

AGENDA ITEM NO:

**UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS BIRMINGHAM NHS FOUNDATION TRUST
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
THURSDAY 25 APRIL 2013**

Title:	UPDATE ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
Responsible Director:	Kay Fawcett, Executive Chief Nurse
Contact:	Lynn Hyatt, Associate Director of Nursing ext 14713

Purpose:	To present the six monthly update to Board of Directors on progress with Emergency Preparedness.
Confidentiality Level & Reason:	
Medium Term Plan Ref:	Aim 1: Always put the needs and care of patients first.
Key Issues Summary:	<p>As a category 1 responder, University Hospitals Birmingham (UHB) has a statutory duty to ensure that it can respond to emergency situations and continue to provide essential services at times of operational pressure or in the event of an internal emergency.</p> <p>This paper provides an update on the progress with emergency preparedness and associated major incident and business continuity plans</p>
Recommendations:	The Board of Directors is asked to accept this update on Emergency Preparedness, and agree to receive another update in 6 months time.

Signed:	Date: 16 April 2013
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UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS BIRMINGHAM NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THURSDAY 25 APRIL 2013

UPDATE ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

PRESENTED BY THE EXECUTIVE CHIEF NURSE

1. Introduction

As a category 1 responder the Trust has a statutory duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to ensure that it has adequate arrangements in place to ensure it can respond to an emergency, support emergency response partners and continue to provide essential services to the public at times of operational pressure in the event of an internal emergency and as is reasonably practicable in the event of an external emergency.

2. Executive Summary

This paper builds on the report presented to the Board of Directors in December 2012. It reports on the progress made over the last 6 months to provide assurance that the Trust is fulfilling its statutory duties, and can demonstrate resilience in relation to emergency planning and preparedness. All emergency planning processes are completed under the umbrella of the Emergency Preparedness Committee, but for clarity each section is broken down to demonstrate progress to date and future work required.

3. Emergency Preparedness Policy

The Emergency Preparedness Policy is available on the Trust intranet and acts as a framework to support the procedures which outline practical steps to ensure an adequate response by the Trust.

All emergency plans are in the process of being revised to reflect the new NHS structures and Emergency Preparedness Resilience and Response (EPRR) arrangements.

4. Major Incident plan and testing

4.1 Major Incident Plan

Extensive training and awareness of the Major Incident plan remains on going throughout the Trust with a number of staff attending for refresher training. The plan is now complemented by a video which is available on the Trust Intranet that shows how to set up the Command and Control centre. Further video footage has been produced which demonstrates

other significant roles within the plan and will be available on the Intranet in May 2013.

4.2 Major Incident Testing

There is a requirement under the Civil Contingencies Act to exercise the Major Incident plan every 6 months for communication call out only, yearly as a table top exercise and every 3 years as a live exercise.

4.2.1 Call out Testing

A call out test from switchboard has consistently been carried out every 6 months. This process is currently undergoing a change to an automated system which was purchased by the Trust in February 2013. Currently all staff phone numbers are being inputted on to the system and the system will be up and running by the end of May 2013. A communication test will be carried out immediately this data has been inputted. This will allow for more frequent testing, if appropriate, and the communication tests can be done out of hours to inform the likely response to an event that occurs during the evenings and weekends. The system also allows for 'live' information on staff responses to the automated call out.

The feedback from all communication tests is reported to the Emergency Preparedness steering group.

4.2.2 Table Top Exercise

In conjunction with the Children's hospital a table top exercise (exercise Northern lights) was held on 21 November 2012 to test the Trust response and lessons learned following exercise Vulcan. Exercise Vulcan was driven by the Department of Health in November 2011 to test Burns plans and the capability of the Trust's response and the Birmingham Children's Hospital as regional Burns centres.

Following this exercise a number of recommendations were highlighted in the formal debrief. These recommendations were tested as part of exercise Northern Lights but a small number of them have yet to be resolved.

4.2.3 Live Exercise

The Trust has a statutory duty to carry out a live exercise every 3 years, and as a live exercise was held in March 2011 a further test is not required until 2014. However a 'live' CBRN exercise is due to take place in summer 2013.

4.2.4 Preparing for Chemical, Biological, Radiation and Nuclear Emergencies (CBRN)

The Trust is to undertake a 'live' exercise in 2013 using students as 'casualties'. Following the live exercise in October 2011 it was highlighted that further training was required and this has been vigorously undertaken with the Emergency Department staff.

The Trust undertook an annual CBRN audit on 18 April 2012, the results from this audit were positive with no recommendations made. A further audit is imminent and the results will be available for the next board report.

The emergency planners are currently working on a table top exercise to test the Trust response to a Radiological incident. This is due to take place in 2013.

4.3 Mass Casualty Planning

The mass casualty plan forms part of the Major Incident plan to ensure special arrangements are put in place to deal with larger numbers of casualties attending the Trust. Recent exercises have been undertaken with larger numbers of casualties to test the arrangements made by this plan.

The Trust is currently ensuring that it can provide the extra capacity should such an event happen.

5. **Business Continuity Planning**

The Business Continuity plan is completed and is available on the Trust intranet as a supporting document to the Emergency Preparedness policy. Training and awareness sessions are now being rolled out in the Trust.

5.1 Risk Assessments and Service Interruptions

The risk assessments and the accompanying operational plans are available on the sharepoint system with more areas identifying risks to their service and formulating operational plans to mitigate such risks.

The Trust continues to experience a number of service interruptions and these incidents have been reviewed and learning fed into the system's operational plans.

5.2 Trust 'black start' Test

A number of power cuts affected the Trust, at the end of 2012 and a small task and finish group was set up to consider the learning from these power cuts and ensure that there are appropriate plans in place to maintain services during such events, mitigating the risks associated with the lack of power.

The New Hospital team and emergency planners worked closely with the Divisions in specific services, to produce a plan to facilitate a “black start” where there was a planned and managed power cut across the new hospital site.

Whilst plans were being formulated to carry out a black start test the Trust suffered a major power cut following a fire at a sub station in Selly Oak. The back up generators were found to have a fault on some of them which left the Trust without power for a considerable length of time. Following this incident repairs were made to the faulty generators and arrangements to carry out the ‘black start’ test were brought forward.

The ‘black start’ test took place on 13 January 2013 when Command and Control was set up to facilitate the test. A number of staff were brought in to act as coordinators on each of the floors and other relevant areas, all of whom received a briefing before the event and were supplied with action cards to follow on the day. The power was left switched off for 1 hour to ensure that the back up generators would cope with the interruption.

The test on the day went well with a few minor problems but nothing which put the Trust at risk. It is envisaged that these tests will need to be undertaken on a regular basis.

6. Additional Emergency Plans

There are other plans available which form part of the Trust’s wider emergency planning and these are:

- The Heatwave plan, which has now been approved by the Emergency Preparedness steering group and is available on the Trust Intranet.
- The Inclement Weather plan, which has now been approved by the Emergency Preparedness steering group and is available on the Trust Intranet.
- The suspicious package plan, which has been approved by the Emergency Preparedness steering group and is available on the Trust intranet.
- The workforce approval plan, which has been approved by the Emergency Preparedness steering group and is available on the Trust intranet.
- The lock down procedure which has been approved by the Emergency preparedness steering group and is available on the Trust Intranet.

7. Emergency Preparedness Conference

The emergency planners are currently planning an Emergency Preparedness conference which will take place at the Trust on September 18, 2013. This

conference will be the first of its kind to be held by an Acute Trust in the West Midlands region and will be reported on in the next board report.

8. **Conclusion**

Over the last 6 months the focus has been on continuing to ensure that training and education relating to the Major Incident and Mass Casualty plans was accessed by all disciplines throughout the Trust. The testing of these plans using both table top and live exercises has been invaluable to ensure that the Trust has maximum resilience.

Due to significant service interruptions to the Trust there has also been a focus on ensuring plans are in place to deal with the incidents as they arise but also to mitigate against the risks.

The Emergency Preparedness risk register reflects the work carried out in the last year. Consequences of the risks are reducing as plans are tested and provide greater assurance of resilience within the Trust.

9. **Recommendations**

The Board of Directors is asked to accept this update on Emergency Preparedness, and agree to receive another update in 6 months time.

Kay Fawcett
Executive Chief Nurse
16 April 2013