

Guidelines for the Prevention and Management of Student and Staff Communicable Diseases

For use in:	All divisions within the University
For use by:	Relevant staff as outlined within the guidelines
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1. Purpose of Guidelines

- 1.1 These guidelines are for university staff who have responsibilities for student or staff health and wellbeing, including raising awareness of threats to health, such as communicable diseases or environmental hazards. Such staff may be required to respond to a suspected or confirmed case of notifiable infection (a single incident) or an outbreak (two or more cases of the same infection) in the student and or staff community.
- 1.2 The focus of these Guidelines is how the University would (a) undertake health promotion work to raise awareness of and prevent communicable diseases (b) work with UKHSA to manage an incident or outbreak.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 An incident or outbreak of any communicable disease in a higher education institution can pose challenges in terms of public health management because the close circle of contacts of those affected may be difficult to define and trace. This is because students will often be living in shared accommodation and may also be part of an active social network outside the hall and within their faculty. Certain categories of staff, such as catering and campus services staff, lecturers, lab technicians and administrative staff, interact with large numbers of different people on a daily basis. This may result in misinformation about the incident spreading quickly and raise unnecessary alarm. Students who have recently left home may feel vulnerable, especially if they have not yet established good access to local primary care services.
- 2.2 United Kingdom Health Security Agency (UKHSA) have local Health Protection Teams (HPT) who provide specialist public health advice and operational support to NHS, local authorities and other agencies. Our local East Midlands Health Protection Team provide specialist support to prevent and reduce infectious diseases and can help with investigating and managing health protection incidents and outbreaks.
- 2.3 Leicester Public Health Team (LPHT) address the health and wellbeing needs of the people of Leicester, with control of five mandatory functions, one of these being Health Protection.
- 2.4 UKHSA define an outbreak as;
 - an incident in which 2 or more people experiencing a similar illness are linked in time or place
 - a greater than expected rate of infection compared with the usual background rate for the place and time where the outbreak has occurred
 - a single case for certain rare or high-consequence diseases such as diphtheria, botulism, rabies, viral haemorrhagic fever or polio
 - a suspected, anticipated or actual event involving microbial contamination of food or water.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/communicable-disease-outbreak-management-operational-guidance/communicable-disease-outbreak-management-operational-guidance>
- 2.5 If the University is informed by UKSHA of an outbreak of a communicable disease, the University will seek guidance from the local Health Protection Team, or relevant Health Protection Team if not local to Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. A Critical Incident meeting will be called to co-ordinate overall responses. Sections of these guidelines describe the specific actions and responsibilities for key services, as part of the overall University response.

3. Notifiable Diseases

3.1 According to the Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010, the following are notifiable diseases:

Acute encephalitis, Acute infectious hepatitis, Acute meningitis, Acute poliomyelitis, Anthrax, Botulism, Brucellosis, Cholera, Diphtheria, Enteric fever (typhoid or paratyphoid fever), Food poisoning, Haemolytic uraemic syndrome (HUS), Infectious bloody diarrhoea, Invasive group A streptococcal disease, Legionnaires' disease, Leprosy, Malaria, Measles, Meningococcal septicaemia, Mumps, Plague, Rabies, Rubella, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Scarlet fever, Smallpox, Tetanus, Tuberculosis, Typhus, Viral haemorrhagic fever (VHF), Whooping cough, Yellow fever, Monkeypox.

- 3.2 It is the duty of a Registered Medical Practitioner to notify the local authority or UKHSA concerning a notifiable disease. In the case of the University, which does not employ any medical professionals with responsibility for student healthcare, the responsibility for notifying will be the student's own GP or other health professional they are in contact with. However, the University can contact the East Midlands UKHSA for advice (where the latter has not already contacted the University) and will work closely with them to manage an incident or outbreak. For a local outbreak, it is likely that the University will also be working closely with Victoria Park Health Centre.
- 3.3 The Occupational Health department is responsible for identifying and managing work related risks to staff health; however it will be the responsibility of the member of staff's own GP to notify UKHSA of a notifiable disease. The Occupational Health Team will be responsible for working with East Midlands UKHSA to help manage an incident or outbreak and, where an exposure has occurred at work, ensure that the members of staff concerned receive the appropriate follow up care and support.

4. Health Promotion Work to Prevent Communicable Diseases

- 4.1. In January 2023 UKSHA produced the [Vaccine Communications Toolkit for Universities and other higher education settings](#). Additional UKHSA communications in June 2023, have informed that the University's health promotion/awareness raising work in relation to communicable diseases will focus on measles, as well as meningitis, mumps and rubella at key points in the academic year. See **Appendix A - Action Plan for Raising Awareness of Meningitis, and Measles, Mumps and Rubella**. This is based on the "[Checklist - Meningitis Aware Recognition Mark](#)" produced by Meningitis Now.
- 4.2. Health promotion information will be available across the university community to raise awareness in relation to communicable diseases that are not vaccine preventable. This will include promoting good hand hygiene, proper food preparation (where required), keeping away from others if ill (Diarrhoea and Vomiting or respiratory illness), awareness of common signs and symptoms and what to do if unwell to support the prevention of transmission, in line with NHS guidance.
- 4.3. International students may not have been in receipt of the same childhood vaccinations as UK born students and all are eligible to receive any of the usual UK vaccinations and should check with their GP when they register. This will be communicated at various stages of onboarding and included within welcome activities.
- 4.3.1. International students whose country of birth have a higher incidence of tuberculosis are eligible for latent tuberculosis screening via their GP on first registration.
- 4.3.2. International students arriving from countries with outbreaks of monkey pox will be provided information on signs and symptoms on first arrival to the country and are advised to ring NHS 111 if they have any concerns and to notify Student Support Services.
- 4.4. Sexually transmitted diseases are on the rise and promotional material will guide on preventative measures that can be taken and information on accessing sexual health services.

- 4.5. Promotion for the upcoming vaccination programme for monkeypox will be promoted when the criterion for eligible persons for this programme is made available.
- 4.6. The staff health and wellbeing team will continue to promote good hand hygiene and measures to reduce the risk of seasonal respiratory infections and will liaise with HR to ensure that statements about ensuring that all eligible vaccinations are up to date are included in staff communications at recruitment stage.

Role of the University in the Event of a Communicable Disease Outbreak

5. Media and Communication

- 5.1 Handling the media during an incident or outbreak of communicable disease requires expertise with clear, consistent and accurate information being provided. Student Support Services and/or Staff Health and Wellbeing will liaise with the University's Communications and Engagement team and UKHSA to develop a communication plan for internal and external audiences in line with the University Crisis Communications Plan and World Health Organisations Toolkit resources. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/outbreak-toolkit>

6. Stakeholders

- 6.1 Depending on the nature of the case(s), the following audiences may need to be considered in a communication plan:

6.1.1 Students

- Those in the same residence
- Those in residence on the same site
- Those on the same course (including field trips, placements, apprentices, electives)
- Those with social contact or have attended the same event
- The general student population who may not be at increased risk but who may perceive themselves to be

6.1.2 Students' Union

- Students' Union Chief Executive Officer and staff

6.1.3 University Staff (Including PGRs/PGTs)

- Residence staff if appropriate, particularly those who have had recent contact with the affected students, such as cleaners or porters
- Where a member of staff is affected, colleagues identified as having been in contact with them when on campus.
- Those in the same academic department or building
- Those who have attended the same event if applicable
- Sports and Active Life staff (SAL) staff if appropriate, particularly those who have had recent contact with the affected students
- Others within the institution who may not be at increased risk, but who may perceive themselves to be

6.1.4 External staff within partnerships, placement providers and apprentice work settings.

6.1.5 Private accommodation providers.

6.1.6 Contractors and Suppliers.

6.1.7 Emergency Contact

- The University will contact the student's Emergency Contact in accordance with the [University's Emergency Contact Protocol](#).

6.1.8 External Media

- In the event of an incident or outbreak, the press may require a quote from the University. This will normally be supplied by the East Midlands UKHSA or Leicester Public Health team in consultation with the Student Support Services (SSS) of Staff Health and Wellbeing lead, describing what action is being taken on campus with regards to disease awareness and prevention. The identity of any affected staff or student(s) will not be disclosed. If a vaccination programme is to be conducted, media access will be via the local UKHSA.

6.2 In the event of a fatality, the Fatalities Procedures should be adhered to.

7. Actions for a Single Confirmed or Probable Case of Communicable Disease (Incident)

- 7.1. A single confirmed case or probable case of a communicable disease will be managed by student support services or occupational health.
- 7.2. If there is a single case of Clade 1 monkeypox then all actions in response to this will be as if there is an outbreak.
- 7.3. See **Appendix A** for actions in priority order.

8. Actions for Multiple Cases of a Communicable Disease (Outbreak)

- 8.1. Following the confirmation of an outbreak, the lead (Head of Student Support Services or deputy) will escalate the issue to the Director of Student Services and Belonging and a decision will be made to either call a Critical or Major Incident, in accordance to the Escalation and Response Activation Criteria. Where this may be out of hours Security would escalate, then take the lead to either call a Critical or Major Incident and on informing the Registrar and Secretary or Duty Officer.
- 8.2. See Appendix B for response members and response actions in priority order.
- 8.3. Whereas, it is expected that a Major Incident will be declared where there is a significant outbreak requiring complex University wide management.

9. Following an Incident or Outbreak

9.1 After a single case or outbreak of a communicable disease, action should be reviewed by SSS and Occupational Health, where necessary, in consultation with the local UKHSA, to identify areas for improvement and lessons that could be shared with other higher education institutions.

10. Consultation

This document has been produced in consultation with:

- Risk and Business Continuity Manager
- Registrar and Secretary
- Director of Communications and Engagement
- Director of Student Services and Belonging
- Occupational Health Service Manager
- Deputy Director of Campus Services
- Victoria Park Health Centre (awaiting reply)
- Consultant in Health Protection, Public Health England, East Midlands (awaiting reply)
- Consultant in Public Health, Leicester City Council

Key Terminology

MIRP – Major Incident Response Plan

MIMT – Major Incident Management Team
UKHSA – UK Health Security Agency
HPT – Health Protection Team
ECS – Estates and Campus Services
SSS – Student Support Service
SAL - Sports and Active Life
SU – Students' Union

Useful Contacts

East Midlands UKHSA, Seaton House, City Link, Nottingham, NG2 4LA. Tel: 0344 2254 524 (option 1). Out of hours: 0344 2254 524. emhpt@ukhsa.gov.uk

Leicester Public Health, Leicester City Council, City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ

Tel: 0116 454 2051

University Emergency Security Number: Tel: 0116 252 2888

University of Leicester Student Welfare Service: www.le.ac.uk/welfare Tel: 0116 223 1185

University of Leicester Students' Union: <http://leicesterunion.com/> Tel: 0116 223 1181

University Occupational Health: Tel: 0116 252 3263

<https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/wellbeing/occupational-health/SitePages/Home.aspx>

University Press Office: <http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/press> Tel: 0116 252 5761. Out of hours: 07711 927821

Meningitis Now: <https://www.meningitisnow.org/> Tel: 0808 80 10 388

Meningitis Research Foundation: <https://www.meningitis.org/> Tel: 080 8800 3344

Victoria Park Health Centre: <http://www.victoriaparkhealthcentre.co.uk/> Tel : 0116 2151105

Appendix A – Initial Contact Form

Date and time	
Name of person completing form	
Name of person providing information	
Contact details of person providing information	
Name of student/staff (patient)	
Disclosed disability - if yes, any requirement of reasonable adjustments to communications and support	
Leicester address of student/staff (patient)	
Course	
Year of study	
Home address of student (patient)	
Home telephone number	
Mobile telephone number	
Date of birth	
Emergency Contact	
Has the Emergency Contact been notified? (<i>Note: contact should only be made in accordance with the University's Student Emergency Contact Protocol</i>). If yes: - details of Emergency Contact - what information has been provided? - any other relevant information e.g. will the Emergency Contact travel to be with the student?	
Details of primary stakeholders (e.g. students in the same accommodation and immediate social circle):	
Details of secondary stakeholders (e.g. students in same classes, wider social circle, living in other halls of residence, SAL, SU):	
Reason for East Midlands UKHSA contacting University or University contacting EMHPT	
Directions from East Midlands UKHSA	
Action Taken by University representative	

Once completed for a student case, the Initial Contact Form should be emailed immediately to Student Support Service via the email: concerned@le.ac.uk and followed up with a phone call on 0116 2231185.

Once completed for a staff case the Initial Contact Form should be emailed immediately to the Occupational Health Service Manager via the email: ochealth@le.ac.uk and followed up with a phone call on 0116 252 3263

Appendix B – Actions for a Single Confirmed or Probable Case of Communicable Disease (Incident)

Priority Order	Action	Service Responsible	Action Taken (1) Initial/date/time	Action Taken (2) Initial/date/time	Action Taken (3) Initial/date/time
	Clarify circumstances and record details – use template (Appendix D)	Student Support Services (SSS) or Staff Health and Wellbeing			
	Contact East Midlands Health Protection Team (local HPT) if they have not already made contact	Head of SSS or Staff Health and Wellbeing			
	Report case to the Victoria Park Health Centre (if required)	East Midlands UKHSA			
	Coordinate an urgent case meeting via Cause for Concern to report case internally to relevant colleagues and departments: • Director of Student Services and Wellbeing • Registrar and Secretary • Academic Registrar • Deputy of Campus Services • Staff Health and Wellbeing • Occupational Health • Dean of Personal Tutoring • Communications and Engagement Team • Head of School (relevant to student/staff) Appendix D- Meeting agenda	SSS or Staff Health and Wellbeing			
	Collate relevant information as required by East Midlands UKHSA	SSS or Staff Health and Wellbeing			
	Under the direction of the East Midlands UKHSA, convene meeting to:	East Midlands UKHSA to advise: University Press			

	• agree communication plan for internal stakeholders (including which students and staff need to be informed) • draft a holding reactive press statement	Office/University Communications Team			
	Under the direction of the East Midlands UKHSA, agree what information should be given to primary stakeholders urgently (i.e. same day), • convene meeting with students and staff (including students living in the same accommodation) • send e-mail and/or text message to students and staff who could not attend meeting	East Midlands UKHSA to advise: SSS/ECS (Accommodation)			
	Under the direction of East Midlands UKHSA, agree what information should be given to secondary stakeholders: students sharing classes and social activities, and students living in other halls of residence, relevant staff	Local HPT to advise: SSS/University Communications Team/ULSU/ECS			
	Where appropriate make immediate contact with student/staff to ensure they have support network in place (if necessary, work as advocate for student)	SSS or Staff Health and Wellbeing/line manager			
	In the event of a death, follow existing procedure for dealing with a fatality.	SSS or Staff Health and Wellbeing			
	Ensure communications to all staff affected to signpost to support and ensure they are aware of any relevant absence reporting procedures.	Staff Health and Wellbeing			

Appendix C - Actions for Multiple Confirmed Cases of a Communicable Disease (Outbreak)

Priority Order	Action	Service Responsible	Action Taken (1) Initial/date/time	Action Taken (2) Initial/date/time	Action Taken (3) Initial/date/time
	Clarify circumstances and record details – use template (<i>Appendix D</i>)	SSS or Staff Health and Wellbeing			
	Contact East Midlands UKHSA if they have not already made contact	SSS or Staff Health and Wellbeing			
	Report case to the: - the local A & E department at the LRI - Victoria Park Health Centre or relevant Health centre	Local HPT			
	Collate relevant information as required by East Midlands UKHSA	SSS or Staff Health and Wellbeing Victoria Park Health Centre or relevant Health Centre			
	Coordinate an urgent Critical Incident meeting internally with relevant colleagues and departments: • Director of Student Services and Belonging • Registrar and Secretary • Deputy of Campus services • Academic Registrar • Staff Health and Wellbeing • Occupational Health • Vice Chancellor's Office • Dean of Personal Tutoring • Communications and Engagement Team Appendix D- Meeting agenda	SSS or Staff Health and Wellbeing			
	Under the direction of East Midlands UKHSA : consult Registrar and Secretary or Deputy to	East Midlands UKHSA to advise: SSS to contact			

	declare a Major Incident and convene MIMT meeting	Registrar or Deputy and Major Incident Management Team			
	Under the direction of the local HPT, convene meeting to: • agree communication plan for internal stakeholders (including which students and staff need to be informed) • agree public communication plan/press statement	East Midlands UKHSA: SSS or Staff Health and Wellbeing/			
	Under the direction of East Midlands UKHSA, inform urgently (i.e. within 4 hours) students living in the same hall of residence (where applicable) and relevant staff • convene meeting with students and staff • send e-mail and/or text message to students and staff who could not attend meeting	East Midlands UKHSA to advise: SSS or Staff Health and Wellbeing (Accommodation) University Press Office/University Communications Team/SU			
	Under the direction of East Midlands UKHSA, issue information urgently (i.e. same day) to all appropriate departments and halls of residence.	East Midlands UKHSA to advise: SSS/Staff health and Wellbeing/University Communications Team/SU/ECS (Accommodation)			
	Under the direction of East Midlands UKHSA organise appropriate venue to facilitate the issue of preventive medication to the target group, as appropriate	East Midlands UKHSA to advise: SSS/ECS (Accommodation)			
	Notify national helplines e.g. NHS 111, Meningitis Now and Meningitis Research Foundation which operate helpline services that are equipped to deal with enquiries from members of the public	East Midlands UKHSA			

	Under the direction of East Midlands UKHSA, consider notifying other universities	East Midlands UKHSA to advise: Registrar and Secretary/ Press Office			
	In the event of a death, follow existing procedure for dealing with a fatality	SSS/Staff Health and Wellbeing			
	Where appropriate make immediate contact with students/staff to ensure they have support network in place (if necessary, work as advocate for students)	SSS/Staff Health and Wellbeing			

Appendix D – Agenda for Critical Incident meeting

- Situational picture
- Contact tracing
- Health/Hygiene measures
- Communications
- Potential impact on university activities e.g. events/teaching
- Next steps (including summary for MI if required)

Appendix E - Relevant documents.

An overview of the linked documents can be found in the following table, which contains useful policies and procedures, as well as useful reference materials which could be adapted and utilised as appropriate.

Response Plans and Processes (link to MIM Teams site – restricted access)			
No.	Plan	Purpose	Main Contact
1.	Response Escalation and Activation Procedure	Sets out the approach for assessing a situation and declaring an incident.	Risk and Business Continuity Manager
2.	Duty Officer Guidance	This document provides guidance on the Duty Officer role and its associated responsibilities. It should be considered alongside the Incident Escalation and Response Activation Procedure.	Risk and Business Continuity Manager
3.	Major Incident Management Plan	This document provides an overview of the management framework, and the roles and responsibilities for the management of a major incident	Risk and Business Continuity Manager
4.	Business Continuity Plans	These documents provide an overview of the management framework, and the roles and responsibilities for the recovery from an incident that impacts our ability to deliver of core services and functions.	Risk and Business Continuity Manager
5.	Student Fatality Procedure	This provides a framework, with clear lines of responsibilities ensuring that the University's response to a death of a student is appropriate, timely and coordinated	Head of Student Support Services
6.	Staff death in service process	This provides a framework, with clear lines of responsibilities ensuring that the University's response to a death of staff is appropriate, timely and coordinated	Relevant Senior HR Advisor
7.	Student Emergency Contact Protocol	This provides guidance on the recording and utilisation of emergency contact information for students	Head of Student Support Services

8.	Pandemic Response Plan (Pandemic Working Group)	This describes the University's strategic approach for responding to large scale health threats, such as epidemics or pandemics that risk the continuity of the University's critical functions.	Risk and Business Continuity Manager
9.	Crisis Communications Plan	The plan sets out a framework for communications activity in the event of a major incident on campus, or involving staff/students. It covers internal communications as well as traditional and social media but should also be considered alongside the University's Major Incident Management Team protocols.	Director of Communications and Engagement