

**Written Evidence Submitted by
Professor Stephen Powis,
National Medical Director for NHS England and NHS Improvement
(C190043)**

Dear Mr Clark,

Thank you for your letter following my recent appearance at the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee. I apologise for the delay in this letter.

The NHS plans for responding to a range of incidents and emergencies which could affect health or patient care. In recent years they have ranged from terrorist attacks, extreme weather conditions, major transport incidents, industrial action and infectious diseases outbreaks such as Ebola.

Every year local commissioners and providers of NHS funded care complete an Emergency Preparedness Resilience and Response (EPRR) annual assurance process. This process has four main stages:

1. Organisational self-assessment against NHS Core Standards for EPRR
2. Local Health Resilience Partnership (LHRP) confirm and challenge
3. Regional EPRR confirm and challenge
4. National EPRR confirm and challenge

Once organisations have completed this assurance process, the National EPRR team reports to our Board. The report is then shared as an annual EPRR statement with the Department of Health and Social Care. In addition to annual assurance we also conduct system-wide, focused reviews into specific aspects of the EPRR programme to stress test the response to major incidents.

The Government and the Department of Health and Social Care also identify cross-cutting risks and periodically stress test the cross Government and Public Health response, including to a pandemic.

Exercise Cygnus was one such initiative, and while it is for the Department of Health and Social Care to advise you on publication of the results, we would be fully supportive of them being published.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Powis', with a stylized, cursive script.

**Professor Stephen Powis
National Medical Director
NHS England and NHS Improvement**

(17 June 2020)