- establishing local pop-up sites;
- extending the successful programme of mobile testing units.

How would people be informed about an outbreak?

Surrounding any outbreak, there would be an agreed programme of communications covering:

- general information about the outbreak;
- where people can access further information and updates;
- targeted messages on how to access the Test and Trace process and the importance of following up if contacted;
- information should the outbreak have wider consequences such as affecting a local workplace or service;
- what is being done to manage those consequences.