

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON  
DANGEROUS PATHOGENS**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2006**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens (ACDP) is a non-statutory advisory non-Departmental Public Body. The Committee comprises a Chairman and 16 members. The membership is tripartite, with scientific experts, employer and employee representatives.

The work of the ACDP cuts across a number of Government Departments. The Committee is thus supported by a Secretariat with representatives from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the Health Protection Agency (HPA) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The HPA Secretariat function was delegated by the Department of Health (DH) in late 2004.

In 2006 the ACDP held three main meetings (the 82<sup>nd</sup> on the 17<sup>th</sup> January, the 83<sup>rd</sup> on the 20<sup>th</sup> June and the 84<sup>th</sup> on the 21<sup>st</sup> September). In addition, an *ad hoc* ACDP meeting was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> December to discuss avian influenza and public health measures.

A number of the ACDP's working groups met throughout the year including:

- The Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy Working Group (TSE WG);
- BSE Occupational Guidance Drafting Group;
- Key Players meeting to discuss the revision of the 1996 ACDP Guidance Management & Control of Viral Haemorrhagic Fevers;
- Steering Group for revision of the ACDP guidance on Blood-Borne Viruses;
- ACDP rabies and exotic disease policy Working Group.

## 2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens' terms of reference are:

*“To advise the Health and Safety Commission, the Health and Safety Executive, Health and Agriculture Ministers and their counterparts under devolution in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as required, on all aspects of hazards and risks to workers and others from exposure to pathogens.”*

### **3. DANGEROUS PATHOGENS**

#### **3.1 Background**

The remit of ACDP is to provide advice to workers and others on risks from exposure to dangerous pathogens (also known as biological agents and infectious agents). Workers and others can be exposed to a range of dangerous pathogens in the workplace and through workplace activities.

Bacteria, fungi, viruses, internal parasites and infectious proteins (known as prions) are all defined as dangerous pathogens. Dangerous pathogens may be used intentionally at work, e.g. in a microbiology laboratory, but exposure can also occur that is incidental to the purpose of the work, eg healthcare workers exposed to infectious patients, farmers exposed to diseases carried by their stock. Exposure to dangerous pathogens in the workplace could lead to the development of infectious disease, disease caused by the toxins produced by the dangerous pathogen, or an allergic reaction.

#### **3.2 Legislation**

Dangerous pathogens include infectious agents that cause diseases transmissible between animals and man (zoonoses). Such agents are controlled under human health (DH/HPA remit), health and safety (HSE remit), and animal health legislation (Defra remit). (The primary purpose of the latter legislation is to prevent the introduction and spread of animal diseases that affect farmed livestock and poultry).

One of ACDP's roles is to advise on worker health and safety, and much of its advice supports health and safety legislation on the control of exposure to hazardous substances such as dangerous pathogens. Health and safety legislation (principally the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health [COSHH] Regulations 2002 (as amended)) requires employers to assess the risks from dangerous pathogens in their workplace and to prevent or control exposure. Further information can be obtained from the HSE website (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/biosafety/index.htm>).

Defra seeks to control imports of animal pathogens and carriers from third countries under the Importation of Animal Pathogens Order 1980, and animal pathogens causing serious, predominantly exotic, diseases of farmed livestock and poultry under the Specified Animal Pathogens Order 1998 by means of licensing regimes. Further information can be obtained from Defra's website (<http://www.defra.gov.uk/>).

There are various pieces of legislation covering public health; further information on these can be obtained from the DH website (<http://www.dh.gov.uk/Home/fs/en>).

#### **3.3 Role of the ACDP**

The work of ACDP can be broadly divided into three areas:

- Production of guidance relating to safety at work and protection of public health;
- Provision of advice to Government on the formulation and implementation of legislation;
- Provision of advice to Government on specific pathogen risk issues and their impact.

ACDP makes a significant contribution to the assessment of risks to employees and the general public from infectious agents, and to ensuring that appropriate controls are in place. It has produced several guidance documents that give practical advice on the application of health and safety measures for a range of occupational groups and on a range of public health issues. For example, *Infection at Work: Controlling the Risk* and *TSE agents: Safe working and the prevention of infection*. Information on the range of publications available from the ACDP can be found at <http://www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/acdp/publications.htm>

#### 4. MEMBERSHIP IN 2006

##### 4.1 Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens (ACDP) Membership

Independent member	Expert/Employer/Employee representative/Lay Member	Employer
Professor George Griffin (Chair)	Expert in clinical and research microbiology and infectious diseases	St George's Hospital Medical School
Professor Tony Hart	Employer representative	University of Liverpool
Professor Colin Howard	Expert in veterinary microbiology/ parasitology	The Royal Veterinary College
Professor Will Irving	Clinical virology	University of Nottingham
Ms Karen Jones	Lay Member	Air Support International, Crawley
Dr Phil Jones	Expert in environmental/ veterinary microbiology	Institute for Animal Health (IAH)
Dr John Keddie	Employer representative	GlaxoSmithKline
Mr John McLuckie	Employee Representative	Belfast City Hospital
Dr Phil Minor	Expert in research virology	National Institute of Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC)
Dr Mike Painter	Expert in epidemiology/ public health	HPA
Mrs Judith Potter	Employee Representative	Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust
Dr Andrew Rycroft	Expert in veterinary microbiology	Bart's and The London
Professor Armine Sefton	Expert in medical microbiology	Bart's and The London
Mr Gordon Sutehall	Expert in laboratory health and safety	Addenbrooke's Hospital
Dr Diana Westmoreland	Expert in clinical virology	University Hospital of Wales
Dr Peter Wilson	Employer representative	St Andrew's Hospital
Ms Sue Wiseman	Employee Representative	Dorset County Hospital

Assessors and Observers	Representing
Dr Tim Brooks	Health Protection Agency, Centre for Emergency Preparedness and Response
Dr David Brown	Health Protection Agency, Centre for Infections
Professor Brian Duerden	Department of Health, Inspector of Microbiology
Ms Delyth Dyne	Health and Safety Executive
Mrs Christine Elmer	Defra
Ms Amanda Gatto	Department of Health
Dr Geraldine Hoad	Food Standards Agency
Mr Greg Jordinson	Environment Agency
Dr Aileen Keel	Scottish Executive Health Department
Dr Kerri Mack	Defence Science and Technology Laboratory
Mr Paul Manser	Defra
Mr Michael Paton	Health and Safety Executive
Mr David Redwood	Veterinary Laboratory Agency
Dr Roland Salmon	National Public Health Service for Wales
Dr Delia Skan	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Northern Ireland
Ms Maggie Tomlinson	Department of Health
Dr Lesley Wilkie	Scottish Executive Health Department

<b>Secretariat</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Ms Angela Clark	Health Protection Agency
Mr Colin Dunn	Health and Safety Executive
Miss Papia Khanom	Defra
Mr Graham Lott	Defra
Miss Charlotte Mirrielees	Health Protection Agency
Mr Norman Smith	Health and Safety Executive

There were some changes to the ACDP membership in 2006. These were:

- Five new members were appointed to the Committee. They were: Ms Karen Jones, Mr John McLuckie, Mrs Judith Potter, Dr Andrew Rycroft and Professor Armine Sefton
- Four members were reappointed to the Committee. They were: Professor Tony Hart, Professor Will Irving, Dr Diana Westmoreland and Peter Wilson

#### **4.2 ACDP TSE Working Group Membership**

<b>Independent member</b>	<b>Employer</b>
Professor Donald Jeffries (Chair)	St. Bartholomew's Hospital (retired mid-2006)
Mr Ray Bradley	Veterinary Laboratory Agency (retired)
Mr John Goodman	Meat and Livestock Commission
Professor James Ironside	National CJD Surveillance Unit
Dr Mike Painter	Public health physician (retired)
Dr Geoff Ridgway	University College London (retired)
Dr Roland Salmon	National Public Health Service for Wales
Mr Ron Spellman	Unison
Dr Tim Wyatt	Mater Hospital Trust, Northern Ireland

<b>Officials and Observers</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Mr Ian Aitken	Rural Payments Agency
Mr Peter Bennett	Department of Health, ESOR
Dr Lynne Bountiff/Dr Irene Hill	Food Standards Agency
Mr Patrick Burke	Defra
Dr Peter Christie	Scottish Executive
Dr Nicky Connor/Dr Kate Soldan	CJD Incidents Panel Secretariat
Dr Neil Ebenezer	Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee Secretariat, Department of Health
Mr Allan Hilderley	Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency
Miss Sarah Jackson/ Mr Craig Kirby	Meat Hygiene Service
Mr Greg Jordinson	Environment Agency
Dr Gemma Priddey/ Ms Amanda Gatto	Department of Health
Dr Danny Matthews	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
Mr Mark Noterman	Department of Health, CJD Policy
Dr Michael Paton	Health and Safety Executive
Mr David Pryer	Chair of CJD Incidents Panel
Dr Kate Richards	Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee Secretariat, Defra
Dr John Stephenson	Department of Health, RDD
Ms Maggie Tomlinson	Department of Health, Emerging Hazards
Mr Nigel Tomlinson	Department of Health, Estates and Facilities

<b>Secretariat</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Dr Angela Clark/Miss Charlotte Mirrielees	Health Protection Agency
Mr Colin Dunn/Mr Norman Smith	Health and Safety Executive

#### 4.3 BSE Occupational Guidance Drafting Group Membership

<b>Independent member</b>	<b>Employer</b>
Mrs Sarah Senior (Chair)	Health and Safety Executive
Mr Ray Bradley	Veterinary Laboratory Agency (retired)
Mr John Goodman	Meat and Livestock Commission
Professor Don Jeffries	St. Bartholomew's Hospital (retired mid-2006)
Dr Phil Jones	Institute for Animal Health
Dr Danny Mathews	Veterinary Laboratory Agency
Mr Ron Spellman	Unison

<b>Officials and Observers</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Ms Maggie Tomlinson	Department of Health
Mr Brian Coggans	Health and Safety Executive
Ms Adrienne Conroy	Food Standards Agency
Ms Sarah Jackson	Meat Hygiene Service
Mr Andrew Love	Meat Hygiene Service
Mr Patrick Seechurn	Health and Safety Executive
Ms Sharon Slater	Rural Payments Agency
Mr Patrick Burke	Defra

<b>Secretariat</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Ms Delyth Dyne	Health and Safety Executive

#### 4.4 Key Players meeting to discuss the revision of the 1996 ACDP guidance "Management & Control of Viral Haemorrhagic Fevers" Membership

<b>Key Player</b>	<b>Representing:</b>
Ms Breda Athan	Royal Free Hospital, London
Dr Barbara Bannister	Royal Free Hospital, London
Professor Chris Bartlett	Royal Free and University College, London
Dr Tim Brooks	Health Protection Agency, Centre for Emergency Preparedness and Response
Dr David Brown	Health Protection Agency, Centre for Infection
Dr Andrew Freeman	Cardiff University School of Medicine, Wales
Dr Sara Hedderwick	Royal Victoria Hospital, Northern Ireland
Dr Robin Gopal	Health Protection Agency, Centre for Infection
Wing Commander Andy Green	Ministry of Defence
Professor George Griffin	ACDP Chairman
Dr Graham Lloyd	Health Protection Agency, Centre for Emergency Preparedness and Response
Dr Dilys Morgan	Health Protection Agency, Centre for Infection
Ms Sheila Morgan	Newcastle General Hospital
Dr Ed Ong	Newcastle General Hospital
Dr Mike Painter	ACDP Member
Dr Cathy Roth	World Health Organisation
Dr Andrew Simpson	Defence, Science and Technology Laboratory

<b>Officials and Observers</b>	<b>Representing:</b>
Dr Steve Copping	Health and Safety Executive
Mr Colin Dunn	Health and Safety Executive

Dr Mike Paton	Health and Safety Executive
Dr Gemma Priddey	Department of Health
Dr Maggie Tomlinson	Department of Health
Dr Nigel Tomlinson	Department of Health

<b>Secretariat</b>	<b>Representing:</b>
Dr Angela Clark	Health Protection Agency

#### 4.5 Steering Group for revision of the ACDP guidance on Blood-Borne Viruses Membership

<b>Independent member</b>	<b>Employer</b>
Professor Will Irving (Chair)	University of Nottingham
Dr Nick Armand-Smith	Stoke Mandeville Hospital
Professor Brian Gazzard	Chelsea and Westminster Hospital
Dr Mike Harding	Occupational Health Physician
Professor Don Jeffries	St Bartholomew's Hospital (retired mid-2006)
Professor Mike Malim	Kings College, London
Dr Fortune Ncube	Health Protection Agency
Dr Mike Painter	Public health physician (retired)
Dr Alison Rimmer	Northern General Hospital, Sheffield
Dr Howard Thomas	Imperial College School of Medicine
Dr Diane Westmoreland	University Hospital of Wales (retired)
Mr Paul Weaving	Cumberland Infirmary

<b>Observers</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Dr Alan Beswick	Health and Safety Laboratory
Dr Angela Clark	Health Protection Agency
Ms Carole Fry	Department of Health
Professor David Goldberg	Health Protection Scotland
Dr Gemma Priddey	Department of Health

<b>Secretariat</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Dr Michael Paton	Health and Safety Executive
Mr Norman Smith	Health and Safety Executive
Miss Caroline Walls	Health and Safety Executive

#### 4.6 ACDP rabies and exotic disease policy Working Group Membership

<b>Independent members and Observers</b>	<b>Employer</b>
Professor George Griffin (Chair)	St George's Hospital Medical School
Mr Andrew Baxter	Defra
Dr Phil Jones	Institute of Animal Health
Mr John Keddie	GlaxoSmithKline
Dr Paul Manser	Defra
Mr Tim Miles	Defra
Ms Maggie Tomlinson	Department of Health
Dr Diana Westmoreland	University Hospital of Wales (retired)

<b>Secretariat</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Dr Angela Clark	Health Protection Agency
Mr Mick Merry	Defra

## 5. Key Issues discussed by ACDP in 2006

In 2006 the ACDP held three main committee meetings (the 82<sup>nd</sup> on the 17<sup>th</sup> January, the 83<sup>rd</sup> on the 20<sup>th</sup> June and the 84<sup>th</sup> on the 21<sup>st</sup> September). In addition, an *ad hoc* ACDP meeting was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> December to discuss avian flu and public health measures.

### 5.1 82<sup>nd</sup> Meeting

At the 82<sup>nd</sup> meeting Members discussed:

- *Mycobacterium Avium* subspecies *para tuberculosis* (MAP) and Crohn's Disease

Following the National Expert Panel and Emerging Infection's (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. ACDP agreed to keep a watching brief on this issue.

- Avian Influenza

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>

- 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; <http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/index.htm>

- Animal Isolators for Small Animals Infected with Biological Agents

Members were provided with a background paper and were informed that the guidance 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 Animal Infections and Risk Surveillance Group (HAIRS)

Members were informed about the work of the HAIRS Group. A summary of recent risk assessments of potential zoonotic incidents was given.

- West Nile Virus Diagnostics and surveillance

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.

## **5.2 83<sup>rd</sup> Meeting**

At the 83<sup>rd</sup> meeting Members discussed:

- Biological Agents: the principles, design and operation of containment level 4 facilities

Members were informed that the guidance was published on 10 May 2006. It is available at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/web09.pdf>

- Laboratory containment of wild poliovirus and potentially infected material after global eradication of poliomyelitis

An update on progress with UK implementation of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Polio Eradication Initiative and its Global Plan for Laboratory Containment of Wild Polioviruses was provided by HSE.

- Enhanced surveillance for UK-acquired West Nile Virus 2002-2005

An overview of surveillance activities for West Nile Virus (WNV) in humans, wild birds and mosquitoes was given. Members suggested that the surveillance be extended even though there were funding issues to be considered.

- Respiratory protective equipment (RPE) protection in healthcare settings

Members were informed on the findings of recent challenge testing of RPE and surgical masks against airborne viruses. Members suggested that guidance on RPE protection in healthcare settings should be considered further.

## **5.3 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

At the 84<sup>th</sup> meeting Members discussed:

- ACDP Appointments

Members were informed that the current ACDP appointments exercise was underway. The 5 ACDP vacancies had been advertised at the start of September and nominations for 3 employee representatives had been requested.

- Update on Avian Influenza

Members were provided with an overview by Defra on the outbreaks of H5NI in Europe in 2005/2006.

- Swine flu and swine workers

Following a recommendation made by the ACDP, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) recently considered whether swine workers should be vaccinated with the seasonal flu vaccine as a public health measure. The JCVI decided not to recommend routine use of the seasonal flu vaccine for pig workers.

- Guidance on the use, testing and maintenance of laboratory and animal isolators for the containment of biological agents

The second draft of the guidance was presented to the members for approval. The document had been circulated to the wider biological sciences community in spring 2006 and ACDP were content for HSE to publish the guidance, taking into account the consultation comments.

- ACDP Work Plan for 2006/2007

Members agreed their work plan for 2006/2007. The ACDP TSE Working Group had produced a separate work plan for 2006/7, which has been cross-referenced in the ACDP plan.

- Biological Safety Training Programme

Members were informed about two newly designed courses for senior personnel, laboratory managers and laboratory workers that are intended to raise awareness and establish operational consistency for working in Containment Level 3 facilities.

#### **5.4 *Ad-hoc* Meeting to discuss Avian Influenza and Public Health Measures**

ACDP held an *ad-hoc* meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2006 to discuss public health measures for poultry and swine workers in response to recommendations arising from the *ad-hoc* Working Group Meeting held in October 2006. Members discussed the following aspects:

- To consider implementation of a seasonal vaccination scheme for poultry and swine workers

- To review scientific developments since the last ACDP Avian Influenza (AI) meeting and implications (if any) for recommendations made at the last meeting
- To review the current scientific and epidemiological evidence on AI and the current trends in seasonal human flu. Members to give their views on the timing of the programme

Several recommendations were given which included:

- Although there had only been a few reported confirmed sporadic cases of A/H3 influenza, it was too early in the season to determine what strain of influenza in humans would dominate and when/if the peak of season would occur. Therefore members recommended seasonal influenza vaccination of poultry workers from January 2007.
- ACDP members concluded that pig workers were at lower risk than poultry workers of acquiring AI. Routine seasonal vaccination of pig workers was not recommended.

The minutes and statement from this meeting are on the ACDP DH website at: <http://www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/acdp/publications.htm>

## 6.0 ACDP WORKING GROUPS

### 6.1 Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy Working Group (TSE WG)

The TSE WG was reconfigured in 2004 with the following terms of reference:

*“To provide practical, scientifically based advice on the management of risks from transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs), in order to limit or reduce the risks of human exposure to or transmission of TSEs in healthcare and other occupational settings. To provide advice to ACDP, SEAC and Government Departments, as requested, and to handle issues referred to those bodies, taking into account the work of other relevant bodies.”*

The TSE WG met three times in 2006 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 19<sup>th</sup> July and 22<sup>nd</sup> November.

At each meeting, members received an update on the numbers and epidemiology of both CJD and BSE cases and a progress report on current research. Members also received feedback from the ACDP, and related committees such as the CJD Incidents Panel, SEAC and the Engineering and Scientific Advisory Committee on the decontamination of surgical instruments, including prion removal (ESAC-Pr).

The following key issues were considered by the TSE Working Group in 2006:

- Pre-surgery assessment

Annex J of the TSE infection control guidance, produced by the TSE Working Group at <http://www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/acdp/tseguidance/>, was published in July 2006 to provide advice on effective pre-surgery assessment. This guidance is aimed at ensuring that patients with, or at risk of, CJD are identified before high or medium-risk surgical or endoscopic procedures, so that appropriate infection control precautions can be taken.

- Blood donors with reactive tests for vCJD

A blood test for variant CJD may become available in the future. The CMO asked the TSE WG to consider how to categorise donors with reactive blood tests for vCJD and how to ensure that hospitals are informed of patients' CJD risk. The TSE WG responded by writing a letter to the CMO including the following points:

- Donors with a repeatedly reactive blood test (by the screening test, possibly without a confirmatory test available) would be categorised as infective for public health purposes. This would mean that the donor would be informed and no further donations would be accepted. How the NBS would inform the donor needs to be carefully considered

- It is very important that specialist centres for referral of the donors are established before a vCJD screening test is introduced by the NBS
- It was felt that to be in line with the CJD Incidents Panel, the NBS could be given permission to directly inform the donor's GP without the donor's consent
- Update of WHO guidelines on tissue infectivity

Members updated Annexes A1 and A2 of the TSE infection control guidance (referenced above) in line with the revision of the WHO guidelines on tissue infectivity distribution in TSEs.

- Advice to funeral directors and others

Since the publication of new HSE guidance in June 2005 on the risks to workers from human remains, problems had been encountered by families over funeral arrangements following a CJD death. It was decided that the TSE WG would issue an information sheet for funeral directors, relatives and others following a CJD death, to be given to families of patients who have died of CJD, and to be put up on the TSE WG website for funeral directors and others to access. This information sheet outlines procedures to be followed for viewing and dressing the deceased.

- Pathology and Neuropathology

The CJD Surveillance Unit in Edinburgh have received a number of enquiries related to the handling of tissue specimens in Pathology laboratories from patients who have been designated as "at risk" of CJD. Most of these individuals are at increased risk of vCJD, and questions have been raised about what additional measures, if any, need to be taken with these specimens in the Pathology laboratory. The TSE WG decided to set up a specialist subgroup to address these issues, and to write some additional guidance for inclusion in the TSE infection control guidance (referenced above). This guidance will be published in 2007.

- Ophthalmology and CJD

There is at present conflicting advice to professionals regarding general infection control precautions to be taken for ophthalmic procedures. It was agreed that a subgroup should be formed to consider ophthalmic issues further and develop definitive advice. The subgroup will consider a number of aspects including infectivity of the surface of the eye, and the risk status of corneal graft recipients, a subject which has been considered by the TSE WG before. This subgroup will meet for the first time in 2007.

## **6.2 BSE occupational guidance Drafting Group**

The new BSE Occupational Guidance was published in January 2007 on the internet and is available at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/web22.pdf>

It is based on the most up-to-date knowledge and if followed it is considered that workers will have a negligible risk of being exposed to BSE infection. The guidance aims to provide information about BSE to those whose job could potentially expose them to BSE-infected material, and re-emphasises the importance of using precautionary protective measures to control risks from BSE infection.

The guidance was prepared by ACDP in conjunction with HSE, DEFRA, DH the Food Standards Agency, the Rural Payments Agency, the Meat and Livestock Commission and Meat Hygiene Service, employee & employer representatives of the TSE Working Group and devolved administrations.

## **6.3 Key Players meeting to discuss the revision of the 1996 ACDP Guidance Management & Control of Viral Haemorrhagic Fever**

The current guidance on the *Management and Control of Viral Haemorrhagic Fevers* was published in 1996. It was decided in 2001 that this guidance would be redrafted in light of the experience gained following cases of VHFs imported to the UK, and new evidence and information.

A Key Players meeting was held in May 2006 to define the scope of the revised guidance and to start the drafting process. The scope and format of the new guidance document were discussed, as well as issues relating to epidemiology, risk assessment, specimen handling and laboratory procedures, transportation, patient management and public health actions.

The following main conclusions were reached:

- The revised guidance document will include general advice for all HG4 agents, with emphasis on VHFs. It will not include guidance on smallpox, *Nipah* or *Hendra* viruses, however, as existing DH guidance exists for these agents
- A change from 3 risk categories (minimum, moderate and high risk status) to 2 (at risk and high risk) will be implemented, in line with US and European guidelines
- The different patient management systems available need to be reviewed, including the Trexlar patient isolator, and the use of full suits
- The new protocol for the transportation of samples needs to ensure the quick delivery of samples to reference labs

- The management of waste at high security infectious disease units needs to be considered
- The current protocol for follow up and surveillance of contacts needs to be re-thought
- An algorithm would be useful for clinicians to clarify when and where to seek epidemiological information from and at what point relevant experts in the HPA and at HSIDUs need to be contacted

It was decided that two main subgroups would be set up following this meeting, to discuss diagnostic and clinical management issues separately. Following these subgroup meetings, it was agreed that one-off meetings to address issues such as transportation of patients may be required.

#### **6.4 Steering Group for revision of the ACDP guidance on Blood-borne Viruses**

A Steering Group meeting was held in August 2006 under the chair of Professor Irving to discuss the general process for the revision of the guidance including the format and scope. The intention is to produce a final draft of the guidance for agreement by ACDP in spring 2008.

#### **6.5 ACDP Rabies and Exotic diseases in animals Working Group**

At the January 2006 ACDP meeting, Defra advised members that it had begun work on a review of its policies relating to preventing rabies entering the UK through an imported animal. The ACDP had previously been informed of this review in December 2005. The ACDP's view was requested on how it wished to input into the review. A sub group of the ACDP Committee was established in February 2006 under the Chairmanship of Professor George Griffin. Their remit was to consider the human health implications of a range of policy options, and to provide a report on how the finding of Defra's risk assessments impact on human health.

The ACDP Rabies and Exotic Diseases in Animals Working Group met twice (May and June 2006), and the Chair of the Group provided its written views to Defra.

## 7. ABBREVIATIONS

ACDP	Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CEPR	Centre for Emergency Preparedness Response, HPA
Cfi	Centre for Infections, HPA
CJD	Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease
CJD IP	CJD Incidents Panel
CL4	Containment Level 4
COSHH	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DH	Department of Health
DSTL	Defence, Science and Technology Laboratory
EA	Environment Agency
EU	European Union
FSA	Food Standards Agency
HAIRS	Human-Animal Infections and Risk Surveillance Group
HG	Hazard Group
HPA	Health Protection Agency
HPAI	Highly pathogenic avian influenza
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
IAH	Institute for Animal Health
MAP	<i>Mycobacterium Avium</i> subspecies <i>Paratuberculosis</i>
MHS	Meat Hygiene Service
MHRA	Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency
MLC	Meat and Livestock Commission
NepNei	National Expert Panel on New and Emerging Infections
NIBSC	National Institute of Biological Standards and Control
NICE	National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence
OTM	Over Thirty Month
SACGM	Scientific Advisory Committee on Genetic Modifications
SEAC	Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee
TSE	Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy
TSE WG	Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy Working Group
WHO	World Health Organization
WNV	West Nile Virus