

Open Government Status: Open

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DANGEROUS PATHOGENS

Secretariat Report for the 91st meeting of the ACDP, and matters arising from the 90th meeting

1. This paper includes reports on progress made with matters arising from the last meeting, reports from ACDP Working Groups and other relevant advisory committees as well as other items of interest to members.

Matters arising from the 90th meeting

Progress on additional guidance on *Neisseria meningitidis*

2. HSE will begin drafting this guidance in spring 2009, and will report back to ACDP at their June 2009 meeting.

Revision of the ACDP guidance on blood-borne viruses (BBV)

3. Since the last ACDP meeting a wide consultation has been completed on all aspects of the ACDP BBV guidance document using HSE's on-line consultation response facility. Thirty four responses were received back following the 8 week consultation period, and several of these comprised collective feedback from major stakeholders, including the Expert Advisory Group on Aids, the Advisory Group on Hepatitis, the Society for General Microbiology, The Royal Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Health Protection Scotland, Scottish Clinical Virology Consultants Group, the British Medical Association and the British Dental Association. Useful comments were also received from the Department of Health, the members of the utilities sector (water companies), fire and rescue services, the university sector, local authority sector and pharmaceuticals companies. A recent meeting took place between the guidance core editorial team and all formal consultation comments were carefully considered and, where appropriate, incorporated across the various parts of the guidance document. This allowed the generation of improved versions for all 9 sections of the guidance.

4. Following this process, the amended drafts were sent to lead Consultant Occupational Physicians. As a result, a number of important questions have been raised, in particular relating to the application of COSHH within the healthcare sector, the nature of incident reporting for that sector and of related surveillance of medical personnel at risk of BBV exposure. The Secretariat believe that these, and other matters raised, will require further discussion to reach a satisfactory resolution. For this reason the final guidance documents will now be available for a full review by Members at the ACDP meeting in June.

Working Group to write guidance on non-circulating strains of influenza virus of known pandemic potential

5. A meeting is being organised for early April to discuss the contents of this additional guidance, to update the current ACDP document “Advice on working with influenza viruses”, available here: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/biosafety/diseases/acdpflu.pdf>
6. The membership of the Working Group so far is as follows:
 - Dr David Brown – Health Protection Agency
 - Dr Trevor Drew – Veterinary Laboratories Agency
 - Professor Colin Howard – ACDP
 - Professor Will Irving – ACDP
 - Professor Maria Zambon – Health Protection Agency

In addition SACGM have agreed to provide a member for the Working Group and are in the process of identifying the most appropriate person.

Q fever vaccination feedback from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI)

7. JCVI discussed Q fever vaccination at their meeting in October 2008. The Chairman of JCVI has provided ACDP with the background paper prepared for the Committee for this item, and a letter to the ACDP Chairman detailing the outcome of their discussions. These are provided as Annex A (Open) and Annex B (Closed) of this paper.

HPA algorithm for H5 and H7 serology

8. The Secretariat forwarded the HPA serology algorithm, and two accompanying papers, by email to Members and Observers in January.

Biological Weapons Convention

9. At the last meeting, it was reported that a review of the Biological Weapons Convention has been initiated. Dr Keddie will give a verbal update on this at the meeting.

Reports from ACDP Working Groups

Containment Working Group

10. Progress by this Working Group will be presented under Agenda Item 7 of this meeting.

TSE Working Group

11. The TSE Working Group has met once since the October ACDP meeting, on the 2nd December 2008.

Annex D – Transport of TSE infected material

12. The final draft update of Annex D was presented to the Working Group at their December meeting. Members agreed that the Annex was much improved, and signed it off for publication. The Annex was sent to the ACDP Chairman for approval in January 2009, and published on the 23rd January. It is available at: http://www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/acdp/tseguidance/tseguidance_annexd_updated_230109.pdf

Ophthalmology guidance

13. The final draft of the new Ophthalmology guidance will be presented to the Working Group at their meeting in March 2009. It is anticipated that it will then come to ACDP in June.

Annex K – Pathology

14. The final draft of this guidance will be presented to Members under Agenda Item 8 of this meeting.

Annex B – Diagnostic Criteria

15. Following approval by Members of the Working Group, and the ACDP Chairman, the updated Annex was published on the 22nd October 2008 and is available at: http://www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/acdp/tseguidance/tseguidance_annexb.pdf

Annex C – Decontamination and waste disposal

16. A small subgroup meeting was held on the 7th November 2008 to move forward with the proposed update to Annex C of the Working Group guidance. It was agreed that much of the information in the current Annex C will be updated and moved to Parts 3 and 4 of the Working Group guidance, for completeness. Annex C will be reduced to a more technical document. It is hoped that these updates will be complete by June 2009.

Anaesthesia infection control guidance

17. The Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland (AAGBI) have recently published an update to their 2002 guidance “Infection Control in Anaesthesia”. The Working Group has not produced guidelines of its own on infection control in anaesthesia. Members have agreed to put a link to this guidance on the Working Group’s Frequently Asked Questions webpage.

Revision of the 1996 ACDP guidance on the Management and Control of Viral Haemorrhagic Fevers

18. Progress on the revision to this guidance will be presented under Agenda Item 6 of this meeting.

Other Matters

Poliovirus facilities containment plan

19. Poliovirus eradication will not be complete until all potential sources of wild poliovirus, including laboratory sources, are properly identified and any remaining viruses destroyed or safely contained. The JCVI and ACDP set up a joint Working Party to take this work forward in the UK in 2000. The Working Party meets at least once a year to review progress.
20. In 2008, the Department of Health commissioned work to review activities in the UK against the WHO global action plan for laboratory containment of wild polioviruses and to make recommendations on future action required. This report has been completed and is provided to Members, as Annex C (Open) of this paper, for information and comments. Please send any comments on the report to the Working Party Secretariat (karen.noakes@dh.gsi.gov.uk) by Friday 6th March. These will be considered by the Working Party at their next meeting.

Seasonal influenza vaccination of poultry workers – results from Northern Ireland

21. The results from the 2008/09 vaccination programme in Northern Ireland will be reported to ACDP in June 2009.

Publication of the Griffin Review

22. An Independent Review of the Highest Level Microbiological Containment Facilities in the UK, led by Professor Griffin, reported in October 2008. The public version of the report has been published online at:

http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAwebFile/HPAweb_C/1227688128129

Appointments

23. The appointments exercise for six new members of ACDP has been launched in January 2009. The advert for the four expert member vacancies will be published in two publications at the beginning of February 2009, and a number of organisations will be contacted by letter to bring the appointments exercise to their attention. The advert will also be put on the ACDP website, and circulated to Members with accompanying information. Members are asked to forward the advert on to their colleagues to generate as much interest as possible.

Organisation of future meetings

24. Due to recent changes in the Secretariat, the organisation and venue of future ACDP meetings has been altered:
- 9th June 2009 – Defra
 - 13th October 2009 – DH/HPA
 - February 2010 (date tbc) – Defra
 - June 2010 (date tbc) – DH/HPA
 - October 2010 (date tbc) – HSE

Secretariat

January 2009

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Dear George

Re: Q fever vaccination

In response to your request JCVI considered this issue at its meeting in October. I attach the background document which we prepared for that discussion. As part of that preparation I had a lengthy correspondence and a meeting with Professor Barry Marmion – the expert on the issue who was Director of the Q fever research unit in Australia.

The committee did not feel that vaccination was likely to be useful in the outbreak situation. By the time that the outbreak is recognised the opportunity to protect exposed individuals will have past and those likely to be infected will already have been. However the issue as to whether there is a role for occupational vaccination as a prophylactic is dependent on the burden of disease in the UK. Data from Northern Ireland suggests that there may be foci where this is quite high. I have therefore written to the Health Protection Agency asking them to provide a background paper on Q fever surveillance and some estimates of burden of disease. This is likely to come to the June meeting of JCVI. I will write to you again after that meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew J Hall
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