

Your guide to the North Somerset Local Outbreak Management Plan

Why do we need this plan?

Management of disease outbreaks requires the co-ordinated efforts of local and national government, Public Health England health protection teams, the NHS, the private and community/voluntary sector and the general public. The North Somerset Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) provides assurance that appropriate actions are in place (or are ready to implement) to respond to any outbreaks affecting our population.

What is an outbreak?

For COVID-19, an outbreak is declared when two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 are identified among individuals associated with a specific setting with onset dates within 14 days of each other. Outbreaks may be setting-specific or relate to a geographic area.

Outbreak management is not a new responsibility. The Director of Public Health and the Public Health and Regulatory Services Team already work closely with Public Health England to manage any outbreak of communicable disease. We have thought carefully how we will build on these well-tested processes and experience alongside new national resources to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic including the Test and Trace service.

What is important about the context of North Somerset?

North Somerset is a unitary authority, covering an area of 37,500 hectares and a population of 213,919. The area is mainly rural with population concentration along coastal areas including the main urban area of Weston-Super-Mare with other major towns of Portishead, Clevedon and Nailsea. We have a higher proportion of people in the older age groups (75+ years) than regional or national averages. This group is particularly vulnerable to the virus.

We have thought carefully about how we will prevent and manage outbreaks in individual settings, for example, schools, care homes and in high risk communities and locations including workplaces. We will support vulnerable people and ensure we meet the needs of our diverse communities

What does the outbreak management plan do?

The plan describes a response under seven themes, supported by an action plan. They are:

- 1) Care homes and schools
- 2) High risk places, locations and communities
- 3) Local testing capacity
- 4) Contact tracing
- 5) Data integration
- 6) Vulnerable people
- 7) Local Boards



What leadership is being provided?

Prevention is always the best approach in managing the spread of infections. There are several actions we can all take to mitigate the potential impact that outbreaks may cause to the population of North Somerset. We commit as a local authority to:

- Raise awareness and explain any changes to the guidelines or restrictions; to whom or where they apply.
- Educate about the potential consequences of not complying.
- Raise awareness of the local and national support available.
- Explain and provide access to data showing how COVID-19 is being monitored.
- Encourage employers and community influencers to 'play their part' by sharing messages and guidance with their own contacts.

In the plan we have described roles and responsibilities under three main domains of activity:

- 1) **Health protection response** – the more technical aspects of identifying and mitigating the spread of the virus and its impacts
- 2) **Civil society response** – how different services and organisations working within North Somerset but connected to other parts of the South West or national structures will support a local response
- 3) **Community support** – the essential role of building and sustaining community understanding and support for different measures to help minimise harm and identifying opportunities to use community assets to help recovery from the pandemic

What can we all do to prevent problems occurring and react well if issues arise?

We all have a role to play in managing the spread of COVID-19. The plan works on the basis of cooperation and consent – our approach is to work with you (our community) to reduce the impact of the virus and support those who are most vulnerable. We want to build on good work that is already happening through the [North Somerset Together](#) programme and use these connections to help you keep you safe and prevent the virus spreading.

We all need to stay up to date with and follow the latest national guidance. It remains important at the first sign of symptoms to isolate yourself for seven days and your household for 14 days, access testing and follow advice of the NHS Test and Trace service. Please follow advice around social distancing and good hygiene practices and please comply with any other guidance that may be relevant, for example, use of PPE as an additional barrier to the virus in certain locations.

What will happen next?

The plan sets out a framework for how we will aim to prevent but be ready to respond to any outbreaks. It is based on some key principles of how we work together across our whole community to take responsibility and keep safe. The plan will evolve as we learn more about the virus, adapt our approach and continue to listen to a wide range of local stakeholders in deciding what actions to prioritise.

Where can I find out more?

Local plan: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/lomp

National guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>