The University of Edinburgh

College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

Western General Hospital Site

Royal Edinburgh Hospital Site

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Business Continuity Planning
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Aim
To summarise arrangements for business continuity planning for services based within University of Edinburgh buildings on the WGH/REH campus.

Introduction
A business continuity plan is one that contains information and describes procedures intended to help an organisation survive threats to business activities, make best use of resources under pressure, and minimise loses and recovery time.

A business continuity plan for the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine’s activities on the WGH/REH campus will be prepared by December 2014 and will then be available on the CMVM WGH/REH webpage.

Sections of the Plan, taken individually or together, are intended to provide a framework for a corporate response by the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine to a threat affecting operations on the WGH/REH campus.

Business continuity plans have also been prepared for some individual operational elements of the College’s activities on WGH/REH campus and are available locally.

Business Continuity Plan: The College’s Plan is comprised of twenty Sections, as follows:

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Threat Assessment

Threats identified by contingency planners for the WGH/REH campus range from those with the potential to cause relatively minor temporary inconvenience to a few services, to those that would cause a severe and potentially lasting impact on the ability of the whole College, and its constituent teaching and research components on the WGH/REH campus, to maintain business continuity.

Threats may arise from events that can reasonably be anticipated (e.g. industrial action), or are often unanticipated (e.g. severe weather), both of which may cause disruption to the College’s capacity to deliver services in the usual manner.

Threats considered in detail within the Plan are as follows:

- Fire
- gas leak
- explosion
- flood and water leaks
- chemical leaks and spillages
- injuries to staff, students or visitors
- illness affecting staff or students
- damage to the buildings or equipment
- disruption to utilities
- interruption to the supply chain
- industrial action
- vandalism and criminal damage
- acts or threats of terrorism
- severe weather
- a requirement to provide mutual aid to the Western General Hospital and/or the Royal Edinburgh Hospital
- collateral or proximity impact affecting areas within and around WGH/REH
- Loss or damage to arts collections displayed within University buildings and local areas on the WGH/REH campus.
Where these have been prepared, business continuity plans for individual operational elements of the College’s activities on the WGH/REH campus conform to the structure shown above.

**Critical Activities and Priorities**

Activities carried out on the WGH/REH campus are diverse, including teaching and research, but include also activities carried out by workers not employed by the University, including some from NHS Lothian.

The business continuity plan for the WGH/REH campus assigns varying levels of priority to each class of activity in order that increasing pressure on finite resources can be managed by gradually suspending activities of lower priority in order to preserve those that are more critical.

**Critical Activities**

These are described as activities that must be carried out in order for the College to continue to deliver core services, and are identified by a process of business impact analysis that has been led by representatives of senior management. Critical activities may be ongoing or time-sensitive, and priority is not necessarily dependent on which of these is most applicable, nor is prioritisation unchangeable over time.

**Prioritisation**

A CMVM Crisis Management Team, having been formed, will be invited to endorse the proposition set out in this Section that five categories of activities be considered in the context of defining critical activities and allocating priorities:

- **Category One**: Activities capable of being suspended with relatively little difficulty, and which are capable of being resumed with relatively equal ease
- **Category Two**: Activities that could be displaced or delivered in innovative ways (e.g. delivery of lectures using on-line methodologies as an alternative to using lecture theatres on-site, or if it became difficult to do so e.g. due to prolonged severe weather or transport difficulties) or unwise e.g. due to pandemic influenza for students and lecturers to assemble conventionally
- **Category Three**: Activities that could be suspended, even with a fair degree of difficulty, and which could take a considerable time to reactivate, but where suspension and reactivation would not have serious health and safety implications
- **Category Four**: Activities that would be extremely difficult to suspend and reactivate due to the amount of effort expended setting up the activity in the first place and the extreme difficulty that would be entailed in reproducing the work, or which represent irreplaceable archives of data or biological material
- **Category Five**: Activities that could not be suspended and reactivated without some degree of risk, either in the context of health and safety implications or the College’s ability to recover from the interruption or loss.

Being aware of the full range of activities and services being delivered from the WGH/REH sites, and taking into account the actual circumstances associated with an actual emergency, the CMVM Crisis Management Team will either confirm or perhaps modify the priority levels listed above and publish the revised list as an amendment to the Plan.
It will be for the CMVM Crisis Management Team to assess the need to implement phased discontinuation of activities in order to preserve diminishing resources or redirect effort to maintenance of higher priority activities.

Contingency plans prepared by each building or local area will set out activities within their respective laboratory areas and offices in accordance with the above scheme of prioritisation, and corresponding levels of crisis management teams operating at operational levels within the campus will be prepared to commence phased discontinuation of activities upon direction from the CMVM Crisis Management Team.

CMVM Crisis Management Team
In broad terms, the CMVM Crisis Management Team has the function of:

- agreeing an overall management strategy for business continuity
- decision-making in response to an evolving scenario
- allocation of resources and reprioritisation of effort
- organisation and authorisation of extraordinary procurement and finance arrangements
- maintaining at least the minimum essential standards for health and safety throughout period of crisis
- media coordination, public information and welfare strategies
- pre-planning a recovery phase strategy

Sub-Groups
It is possible that some matters may begin to dominate business for the CMVM Crisis Management Team such that it becomes desirable to form various task-orientated sub-groups (e.g. procurement and finance, media coordination, information etc.), in which case one or more sub-group chairpersons will be appointed and the sub-groups will meet separately from the CMVM Crisis Management Team. Sub-group chairpersons will attend CMVM Crisis Management Team meetings to represent the work of their respective sub-groups, and to convey back to their sub-groups additional tasks allocated by the strategic-level management team.

Last reviewed/updated: January 2015