

COVID-19 Response

Contain Framework October 2021



COVID-19 contain framework: a guide for local decision-makers

Key Notes

- **National Government will continue to set the overall framework for the COVID-19 response** with a national communications strategy, enabling and supporting the local response, **including provision of funding and for ongoing oversight and intervention** where necessary.
- **No changes to roles and responsibilities for local authorities** – *While COVID-19 continues to present an unprecedented challenge, well-established local, regional and national arrangements for public health and emergency planning and response continue to form the basis of the response.* - All local authorities are engaged in activities designed to respond to COVID-19 in their areas.
- It sets out how **national, regional and local partners should continue to work with each other**, the public, businesses, and other partners in their communities to prevent, manage and contain outbreaks
- The COVID-19 regional partnership teams led by **UKHSA and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities will play a pivotal role** in connecting the national and local response. UKHSA will set strategic and policy direction, clinical governance guidelines for community interventions, regulatory and compliance standards.
- The framework applies to the autumn and winter period and **underpins the delivery of the Autumn and Winter Plan.**

www.gov.uk/government/publications/containing-and-managing-local-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreaks

Updated 07 October 2021



Timelines

Summer Response July 2021

- sets out the arrangements that will be put in place following the removal of covid restrictions.

Autumn and Winter Plan Sept 2021.

- To sustain the progress made and prepare the country for future challenges, while ensuring the NHS does not come under unsustainable pressure.

Spring Response

Summer Response

Updated Contain Framework

Autumn and Winter Plan

Re-written Contain Framework

Spring Response Feb 2021

- Spring Response provides the roadmap out of the current lockdown (Steps 1-4).

Contain Framework Aug 2021

- Roles and responsibilities LAs.
- Core components of outbreak management.
- LOMP.
- The support LA can expect.

Contain Framework Oct 2021.

- Re-written to underpin the delivery of the Autumn and Winter Plan and reflect changes to PHE restructure.

Recap of the Autumn and Winter Plan

The National Autumn and Winter plan aims to sustain the progress made and prepare the country for future challenges, while ensuring the National Health Service (NHS) does not come under unsustainable pressure.

The key themes are:

- 1) Building our defences through pharmaceutical interventions
- 2) Identifying and isolating positive cases to limit transmission
- 3) Supporting the NHS and social care
- 4) Advising people on how to protect themselves and others
- 5) Pursuing an international approach: helping to vaccinate the world and managing risks at the border.
- 6) Contingency (Plan B)

We have reviewed and identified a key set of local actions agreed by the HPAB (23 Sept 2021)

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-autumn-and-winter-plan-2021



The core COVID-19 response outlined in the Contain Framework

Tracing

- Efficient tracing is **critical step** in the control of community transmission.
- Continue to deliver the **local tracing partnership** model alongside the national trace team.

Testing

Local authorities have a **key role delivering** Symptomatic (PCR), Asymptomatic (LFD) and Targeted Community Testing (LFD). **Testing available throughout Autumn and Winter – March 2022.** The framework covers:

- Delivering testing
- Regional and local test sites
- Prioritising and directing the use of mobile test units
- Communicating with the public about the availability of testing and encouraging uptake

The NHS Covid-19 App will

- Continue to **advised potential contacts** who are vaccinated to take a PCR test rather than self-isolate, inline with self-isolation policy changes.
- **Key metrics from the app** available (<https://stats.app.covid19.nhs.uk>) at local authority level to support decision-making and planning, including where to target marketing and communications.

The core COVID-19 response outlined in the Contain Framework

Self Isolation

- Since **16 August 2021**, contacts who are fully vaccinated, under the age of 18, clinical trial participants or who cannot be vaccinated for clinical reasons no longer have to self-isolate.
- **Self-isolation remains vital for people with COVID-19 symptoms**, those who test positive for COVID-19 and close adult contacts who are not fully vaccinated.
- **Supporting people on low incomes who are required to self-isolate** by delivering financial assistance via the Test and Trace Support Payment (TTSP) scheme and Practical Support Payment (PSP) schemes.

Vaccines

- Vaccine is **seen as the main line of defence for controlling the virus**, over lockdown.
- Work closely with National Screening and Immunisation Teams to **understand the population of an area**.
- Increase vaccination rates overall and especially among people in **disproportionately impacted groups**.
- **Offer a booster** to individuals who received vaccine in Phase 1 (Priority groups 1-9)
- Support a **school based vaccination programme**.

The core COVID-19 response outlined in the Contain Framework

Funding

- The **Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF)** is the primary source of funding to support local authorities to deliver their outbreak management plans and implement measures to tackle enduring transmission, and enhanced response activity.
- TTSP, PSP and the Medicines Delivery Service will **continue to the end of March 2022**.

Surveillance and Data

- Surveillance will **continue to play a critical role** in preventing, understanding and responding to outbreaks.
- The National Surveillance Programme, provides the necessary information and intelligence to **develop shared situational awareness to prioritise the ongoing planning** and response to COVID-19.

Communications and Engagement

- Local authorities will continue to **tailor local public health messaging appropriately in their areas**, considering a range of factors including the surveillance and intelligence data, settings and community intel, and the nature of the outbreak.
- Communications should also focus **on building community resilience** by providing the knowledge and resources **to enable individuals to protect and care for themselves and others**.
- The government will make available a **comprehensive and up-to-date range of assets**.

The core COVID-19 response outlined in the Contain Framework

Compliance and Enforcement

- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Local Authorities are the **lead enforcement authorities** for business related COVID-19 compliance and enforcement.
- Legal measures have **moved to advice and guidance**, however **Local Authorities will still have an important role in supporting businesses** and public places to be COVID-safe.
- Under the government's COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan local authorities will **retain powers under the No. 3 Regulations until 24 March 2022** and will also play a role in ensuring that employers comply with their obligations under the self-isolation regulations.

Plan B – Autumn and Winter

- Local Authorities would hold the **compliance and enforcement responsibility** with respect to businesses and events organisers implementation of mandatory **vaccine-only COVID-19-status certification** in certain settings.
- Local authorities would also play a role in compliance and enforcement of **mandatory face coverings** in business settings.
- Decisions regarding face coverings in **education settings** are not in scope here and should follow the principles set out in the **Education Contingency Framework**.
- Contain Framework **doesn't mention WFH** – we presume there'll be a national instruction.

Autumn and Winter Plan

6) Contingency

If Plan A is not sufficient to prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS and that further measures are required, the **Government has prepared a Plan B** for England.

- Communicating clearly and urgently to the public and businesses that the level of risk has increased and **setting out the steps that they should take to manage the increased risks** of the virus.
- Introducing **mandatory vaccine-only COVID-status certification** in certain settings.
- Legally **mandating face coverings** in certain settings
- The Government would also consider asking people once again to **work from home if they can, for a limited period.**
- Variants of Concern

County Durham Actions

- Maintain targeted testing/surge vaccination plans
- Develop local contingency plans (LRF) that has the flexibility to respond to escalating situations

The core COVID-19 response outlined in the Contain Framework

More Contingency

- As set out in the autumn and winter plan contingency measures would be introduced if the **NHS was likely to come under unsustainable pressure**.
- In the event of these measures being required **more substantial restrictions could be implemented**. These include:
 - **closing businesses** and venues in whole sectors or geographies
 - imposing general **restrictions on people's movements** or gatherings
 - **restricting** or closing local or national **transport systems**

Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP)

- Local plans **should be regularly refreshed to reflect learning** from exercises, incidents, good practice and remain aligned with the overall national response as it evolves.

The core COVID-19 response outlined in the Contain Framework

Operational support

- Local authority **activity, using local resources** in line with individual LOMPs, will remain **the primary mechanism to respond to incidents and outbreaks** of COVID-19 through the autumn and winter period.
- **National support will continue to be available** to help respond to some outbreaks, depending on the speed and scale of response required.

Education Support

- Outbreak management in education settings and any further measures in education settings to reduce transmission should follow the principles set out in the **Education Contingency Framework**.

Enhanced Response Area

- **UKHSA will provide enhanced support to local areas** facing challenging disease situations, where the evidence suggests short-term additional support could slow or bring rates down.

The core COVID-19 response outlined in the Contain Framework

Enduring Transmission

- Enduring transmission is **linked to wider socio-economic challenges**, rather than being a short-term outbreak and is **linked to long-standing patterns of deprivation and health inequalities**.
- **UKHSA will offer support** to Local Authorities experiencing enduring transmission.
- A Local Authority which has **exhausted their COMF** can discuss making a separate case for **additional funding**.

Variants

- Local Authorities play a **critical role in responding to variant outbreaks** through the processes **set out in their LOMP**. Health Protection Teams (HPTs) and Local Authorities work with their local community and partners to **investigate cases and clusters** and may establish an incident management team if needed.

Next Steps for the Framework

- This Framework will be **reviewed in the spring of 2022** and updated as necessary, considering developments and lessons in the response to COVID-19.
- UKHSA will work collectively with partners to **develop a future engagement framework** that best supports regional and local teams to deliver against public health threats and to facilitate the co-design of future policies and responses.