

Epidemic contingency procedure

Aims

The aims of this procedure are to:

- Reduce the chances of staff contracting the pathogen
- Minimise the chances of staff acting as vectors for a pathogen within a site
- Prevent the transmission of pathogens from site to site via company staff
- Reassure clients that the company is acting professionally and responsibly
- Minimise the impact on operations of losing staff availability

Scope

This policy applies to all ProEconomy staff and associate organisations.

1. Additional actions to be taken by staff

1.1 All staff should exercise all due care to prevent becoming infected, e.g. avoid major public gatherings, wash hands frequently, etc.

- Must familiarise themselves with the pathogen symptoms and notify their line manager immediately should they begin to display any of them. Once this has been done, they must then self-isolate and follow government advice.

1.2 Water quality analysts

- Before a site visit, infection control (or senior management) for the establishment must be contacted. Ensure that Estates are kept in the loop.
- A copy of this procedure must be provided to let them know the actions that the company is taking, and the local situation discussed.
- Any amendments to planned activities for the site must be recorded and then be communicated in writing to the relevant staff members.
- Any scheduled meetings with clients should be postponed unless specifically requested by the establishment.
- All communications should be by phone, text or email.

1.3 Operations staff

- Before visiting a site, contact the office to obtain the latest situation regarding the client.
- Before entering a site, disinfect all tools that are likely to be used by wiping them with alcohol. This includes tablets (following the relevant method statement for doing so).
- Wash hands thoroughly before entering a sampling area, or use sanitiser. There will probably be sanitiser dispensers available at ward entrances, otherwise use that provided by the company.
- Disposable gloves must be worn for each sample point. The client's staff may prefer to provide these, otherwise use those provided by the company.
- Once the sample has been taken, disinfect the sample point surface thoroughly. Discard the disposable gloves into any designated receptacle and wash hands again.
- If visiting another site on the same day the above steps must be repeated.
- Wear the masks provided if their use is specified by the client

1.4 Sales staff

- Consider postponing meetings with potential clients
- Don't shake hands

2. Management actions

- The situation must be monitored continuously, and all official advice complied with.
- Clients must be kept fully informed and infection control/senior management of any changes ProEconomy makes to its sampling and maintenance procedures.
- Ensure that sufficient additional resources i.e. gloves, masks, sanitiser gel, are available. This may entail staff buying their own locally and being reimbursed.

3. Escalation measures

- Close the office and ask staff to work from home.
- Cancel staff meetings, and conduct all communication via phone, email or text.
- If staff availability decreases, reduce the number of site visits made.
- Should site visit reduction become necessary, prioritise establishments on the basis of level of risk, i.e. presence/absence of legionella, number of individuals placed at risk. Infection control teams should be consulted.