

# **SWANSEA BAY UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD AREA COVID-19 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM: UPDATE REPORT FOR SWANSEA**

**DATE: 05 October 2020**

## **SITUATION**

There has been a resumption in the increase in 7-day cumulative incidence rates of COVID-19 infections and test positivity rates in Swansea. In Neath Port Talbot there is an acceleration in the incidence and in the positive case rate. This trend appears in this local authority areas to be attributed to a number of outbreaks occurring in workplaces. The impact of local restrictions has not yet fed through reliably to a change in epidemiology but there are reports from the TTP contact tracing teams that the number of new cases associated with social contact outside of the home appear to be stabilising.

Test Trace and Protect teams are managing the contact tracing efforts successfully in face of increased case numbers.

Testing capacity remains able to cope with local demand and has been expanded. Mobile Testing Units are now deployed and the initial sessions have been met with high demand for testing.

**There has been an incident associated with a fault in the booking process for the MTUs (see below).**

The Local Testing Site (walk-in testing unit) at the Grand Theatre in Swansea will be commissioned this week and is scheduled to open on 9<sup>th</sup> October.

There is a low level of COVID infection in secondary care patients (10 cases including <5 in intensive care).

There is a report of a cluster of cases (<5 positives) in midwifery staff and a cluster investigation is underway.

The picture in care homes appears to be stable.

There remains no evidence of transmission within schools. Cases associated with schools appear to have arisen as a consequence of social or household contact away from school. The overall numbers of schools impacted is rising in line with the increased incidence in the general population.

A number of clusters associated with pre-school care or early years education settings has arisen.

A cluster associated with Swansea University Rugby Club appears to be under control. There has been an isolated case within a University hall of residence on the Bay campus. There continues to be close liaison with University officers to manage these situations.

One workplace (Aberpergwm Mine) has been closed on advice of Public Health Wales given the number of cases there (39).

Police report no change in the level of calls to service associated with COVID and a low level of anti-social behaviour.

Enforcement action was required in relation to 3 licensed premises over the weekend.

	Swansea	NPT	Swansea	NPT	Swansea	NPT
	Cases per 100K per week		Positivity Rate		Case Numbers	
21/09	40.1	15.4	3.3%	1.3%	37	<5
23/09	50.6	18.1	4.0%	1.6%	41	8
24/09	63.6	29.3	4.7%	2.4%	28	19
25/09	82.2	34.2	5.8%	2.8%	58	<5
26/09	93.1	37.0	6.2%	2.9%	36	8
27/09	97.6	41.2	6.3%	3.2%	26	9
28/09	98.8	48.8	6.1%	3.7%	28	15
29/09	100.0	53.0	6.1%	3.9%	27	12
30/09	94.3	54.4	5.8%	4.1%	25	12
01/10	96.4	54.4	6.1%	4.3%	51	15
02/10	92.3	59.3	6.3%	4.7%	55	22
03/10	97.2	65.6	7.2%	5.4%	30	9
04/10	107.7	80.2	8.1%	6.6%	59	36

## BACKGROUND

With the implementation of local restrictions in both counties within the Region we are now in a steady state in relation to the operation of TTP and of control measures.

The age distribution of cases is now similar across both Neath Port Talbot and Swansea with most cases in those of working age.

Clusters are emerging in a number of workplaces and contributing factors are outlined below.

The University of Swansea remains on high alert but there are currently no further clusters of cases although one hall of residence now reports <5 positive cases (reported 02/10).

## ASSESSMENT

The recent slowing of the increasing incidence in Swansea has now reversed but the underlying reasons are not clear. There is an acceleration in the rate of increase in incidence in Neath Port Talbot. This appears to be driven in part by case ascertainment associated with workplace clusters. However, an underlying non-specific increasing incidence remains apparent.

The TTP team indicate that while social contact remains the single largest factor driving the increase in cases this appears to be accompanied by an increase in cases occurring in workplaces. Emergent workplace clusters appear to be arising due to inattention to social distancing and other mitigation measures when at work. These issues were highlighted in our last SBAR: mingling in crew rooms / mess rooms or staff rest area; car and van sharing to and from work; delays in self-isolation and attending work when infectious.

Two geographical areas within the Region have been identified as possible 'hot-spots' for infection. These continue to be monitored more

closely to identify any underlying contributory factors. One (Glynneath) may be associated with a large cluster in a local business operation.

The contact tracing service is operating as required and reporting that the time for results to be issued is improving slightly.

The situation within the TATA Steel plant remains under active review with dedicated expert resource being deployed in support.

**There has been an incident today with the deployment of an MTU to Townhill Community Centre in Swansea** where 300 appointments were made available for a location with capacity of 75. Just over 200 appointments were booked and this has led to two significant consequences: a need to redirect those booked for MTU testing in the afternoon to alternative testing sites; and significant difficulties in managing the numbers attending Townhill, with long queues of people and requiring Police assistance to manage the situation. This follows an incident last week when appointments in excess of capacity were being allocated to MTU sessions via the portal, an issue which was escalated to Welsh Government TTP colleagues for attention.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Regional recommendations:**

- a. Deliver increased communications to the business community to reinforce: the need for social distancing, hand hygiene and other mitigation measures for staff at all times when in the workplace; and the need for self-isolation and testing where symptomatic.
- b. Target communications to the Glynneath community on the need to observe social distancing, hand hygiene and other local restriction measures.
- c. A rapid review of the current situation in care homes in the Region to understand the relative impact of fortnightly testing and PPE on maintaining COVID free status.

### **Recommendation to Welsh Government:**

To note the incident associated with the over booking of MTU appointments at Townhill Community Centre in Swansea this morning. To seek assurances that the booking system through the portal will be controlled in such a manner to prevent a recurrence.

- **The next IMT will be held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October**

Dr Keith Reid, Executive Director of Public Health, Swansea Bay University Health Board (IMT Chair)