


**Board of Directors' Meeting  
7 October 2021**

<b>Agenda item</b>	252/21			
<b>Report</b>	Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response (EPRR) assurance process sign off			
<b>Executive Lead</b>	Chief Operating Officer			
√ <i>tick only those applicable</i>	<b>Link to strategic pillar:</b>		<b>Link to CQC domain:</b>	
	Our patients and community	√	Safe	√
	Our people	√	Effective	√
	Our service delivery	√	Caring	√
	Our partners	√	Responsive	√
	Our governance	√	Well Led	√
√ <i>tick / input only those applicable, usually only one</i>	<b>Report recommendations:</b>		<b>Link to BAF / risk:</b>	
	For assurance		-	
	For decision / approval	√	<b>Link to risk register:</b>	
	For review / discussion		-	
	For noting			
	For information			
For consent				
<b>Presented to:</b>	Senior Leadership Committee – Operational (26.08.21) Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (6.09.21)			
<b>Dependent upon</b> (if applicable):	N/A			
<b>Executive summary:</b>	<p>This paper provides an overview on SaTH's Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response (EPRR) statutory requirements.</p> <p>In summary, there continues to be a considerable amount of work in developing the Trust's EPRR arrangements due to the continuously changing landscape. Nationally, there is a high level of focus with the increasing amount of guidance and expanding range of threats the Trust must be prepared for. It is essential that there is a continued focus on the Trust's Emergency Preparedness and Business Continuity arrangements. It is important that the Trust maintains and continues to advance its reputation within the EPRR arena and contributes towards the Region's Preparedness. Board of Directors' are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note the current compliance against the NHS England Core Standards for EPRR.</li> <li>• Note the training and exercising programme for 2020/21</li> <li>• Note the national learning lessons from the first wave of the pandemic along with other concurrent disruptive challenges that the Trust has managed.</li> </ul>			
<b>Appendices (available in separate Information Pack)</b>	<p>Appendix 1: Core Standards Appendix 2: Training and Exercising Appendix 3: Business Continuity Compliance Appendix 4: Plans/ Policies Compliance</p>			
				

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This paper provides a report on the Trust's emergency preparedness to meet the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and the NHS England Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response Framework (EPRR) 2015.
- 1.2. The Trust has a mature suite of plans to deal with Major Incidents and Business Continuity issues. These conform to the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and current NHS-wide guidance. All plans have been developed in consultation with local and regional stakeholders to ensure cohesion with their plans.
- 1.3. The paper reports on the training and exercising programme and the development of emergency planning arrangements and plans. The report gives a summary of instances in which the Trust has had to respond to extraordinary circumstances.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 EPRR is a core function of the NHS and is a statutory requirement of the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004. Responding to emergencies is also a key function within the NHS Act (2006) as amended by the Health and Social Care Act (2012). The role of NHS England relates to potentially disruptive threats and the need to take command of the NHS, as required, during emergency situations. These are wide ranging and may be anything from extreme weather conditions to outbreak of an infectious disease, a major transport accident or a terrorist incident
- 2.1. The Civil Contingencies Act (2004) outlines a single framework for civil protection in the United Kingdom. Part 1 of the Act establishes a clear set of roles and responsibilities for those involved in emergency preparedness and response at the local level.

As a category one responder, the Trust is subject to the following civil protection duties:

- assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning.
- put in place emergency plans.
- put in place business continuity management arrangements.
- put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency.
- share information with other local responders to enhance coordination. cooperate with other local responders to enhance coordination and efficiency.

## **3.0 Audits**

- 3.1 NHS England maintains its statutory duty to seek formal assurance of NHS providers EPRR readiness, discharged through the EPRR annual assurance process. The 2020 process was reduced due to the demands on the NHS as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The 2021 EPRR assurance process requires SaTH to undertake a self-assessment against a reduced number of Core Standards. SaTH will be reporting that the organisation is Substantially Compliant, being fully compliant with 42 out of the reduced 47 core standards, giving an overall 89% compliance, there are no significant risks or actions to be taken to improve compliance are noted in the Self-Assessment, however, a Business Continuity software solution would support divisions and departments in completing their Business Continuity Plans. A system wide approach would achieve economies of scale and a standardised approach across the ICS and

options are currently being explored. The completed Self-Assessment can be found at Annex A.

- 3.2 West Midlands Ambulance Service Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) Audit December 2020 on behalf of National Ambulance Resilience Unit (NARU). Areas of good practice were noted along with areas for improvement such as ED Reception Training, CBRN and the donning and doffing of associated Personal Protective Equipment which have been addressed throughout 2020/21. NARU continue to work with the NHS ambulance services to ensure they maintain specialist capabilities and are fully prepared to respond to any incidents that may occur

#### **4.0 Debriefing from Live Events and Exercises**

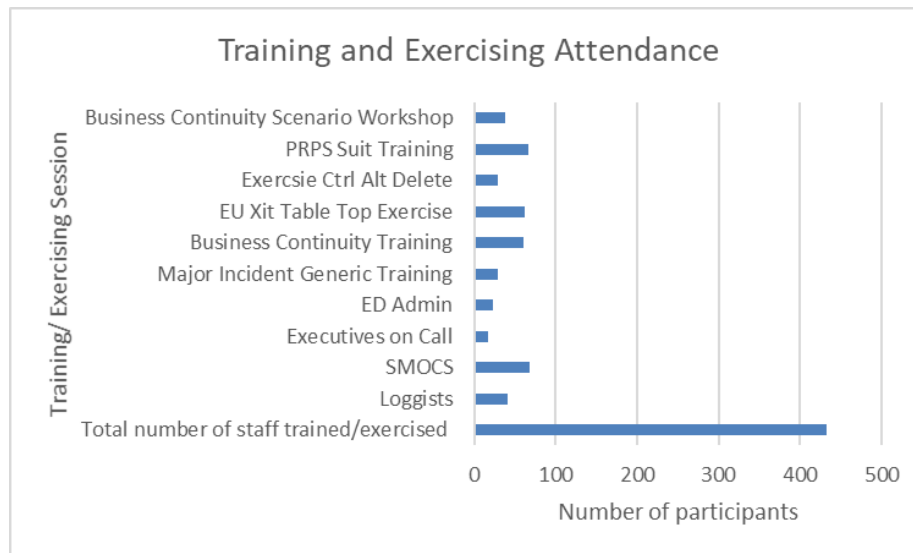
- 4.1 The primary focus of 2020/21 has been the continued response to the coronavirus pandemic, which NHS England declared as a Level 4 national incident in January 2020. Incident Coordination Centres have been operating locally, regionally and nationally from the outset of the pandemic, with command, control, coordination and communication arrangements in place to ensure that the response to the pandemic is co-ordinated.
- 4.2 The Trust is currently still responding to the pandemic; however, debrief sessions with Divisions, Silver Command and Gold Command have been held to capture learning from the response to COVID-19 along with other incidents that have occurred concurrently. The full debrief reports are held on the Trust Intranet.
- 4.3 As well as supporting the Level 4 Covid-19 response, the SaTH has also responded to a number of incidents concurrently, post incident debriefs have taken place and post incident reports written with clear recommendations and action plans in place.
- In November 2020, the Facilities Team received reports of issues with clinical waste due to the increase of infectious waste. Working with the Estates team, a number of mitigating actions have been taken, including publication of a standard operating procedure for COVID-19 waste.
  - ED Majors Cubicles closure 24.05.21. Due to an unknown substance that had been put down one of the sinks in one of the Majors Cubicles, a sink was blocked along with the sluice in the dirty utility. The smell had spread to the outpatient areas and was causing a very unpleasant environment for staff and patients. Internal escalation plans were activated and an ambulance divert was initiated until the issue was resolved.
  - IT Outage 30.05.21. A routine generator test had taken place and at approx. 07:00, the Digital Services on-call support team identified a number of email infrastructure related alerts indicating that the air-conditioning units and switch temperatures had exceeded 40 degrees. The UPS at RSH only lasts for 20 minutes which led to outages of key clinical systems along with the VOIP telephony system.

#### **5.0 EU Exit**

- 5.1 The UK exited the EU on 31 January 2020 starting the transition period until 31 December 2020. Nigel Lee as SRO has overseen SaTH's EU Exit End of Transition programme which was supported by the EPRR Team and Operational leads as part of a single, shared operational readiness and response structure alongside managing the response to COVID-19, restoration and recovery and winter pressures.

#### **6.0 Training, Exercising and Testing**

- 6.1 The Trust has a rolling programme of training along with a programme of live, table top and communication exercises. The exercises are designed to test and develop our plans and afford an opportunity for staff to participate as part of their continued professional development.
- 6.2 The Trust is required to carry out exercises as follows:
- Communication Exercise – minimum frequency – every 6 months
  - Table-top Exercise – minimum frequency – every 12 months
  - Live Play Exercise- minimum frequency – every 3 years
  - Command post exercise – minimum frequency – every three years
- 6.3 The table below details the training and exercises undertaken from April 2020 to July 2021.



- 6.4 It should be noted that several training, exercising and testing events have been cancelled/ rescheduled due to the Coronavirus Pandemic including the multi-agency live exercise planned for May 2021 at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. These events have either been re-scheduled or will be at an appropriate time.
- 6.5 Wherever possible, the Trust strives to ensure that our testing and exercising is held in a multi-agency context. This is to provide familiarisation with other organisations and to assist with benchmarking our response with our partners. Exercises provide invaluable insight into the operationalisation of our plans and also highlight any gaps in our response arrangements that might need to be further developed.
- 6.6 SaTH is planning on running the re-scheduled live exercise “Exercise Rainbow” in May 2022, this will be a large scale multi-agency exercise held at the RSH site.
- 6.7 SaTH will be participating in the live large scale multi agency nuclear exercise taking place at RAF Cosford in September 2021 where WMAS will be conveying 4 amputee contaminated simulated casualties to the RSH site for decontamination as part of the exercise play. This will provide our ED staff with an opportunity to rehearse their skills in a more realistic setting.

## **7.0 Emergency Planning Apprenticeships**

- 7.1 The Emergency Planning Manager for SaTH has convened and been appointed as the chair of the National Emergency Planning Apprenticeship Trailblazer Group. The group was established with a view to recognising Emergency Planning as an occupation, to facilitate some succession planning and the aspiration for

Emergency Planning Resilience and Response to be one of the careers of choice for young people. The development of an Apprenticeship in the field is timelier than ever, with the response to the pandemic and other concurrent incidents over the past months, the publication of “A State of Preparedness” and the review of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

- 7.2 The group has co-opted a range of subject matter experts from the Emergency Planning Field with representatives from the Local Authorities, Fire and Rescue Services, the NHS, Nuclear Sector, Environment Agency, The Police and also a number of Higher Education Institutes and the Emergency Planning Society.
- 7.3 The group will be utilising the Emergency Planning Societies Core Competencies Framework, developed by Eve Coles, who taught and mentored hundreds of Emergency Planners during her academic career and sadly passed away earlier this year, as a basis for the apprenticeship standards.

## **8.0 Risks and actions**

- 8.1 The National Security Risk Assessment and the National Risk Register are reviewed every 2 years and are due for publication later on in 2021. These risks are considered at the Local Resilience Forum and plans, policies and procedures are developed in line with the most likely and highest impact risks.
- 8.2 The Top Risks identified on the West Midlands community risk register are:
- Failure of National Electricity Transmission
  - Pandemic Influenza
  - Fluvial Flooding
  - Catastrophic Collapse within the Ironbridge Gorge
  - Animal Diseases
  - Low Temperatures and Heavy Snow
  - Industrial Action

## **9.0 Conclusion**

- 9.1 The EPRR work programme for 2021/22 will include:
- Ongoing response to the coronavirus pandemic and implementation of the learning identified from the pandemic response during 2020/21
  - Updating plans and standard operating procedures to take account of changes to the national security Risk Assessment and the National Risk Register.
  - Ensuring that staff who trained for and supported to response to the pandemic continue to receive training for future significant incidents that need support from the wider organisation.
- 9.2 The past year has seen good developments in the Trust’s resilience arrangements; however, more work is required at the service level to achieve full resilience.
- 9.3 The Trust should be undertaking a more detailed and comprehensive training and exercising programme; however, this requires resourcing.

**Chief Operating Officer**  
**August 2021**