

Business Continuity Planning

– Swine Flu Policy

Background

Swine flu is a new strain of influenza (H1N1) which was first identified in Mexico in April 2009 and the government's approach in the UK has now moved from containment to outbreak control. It is anticipated that the spread of the virus will accelerate further during the normal autumn and winter flu season. Most people recover from swine flu within a week, even without special treatment. A small number of cases have led to serious illness, and these have often been in patients with existing health problems.

Our Approach

Harrison Catering Services' approach to dealing with swine flu is based on the following model:

- Prevention
- Monitoring
- Contingency Planning

Prevention

The single most effective way to stop or slow the spread of diseases such as Swine flu is to prevent the spread of the virus. This includes washing hands regularly, covering your mouth and nose with a clean tissue if you cough or sneeze, disposing carefully of used tissues and sanitising surfaces in the kitchen and associated areas where hand contact is made. All catering staff have been reminded of the need to maintain high standards of personal and kitchen hygiene, to be extra vigilant during the current crisis and to report any flu like symptoms to their manager so that appropriate action can be taken (see attached instructions for catering staff).

Monitoring

We are monitoring the development of the swine flu pandemic through government websites, the news media and from suspected cases amongst our employees. In the event that the disease reaches a point where our service to customers is likely to be affected we will invoke our business continuity plan.

Contingency Planning

At the point that service to customers is likely to be affected we will invoke the Business Continuity procedures and our Pandemic Flu Team will meet via conference call weekly, or more frequently if required, to limit the effects of the pandemic on the business.

Central Support

Our central and regional support functions are resilient to a flu pandemic as many of our software systems are available remotely and the majority of functions are covered by at least two people. In the event of large scale absence, remote working will be optimised and conference calls encouraged to minimise face to face meetings.

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Catering Units

Government models predict that absenteeism at the peak of a pandemic could reach 15% of the workforce. If such absences were spread evenly across the population then most Harrison units would be able to cope for a limited period given that the number of customers are likely to reduce in proportion. However, inevitably some units will be hit worse than others and our contingency planning is aimed at achieving continuity of service wherever possible. The local management team is empowered to take what actions are required to limit the effect on the service within normal operating procedures.

We have excellent relationships with a number of staff agencies which will be used to fill staff shortages. We will also use staff in other nearby units where feasible to support badly affected sites.

Because of our purchasing policy, we have a broad range of approved suppliers of fresh produce. As a consequence, in the event of supply difficulties with the normal supplier to a unit we have established relationships with alternative sources of supply, providing a built in resilience to our supply chain.

Summary

Harrison Catering Services has considered the potential impact of a flu pandemic on the business and put in place plans to limit the spread of the virus amongst our employees. We also have a business continuity plan which will be invoked if service to customers is at risk.

The Company cannot compromise its responsibilities under Food Safety Law and Health & Safety Law and in the event of a reduced number of catering staff being available to work in the kitchen; the food service offer will reflect the need to protect the wellbeing of our customers.

The prime objective for the pandemic flu team will be continuity of service for our clients and customers and we believe that we are well placed to deal with any escalation in the pandemic.

Swine Flu Prevention

-Instructions for Catering Staff

The single most effective way to stop or slow the spread of diseases such as Swine flu is to prevent the spread of the virus. This includes washing hands regularly and covering your mouth and nose with clean tissue if you cough or sneeze, disposing carefully of used tissues and acting responsibly if you think you have swine flu.

Hand washing

- Should be carried out frequently and always after sneezing or coughing into a tissue. Hands should be washed with friction for 15 to 20 seconds under running water with the Bactericidal Hand Soap which is provided. It is important to dry your hands after washing. Alcohol Hand Sanitiser should be used after washing and drying your hands

Coughing and sneezing

- If you do cough or sneeze at work you must use paper tissue. The paper towel provided in the kitchen is suitable for this purpose and is easily available and accessible. Cover your mouth and nose with the towel and dispose of it into the lidded bin in the kitchen as soon as you have finished then wash your hands before touching any other surface or any food. If the coughing or sneezing symptoms persist you must seek medical advice.

Cleaning and disinfection

- Surfaces in the kitchen such as door handles, sink and wash hand basin taps, toilet seats and flush handles, refrigerator and deep freezer door handles where hands come into contact should be regularly sanitised using the chemical sanitisers provided in the kitchen.

Reporting any symptoms of illness

- If you think that you are suffering from any of the symptoms of swine flu whilst away from work, you should contact your doctor or NHS Direct and not come to work
- If you are absent from work you must contact your manager and give the proper reason for your absence
- If you start to feel unwell with flu like symptoms whilst at work you must inform your manager and leave work immediately and seek medical assistance
- Catering Managers should inform their line manager and the client of any instance where a member of staff is suspected of having swine flu.

Stuart Dye

Company Hygiene & Safety Manager

April 2009