

Dear Colleague

OUTBREAK OF LEGIONNAIRES' DISEASE – SOUTH-WEST EDINBURGH

1. As you will be aware, since Thursday, 31 May 2012 NHS Lothian has been notified of 24 confirmed cases of Legionella and 37 suspected cases (to 12pm on 7 June 2012).
2. The majority of these have been admitted to hospital with severe respiratory illness and one confirmed case has died. The earliest onset date of the confirmed cases to date is 16 May 2012. All the confirmed cases have tested positive for *Legionella pneumophila* SG1 urinary antigen.
3. Local cooling towers on sites in or adjacent to the affected area have been identified as the most likely source of the organism. Initial assessment and disinfection has been carried out and further follow up visits are being undertaken by the Health and Safety Executive and the City of Edinburgh Council's Environmental Health Department.
4. Clinicians are asked to consider Legionnaires' disease as a possible diagnosis in patients who present with flu-like symptoms and/or lower respiratory tract symptoms, or severe respiratory illness, and who have worked or stayed in South-West Edinburgh from mid May until the first week of June inclusive.
5. Clinicians are also asked to consider arranging testing of urine samples for Legionella antigen, and sputum for Legionella, on all suspected cases.

**From the Chief Medical Officer
Sir Harry Burns MPH
FRCS(Glas) FRCP(Ed) FFPH**

Enquiries to:

Gareth Brown
St Andrew's House
EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

Tel: 0131-244 6910
Fax: 0131-244 2157
Gareth.Brown@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

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Addresses

For action

NHS Board Chief Executives (to cascade to Accident and Emergency Departments)
Medical Directors
NHS Board General Practitioners
Nursing Directors
Directors of Public Health
Consultants in Public Health Medicine
Scottish Ambulance Service
Scottish Prisons Service

For information

Infectious Diseases Consultants
Health Protection Scotland
NHS 24

6. Clinicians are also reminded that while Legionnaires' disease is not a notifiable disease under the Public Health etc (Scotland) Act (2008), Legionella is a reportable organism. Accordingly, there is a duty on directors of diagnostic laboratories to report all laboratory detections of Legionella to the local public health department.

7. Where any cases are suspected or confirmed public health departments should notify Health Protection Scotland as a matter of urgency, to ensure any further cases can be interviewed as quickly as possible.

Yours sincerely

Harry Burns

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