



Public Health
England

For attention of all GPs in the Airedale Wharfedale and Craven,
Harrogate Rural and District, Hambleton Richmond and Whitby and
Vale of York CCG areas (Copies to A&E and Microbiology depts)

Protecting and improving the nation's health

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Tuesday 10th January 2017

RE: AVIAN INFLUENZA H5N8

Dear Colleague,

You may have heard about a confirmed outbreak of Avian Influenza A/H5N8 in poultry in Kirby Malham. This incident was declared on 6th January 2017 by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

Avian influenza is primarily a disease of birds and infection in people is rare even in people who are directly exposed to the virus. There are many different subtypes of the avian influenza virus and each differs in its ability to cause disease in birds and people. Virus subtype A/H5N8 is very low risk to humans and no human cases have been reported during the recent outbreaks in poultry and wild birds.

If you have a patient who has been advised to attend as a result of exposure to confirmed Avian Influenza H5N8 please contact the Yorkshire and Humber Health Protection Team on 01904 687100 who will be able to give you further advice about patient management. All those associated with the incident and who might have been at risk of exposure to the virus are being offered appropriate antiviral medicine. We will try to contact all GPs directly in advance of this type of occurrence but in case this has not been possible please pay particular attention to anyone who may have been involved in the response to the outbreak/incident (e.g. catching, culling, etc. on an infected premises).

Members of the public are encouraged to report dead wild waterfowl (swans, geese or ducks) or gulls, or five or more dead wild birds of other species in the same location, to the Defra helpline on 03459 335577.

If you wish to clarify any issues please contact the HPT on the above number. Information about avian influenza is available on the PHE section of www.gov.uk and the Defra website www.defra.gov.uk. Algorithms which provide guidance for this type of event are available on the Public Health England at the following page:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/avian-influenza-guidance-data-and-analysis>

Yours sincerely

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