

# MHRA update on novel coronavirus (COVID-19)

Information for the public on the outbreak of novel coronavirus including the current situation in the UK and information about the virus and coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is available [here](#).

We are working closely with the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) and other healthcare partners, contributing to the essential work needed to protect public health in the UK.

We are prioritising work to support and authorise the development of vaccines, clinical trials of new medicines, and helping to manage the supply of medicines and other healthcare products. We also provide information to patients, manufacturers and healthcare professionals through our established information channels and alert systems.

## **NIBSC**

The MHRA includes the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC), which plays a major role in assuring the quality of biological medicines, worldwide. NIBSC is drawing on its expertise gained through work on previous virus outbreaks such as Zika, Ebola and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), to support the public health response. NIBSC is developing biological reference materials which are needed to support a quick and reliable diagnosis of infection, evaluate vaccines and the effectiveness of treatments, all of which will assist public health research.

NIBSC works closely with the World Health Organization (WHO) and Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI); a global partnership that facilitates the development of vaccines for emerging viruses. NIBSC acts as an implementing partner to produce reference material which supports these activities. Working with CEPI and other partners will ensure the rapid availability of biological materials needed to contribute towards global response efforts to COVID-19.

## **Clinical trials**

We authorise and inspect the clinical trials of new medicines in the UK. We are on standby to ensure that applications relating to COVID-19 are dealt with swiftly and we can guide you through the application process. If you would like further guidance or advice, we would be happy to discuss this with you at the earliest opportunity. Please contact us by emailing [clintrialhelpline@mhra.gov.uk](mailto:clintrialhelpline@mhra.gov.uk).