COVID-19 learning:
Cheshire & Merseyside Contact Tracing Delivery: A Learning Framework

Background - The Cheshire and Merseyside Contact Tracing Hub (CMCTH) and Locally Supported Contact Tracing (LSCT) teams in local authorities are rapidly evolving and having to respond to the increasing demands for contact tracing because of the continuing pandemic. This is a challenging time for everyone and particularly a new workforce who need to be able to deliver a safe, high quality contact tracing function. This means staff require the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to effectively address and reduce the spread of the coronavirus in CM.

Aim - The aim of the framework is to enable those in contact tracing roles within and CMCTH and LSCT teams to be able to work safely and effectively, with the necessary capability for reducing transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus across CM. The ambition is to embed a system wide approach to training and learning that is sustainable and fit for purpose for anyone seeking to develop their knowledge and skills in this area.

System approach to learning and framework - This paper focuses on training and wider learning aimed at supporting the contact tracing workforce within the CMCTH and LSCT in local authority teams who: a) do not have a background in this type of work previously and/or b) have existing contact tracing skills and wish to 'brush up' on their underpinning knowledge.

It also introduces an ambition for a system approach to learning (Figure 1) that recognises the contribution of:
- other workforces and their contributions to tackling coronavirus (now and in the future)
- local communities and their needs for on-going communications and consistent messages and what they can do to reduce the spread of the virus
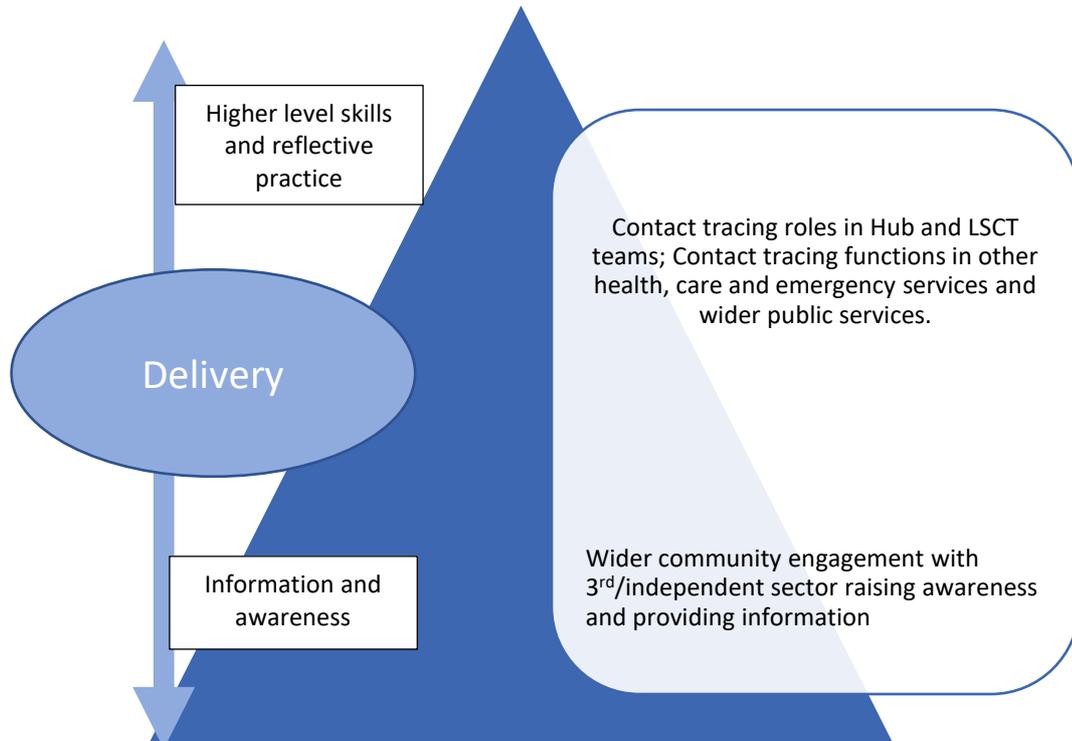

Figure 1: A learning framework for COVID-19 – Contact Tracing

The paper recognises:
- The pressing need to determine the priorities for training both in the immediate term and going forward into the future.
- The need for an effective response to rapid system developments e.g., the Liverpool City Region Integrated Contact Tracing proposal to ensure access to high quality training for a growing workforce.
- The importance of initial training and on-going learning through case discussion and supervision for contact tracers to ensure safe and high-quality practice.
- The significance of supervision, case discussion and reflection on experience.
- The opportunity to develop new knowledge and skills for future public health career development; e.g. the North West Public Health Practitioner Registration Programme

Immediate Priorities
1. **The need to rapidly establish a sustainable, robust and quality assured programme of learning** for contact tracers and team leaders. This will necessarily involve collaborative working between higher education, PHE, Champs local authorities and HEE.
2. **Ensuring a clear and consistent approach to initial training**, utilising the same core modules available on the Health Education England e-Learning for Healthcare Portal: https://portal.e-lfh.org.uk/ This e-LfH training covers a range of requirements necessary for safe, assured practice. If equivalent training has been completed locally in the last 12 months, then this does not need to be repeated. The full training takes approximately 2 days to complete. In addition, staff will need training for any local systems e.g. the Microsoft Dynamics Case Management System and other local processes.
3. **Utilising a range of additional resources** if appropriate (See Appendix 2). The growing contact tracing workforce will comprise of staff with varied levels of experience of contact tracing/community engagement and who need varying levels of additional knowledge to support their skill development.
4. **Clinical supervision arrangements** need to be established. Reflective case discussion should be encouraged either 1-1 or in groups, e.g. at handover
5. **Wellbeing** - Senior staff need to be sensitive to the wellbeing of staff in their teams, recognising the signs of rising stress and allowing time for discussion of concerns; making use of wellbeing resources.

Next steps
To embed a system wide approach to training and learning that is sustainable, Champs Support Team can provide some initial support for this but recommend a joint effort from all partners to make it a success.

Suggested next steps:
1. **Assess and determine university interest and capacity** to providing the necessary programme infrastructure, facilities, co-ordination and accreditation with relevant national public health standards.
2. **Assess the learning needs of the existing workforce** to determine what if any additional learning is required from the available resources.
3. **Consider establishing a 'Buddy System'** within or across LAs where very new contact tracers have an informal contact point with a staff member who has greater experience.
4. **Develop Case study reviews/analysis** either within or sharing across LA teams
5. **Engagement with NHS and LA workforce leads** to raise awareness of learning resources available and make recommendations for capability building.
6. **Continued efforts across stakeholders to maintain a clarity and consistency in messaging** to those outside the health and care system including the general public with

campaigns, communication bulletins, social marketing messages, social media outputs etc.

Appendix 1: Training Requirements extract from LA Checklist

4	TRAINING	
4.1	All staff have access to Health Education England training portal	Local Authority
4.2	Training completed by LA staff	Local Authority
4.2.1	*Data Security Awareness*	Local Authority
4.2.2	*Clinical & Information Governance*	Local Authority
4.2.3	*Safeguarding Level 2*	Local Authority
4.2.4	*An introduction to health protection, contact tracing and COVID-19*	Local Authority
4.2.5	*An introduction to NHS T&T system*	Local Authority
4.2.6	*NHS T&T – Level 2 data entry Demonstration video*	Local Authority
4.2.7	*NHS T&T web-based tool: Logging in and Data Entry of Records - Level 2*	Local Authority
4.2.8	*ACTION CARD – Escalation of queries, complex issues and situations between Tier 2 and 1*	Local Authority
4.2.9	*SOP - Escalation of queries, complex issues and situations between Tiers 2 and 1*	Local Authority

All training is available on the Health Education England e-Learning for Healthcare platform using the link: https://portal.e-lfh.org.uk/

All staff will need to have a username created to access the training material **in a restricted part of the eLfH platform**. Username requests will be required even if staff already have an account on the platform, in order to provide access to the relevant training materials.

Access should be requested in bulk with staff details sent to wncov.contacttracing@phe.gov.uk and Stephan.ElRamey@PHE.Gov.UK.

Access is usually provided within 24 hours. Staff should be advised to access the eLfH support site at https://support.e-lfh.org.uk/ if they require assistance relating to logging in and accessing the training materials.

Please email WNCov.training@phe.gov.uk if you have any queries related to HEE training

Appendix 2: Additional Learning resources (Free unless stated)

Yorks & Humber Public Health Network*	Shared Tier 1 resources: https://www.yhphnetwork.co.uk/shared-tier-1-resources/
	Contact Tracing Basics and skills for Conversations https://www.yhphnetwork.co.uk/shared-tier-1-resources/c-19-workforce-development-resources/contact-tracing-tier-1/
	Covid-19 – Narrated slide sets. Basic Epidemiology Implications for IP&C and Testing https://www.yhphnetwork.co.uk/shared-tier-1-resources/c-19-workforce-development-resources/covid-19-epidemiology-and-infection-prevention-and-control/
	Outbreak Management https://www.yhphnetwork.co.uk/shared-tier-1-resources/c-19-workforce-development-resources/outbreak-management/
Skills for Health	Infection Control and Prevention Level 1 (non-clinical) £11.00 https://www.skillsplatform.org/courses/7492-infection-control-and-prevention-level-1-non-clinical
	Infection Control and Prevention Level 2 (clinical) £11.00 https://www.skillsplatform.org/courses/7493-infection-control-and-prevention-level-2-clinical
HEE e-Learning for Health NB: this is different to the restricted section for contact tracing	A wide range of coronavirus learning resources freely available to colleagues working in the NHS, independent sector and social care. https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/coronavirus/
John Hopkins University and Bloomberg School of Public Health	A free (6 hour) well renowned and popular course from the USA that provides a comprehensive course on contact tracing: https://www.coursera.org/learn/covid-19-contact-tracing?edocomorp=covid-19-contact-tracing
WHO Open Learning	A series of freely available courses for COVID-19 covering IP&C, emerging respiratory viruses, risk management and others: https://openwho.org/courses?lang=en&topic=COVID-19

*these are largely targeted towards a Yorks & Humber audience that will need to be interpreted with caution against Cheshire and Merseyside systems and processes - but nevertheless useful introductory material