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Guidance for the investigation of *Cryptosporidium* linked to swimming pools

Appendix 4: Example of letter to GPs/Hospital Trusts or Health Boards/ etc

Agencies: Public Health Wales, UKHSA, Local Authorities, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, the Pool Water Treatment Advisory Group and the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity.

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- Public (Internet: Cryptosporidium Reference Unit website)
- Links from Public Health Wales (Intranet), UKHSA (Internet) and websites of partner organisations

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Purpose of Document:

This is Appendix 4 of a document that has been drawn up by a task and finish group to provide guidance to public health professionals on the prevention and investigation of cases of cryptosporidiosis linked to swimming pools in England and Wales.

This Appendix is an example of a letter that may be used to alert GPs and relevant colleagues of a cluster of cryptosporidiosis cases and to ask for consideration of *Cryptosporidium* among differential diagnosis, provide hygiene advice, and advise cases not to use swimming pools for 2 weeks after cessation of symptoms.

Work Plan reference: Cryptosporidium Reference Unit 2010/11

[Date]

Dear Colleague,

We are investigating a cluster of cases of cryptosporidiosis which may be linked with swimming at [NAME OF PREMISES]. This is against a background of a [RISE/FALL] in cases of *Cryptosporidium* generally across [e.g. GEOGRAPHICAL AREA / HEALTH BOARD] at present.

The common presenting symptoms of cryptosporidiosis are:

- diarrhoea. This is usually watery in nature; it may contain mucus, but rarely contains blood; it is often profuse, but may wax and wane.
- nausea, vomiting and anorexia often precede diarrhoea
- cramping abdominal pain.

Other symptoms occur such as:

- weight loss
- headache
- low grade fever.

People usually develop symptoms between 3 to 12 days after exposure to the parasite. Most cases occur around 5 to 7 days after exposure.

Cryptosporidiosis is very easily spread. Individuals are infectious from the start of symptoms, and may continue to be infectious for many weeks after symptoms have resolved. Outside of the body, the oocysts can remain infective for between many months in a moist environment.

If you see anyone with watery diarrhoea, and a history of having swam at [NAME OF PREMISES], please consider cryptosporidiosis among your differential diagnosis. Please give the family advice on frequent handwashing with soap and water after using the toilet, changing nappies and before preparing and eating food, not sharing towels and other basic hygiene advice. Please advise them they should not swim with symptoms or for two weeks afterwards.

We would be grateful if you would arrange for a stool sample to be sent from such patients, and for you to notify the Health Protection Team on [TELEPHONE NUMBER].

Yours faithfully,

Consultant in Communicable Disease Control / Consultant in Health Protection