**Pre-election period working: CDSC**

The Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre (Wales) (CDSC) has been providing epidemiology, disease surveillance, outbreak investigation, research and training for Wales since the 1980s, initially as part of the Public Health Laboratory Service (PHLS), then from 2003 in the National Public Health Service for Wales (NPHS) and since 2009 as part of the Health Protection Division of Public Health Wales. Public Health Wales has four statutory functions:

* To provide and manage a range of public health, health protection, healthcare improvement, health advisory, child protection and microbiological laboratory services and services relating to the surveillance, prevention and control of communicable diseases;
* To develop and maintain arrangements for making information about matters related to the protection and improvement of health in Wales available to the public; to undertake and commission research into such matters and to contribute to the provision and development of training in such matters;
* To undertake the systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of information about the health of the people of Wales in particular including cancer incidence, mortality and survival; and prevalence of congenital anomalies; and
* To provide, manage, monitor, evaluate and conduct research into screening of health conditions and screening of health related matters.

CDSC plays a key role in providing timely and proactive services related to the surveillance, prevention and control of communicable disease, working closely with health protection teams, microbiology laboratories and environmental health teams across Wales to protect the health of the population of Wales. This includes the additional outputs and communications in support of Wales’ COVID-19 response.

During the pre-election period, Public Health Wales must follow guidance along the following principles:

* The NHS and its constituent bodies have no party political affiliation.  Nothing should be said or done by any member or employee in his or her official capacity that suggests otherwise
* NHS staff should not be asked to engage in activities which could give rise to the criticism that people paid from public funds are being used for party political purposes
* Parties and candidates should be treated even-handedly
* Party political meetings should not be held on NHS premises during the pre-election period

In line with our role in the COVID-19 response, CDSC will continue to publish reports and analyses to support our statutory function in surveillance, and to support investigation of cases, trends, incidents and outbreaks with field epidemiology and other methods to control and prevent infection. This includes working in an adaptive manner, tailoring outputs and analyses to the current situation.

CDSC will continue to review the content and frequency of reports to meet the changing need, refocussing as appropriate. Any changes will be communicated in a timely way to relevant stakeholders.

CDSC will retain the ability to ramp back up to more frequent reporting should circumstances change and to add or extend outputs as required.

We will respond even-handedly to freedom of information and other requests, and behave impartially, whilst continuing to inform the public and stakeholders of the current epidemiological situation in Wales.

**Reference**

Public Health Wales guidance for 2017 election

<http://howis.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/news/57225>

<http://nww2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/CommunicationsGroupDocs.nsf/0/baf5db50d0739b958025810f0032cca3/$FILE/Welsh%20Health%20Circular%202017%20020%20-%20UK%20General%20Election%202017%20(English).pdf>