



## Legionnaires bug pool stays closed

A PUBLIC swimming pool at the centre of a Legionnaires' disease outbreak will remain closed today.

Hamilton Water Palace in South Lanarkshire was shut yesterday after a man was admitted to hospital suffering from the potentially fatal bug.

His condition was said to be "stable and improving" last night.

An investigation to identify the possible sources of his infection is being carried by NHS Lanarkshire's Public Health Department, environmental health officials from South Lanarkshire Council, the Health and Safety Executive, and Health Protection Scotland.

People who are concerned they may have the disease are being advised to contact their GP or phone NHS 24.

Health officials said the wet facility at Hamilton Water Palace, including the swimming pool, its flumes and sauna facility, was closed yesterday as a precautionary measure following testing of its handwashing and shower facilities.

South Lanarkshire Council said it was investigating a problem with the swimming pool pump system.

A spokeswoman said: "The council's technical and resources looked at the system and reported a water pressure problem.

"When the water goes into the system the temperature must be 60 degrees going in and 50 degrees coming out. These temperatures were not being reached.

"All areas of the facility will remain closed while a new pump is installed."

Dr John Logan, NHS Lanarkshire's consultant in public health, said: "Legionnaires' disease is caused by the bacterium legionella and usually has an incubation period of two to 10 days.

"It normally presents with flu-like symptoms, followed by pneumonia, and sometimes with diarrhoea and confusion.

"Patients usually respond well to treatment with certain common antibiotics."

Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia. The bacteria which causes it can be found in air-conditioning systems, cooling towers, spas and Jacuzzi baths.

However, illness only occurs when water containing the bacteria becomes airborne water droplets.

It is not passed from person to person. It can be fatal, especially in those who are particularly vulnerable, such as the elderly.

9:47am Wednesday 13th February 2008

*By Caroline Wilson*

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