

Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens (ACDP) Summary of the 82nd Meeting.

The ACDP held its 82nd meeting on 17 January 2006. The main agenda items discussed were:

Mycobacterium Avium Subspecies para tuberculosis (MAP) and Crohn's Disease

Following the National Expert Panel on New and Emerging Infections' (NEPNEI) considerations of the findings of the Drinking Water Inspectorate's study and other research findings, NEPNEI concluded that research into the causes of Crohn's disease was now a matter for the Medical Research Council, given the many factors in addition to MAP that would need to be taken into account. ACDP agreed to keep a watching brief on this issue.

Avian Influenza

A licence is required to hold and work with certain avian influenza viruses under the Specified Animals Pathogens Order (SAPO). In this case laboratories must meet Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) containment and operating requirements for DEFRA Group 4 specified animal pathogens. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) has 20 regional laboratories throughout the country working at ACDP containment level 3 facilities for screening and confirmatory testing of suspected H5N1 specimens. It was agreed that the Health Protection Agency (HPA) should produce a note on laboratory arrangements for DEFRA in relation to proposed derogations.

An update was given on the poultry and wild bird surveillance results. See DEFRA website for further information.

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/ai/wildbirds/surveillance.htm>

Following receipt of advice from the Joint Committee of Vaccinations and Immunisation (JCVI) and ACDP on the use of the seasonal flu vaccine for poultry workers, the Department of Health (DH) is considering how such advice should be taken forward.

It was agreed to disseminate information about possible future serological studies of workers in the UK poultry industry to ACDP members.

Pandemic Flu

The DH and the HPA have provided guidance for the NHS on infection control in hospitals in case of a pandemic flu outbreak (available on [the DH website](#)).

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) had initiated a project with the Health and Safety Laboratory on the scientific evidence of aerosol or droplet spread for the flu virus – and respiratory protection. It was agreed that this should be discussed as a future agenda item.

Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) Working Group

Revised guidance on endoscopes was published on the Department of Health (DH) website in November. At its meeting in November the TSE Working Group agreed that additional advice should be drafted regarding pre-surgery assessment to identify patients with or at risk of CJD

Animal Isolators for Small Animals Infected with Biological Agents

The ACDP guidance document “Animal Isolators for Small Animals Infected with Biological Agents” required updating to reflect legislative and technical developments. – It was agreed to bring back the draft guidance to the next meeting for ACDP endorsement before publication.

Human Animals Infections and Risk Surveillance Group (HAIRS)

A presentation of the HAIRS Group was given by HPA and a summary of recent risk assessments of potential zoonotic incidents was given.

West Nile Virus Diagnostics

An overview of West Nile Virus (WNV) diagnostics and the limitations of some of the tests were provided. A summary of the results for WNV testing indicated that so far there had been no cases originating in the UK.

Review of Rabies Disease Import Control Policy

DEFRA has begun work on a review of its policies relating to preventing rabies entering the UK through imported animals. – It was agreed to reconvene the ACDP PETS Working Group which would help feed into the review.