

# COVID-19 OPCE Report

*Outbreak Prevention and Control Executive*

Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan

Southwark Public Health Division

4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

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# This OPCE report gives a brief summary of key information on COVID-19 in Southwark

## BACKGROUND

**Coronaviruses are common globally and have been known to cause infection to humans. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China.**

- Typical symptoms include fever and cough, and may progress to severe pneumonia with breathing difficulties.
- Symptoms are mild in most people, but a number of groups are classed as 'extremely vulnerable' to coronavirus, including:
  - Solid organ transplant patients
  - Those with certain cancers
  - Those with severe respiratory conditions
  - Those on immunosuppression therapies
  - Those with rare health conditions that increase the risk of infection

**This report gives key information on the COVID-19 impact in Southwark, and the local response.**

### Reference

1. DHSC and PHE (2020) Coronavirus: latest information and advice. Available from: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19)

# The OPCE Report is structured around the three key strands, and supporting workstreams, of the OPCP

## OUTBREAK PREVENTION & CONTROL PLAN

The OPCP is structured around three main strands (Prevent, Identify and Control) and the three cross-cutting workstreams.

**AIM: Mitigate the impact of novel coronavirus on Southwark's population and communities, focusing on those most at risk.**

### ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS

#### PREVENT

Work with communities and settings to prevent transmission, focusing on those with greatest vulnerability

#### IDENTIFY

Collate and interpret data to ensure that cases, clusters and outbreaks of disease are promptly identified and those affected appropriately supported

#### CONTROL

Manage outbreaks by providing health protection advice and the institution of control measures (for individuals and communities) so as to prevent onward transmission

### INTELLIGENCE , EVIDENCE & EPIDEMIOLOGY

### TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

#### References

1. Southwark's Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan (OPCP), ([link](#))

# Summary of key developments and next steps in Prevent workstream over the last 7 days

## PREVENT – GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS

### Workstream Activities / Updates

#### General

- Focus on the mass testing and pushing messages through our regular channels, plus some paid for social media.
- Continued provision of COVID prevention messaging through usual channels.
- Vaccine webinar event for Southwark residents on 1<sup>st</sup> March.

#### Internally

- Staff are regularly reminded of the mass testing facility available to all front-line workers.
- An all staff webinar is being held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March to address any questions and concerns raised by Council staff.

### Looking ahead

- Looking at wider comms for vaccines as the age groups widen out.
- Southwark Life to have a feature on the roadmap and vaccines.

Author(s): Ginette Hogan, Public Health; Kim Hooper, Comms

# Summary of key developments and next steps in Prevent workstream over the last 7 days

## PREVENT – TARGETED COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

### Workstream Activities / Updates

#### Businesses

- The Business FAQs and key messages regularly updated on the Council website.
- Weekly comms to over 10,500 businesses on effective prevention and available business support.
- Ongoing grant support to businesses via LRSG and ARG

#### VCS Covid-19 Prevention Grants.

- Waiting for final sign off to release funds to the 7 successful applicants.

#### Community Health Ambassadors

- There are currently 66 local residents and workers who have completed the induction training and are now registered as Community Health Ambassadors.
- A weekly e-newsletter is being distributed to Ambassadors to share news, key messages, events and signpost support.
- Fortnightly induction sessions and monthly Ambassador network meetings are taking place .
- From monthly monitoring survey data, 212 messages were sent out on average per ambassador in January, with printed and direct messages being the most common message types.
- Result from the same survey found that individuals in the Ambassadors' networks are most concerned about their mental health, vaccinations and financial support.

#### Universities/Young people

- Continuing close partnership working with schools, HE and FE institutions.

### Looking ahead

- Ambassador training and recruitment continues with targeted approaches to recruitment from the VCS Latin American Network and Walworth area.
- Regular updating of messages to account for any changes in restrictions. whilst maintaining non-changing messages (mask, handwashing, etc.).

Author(s): Anthony Lobo, Public Health / Danny Edwards, Local Economy Team / Kim Hooper, Comms

# Summary of key developments and next steps in Identify workstream since the last OPCE

## IDENTIFY

### Test and Trace Southwark (TTS)

In the **fourteen days between 15 February and 28 February inclusive**, 109 cases were referred to Test and Trace Southwark for local contact tracing. Of these:

- 44 were contacted successfully, of which: contact tracing was fully completed (43), or contact was made but the individual was unable to share details of contact (1) ;
- 48 cases were not reachable, due to maximum attempts being made (27), refusal to cooperate (4), not enough information to contact the cases (6), the case was too unwell or in hospital (10), or for any other reason (1).
- 14 cases were flagged as inappropriate for the LSCT team to follow-up, because they were already contacted by the national system (6), did not consent prior to referral to TTS (7), the case was older than 10 days (1).
- 2 cases remain open for further follow-up with Home Visits.
- 1 case was referred back to the national team for further follow-up.
- 16 cases were referred on for a Home Visit, of which:
  - 5 completed contact tracing; 1 was later deemed inappropriate; and 2 remain open

### Workstream Activities / Updates

- Referral volumes have fallen markedly over the last fortnight with most days remaining <10 cases.
- Performance both locally and overall has improved markedly with recent local performance  $\geq 50\%$  and overall performance system  $\geq 80\%$  for both cases and their contacts.
- Challenges remain completely restarting home visiting: regulatory services are operating a full home visiting service. There are continued discussions underway with union representatives about fully re-starting the resident services home visiting service for the social housing sector.
- Local work is underway to identify areas for service improvements including options around faster handover times from the national system to TTS.

### Looking ahead

- We are undertaking analysis to place the service on a longer-term footing, using the assumption that TTS will continue to operate until March 2022.

# Summary of key developments and next steps in Identify workstream over the last 14 days

## IDENTIFY

### Rapid (LFT) testing

#### (1) MASS TESTING UPDATE

- [www.southwark.gov.uk/covidtest](https://www.southwark.gov.uk/covidtest)
- National programme of local authority mass rapid testing
- Southwark: Council programme team supported by PH. Ongoing comms and liaison with DHSC.
- New **London Bridge Station** mass testing site went live on 25 February.
- LFT numbers are broadly plateauing; in w/c 25 Feb a total of **2981** tests were reported in Southwark (mirroring the picture across London).
- Current discussions to decide how best to support the programme given its newly announced extension to at least 30 Jun 2021.

#### (2) HIGH STREET PHARMACIES

- Led by PH. Aiming to develop a network of 10+ pharmacies to broaden the offer for key workers across the borough
- Initial pilot - 2 pharmacy sites now live for LFT testing (Jamaica Road Pharmacy and Bonamy Pharmacy)
- Additional sites to be identified via EOI, ambition to have a network of pharmacy sites across the borough to improve access

#### (3) SCHOOLS

- School lateral flow testing programme live
- Public health team providing support on LFTs as part of the planned return to school programme – 4 workshop/Q&A sessions and a school readiness survey underway
- New policy announcement: rollout of twice weekly rapid testing for households with children of school age (including home testing option)

### Workstream Activities / Updates

- Peckham Pulse and Burgess Park PCR testing sites now operating as an LFT home test collection site in the afternoons
- Supporting Elephant Park construction site and local employers interested in providing in-house testing
- Targeted engagement and outreach to – PVI early years, charities, local businesses and many more
- LSBU now engaged in DHSC LFT 'use case' pilot study comparing LFT and PCR results in asymptomatic cases

### Looking ahead

- DHSC developing new 'community collect' home testing model – starting with schools but likely to be extended to wider community
- Additional pharmacy sites to be identified and stood up



# Summary of key developments and next steps in Control workstream over the last 7 days

## CONTROL

### Workstream Activities / Updates

Between the **23rd February & 1st March**, there were **7 open outbreaks<sup>1</sup>** being managed by the Acute Response Team:

- 3 in Care Homes
- 2 in a Hostel / Supported Living Setting
- 1 in a Higher Education Setting
- 1 in a Workplace Setting

In the same time period there were **5 clusters<sup>2</sup>** reported:

- 1 in an Early Years Setting
- 2 In a School
- 1 in a Higher Education Setting
- 1 in a Workplace Setting

There were also **5 single cases** reported.

All received support and advice from Southwark Council's Public Health Team. Where appropriate, situations were escalated to the LCRC.

### Looking ahead

- Close monitoring of local incidence rates and location occurs daily to allow early action to be taken.

Author(s): **Kate Rawlings**, Public Health Programme Officer.

#### Reference

1. An outbreak is defined as two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 at a named location with a proven epidemiological link.
2. A cluster is defined as two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 at a named location where there is no evidence of an epidemiological link.

# Key developments and next steps in the Intelligence workstream

## INTELLIGENCE, EVIDENCE & EPIDEMIOLOGY

### Workstream activities and updates

- The Monitoring Report is revised and reviewed by the Public Health Acute Response Team three times a week. Weekly updates are provided to senior officers.
- Local confirmed cases are reviewed daily against key high risk and vulnerable locations. Cases of interest are notified to the Acute Response Team for follow-up.
- The team review NHS Test and Trace contact tracing data to identify potential common exposure locations. These are shared with Environmental Health on a weekly basis.
- Inequalities analysis of vaccination coverage is underway and will feed into the vaccination coordination group on an on-going basis.

### Looking ahead

- The initial Rapid Impact Assessment is being revised in light of the evolving nature of the pandemic. Updates will incorporate additional intelligence relevant to Southwark populations and local response work.
- The team will continue to consolidate data flows and develop monitoring and reporting of Covid vaccination across South East London, working with sub-regional partners.

Author: Public Health Knowledge & Intelligence Team, for Chris Williamson, Head of Public Health intelligence

**Find out more at**  
**[southwark.gov.uk/publichealth](https://southwark.gov.uk/publichealth)**

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