



The Pandemic Planner

A Monthly Newsletter for Health Care Professionals

Emergency Management Unit, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

August 2006

We are pleased to release the first issue of the *Pandemic Planner* – the Emergency Management Unit’s (EMU) monthly newsletter for health care professionals and organizations involved with pandemic planning. Each month, the newsletter will provide information and updates on pandemic planning, preparedness and related initiatives locally, provincially and internationally. In addition to being issued electronically, the *Pandemic Planner* will be posted on the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care’s web site at: www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/program/pubhealth/flu/panflu/panflu_mn.html. We appreciate hearing your comments and suggestions for the newsletter. Please provide feedback through the Ministry’s web site at the web address above.

~ Allison J. Stuart, Director, Emergency Management Unit

What’s New

Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic:

Over the past year, over 400 stakeholders from the health care sector, government and labour dedicated their time, effort and expertise to update of Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic (OHPIP). The Ministry is finalizing the 2006 iteration of the plan.

We would like to thank all the members of the OHPIP Steering Committee, the sub-committees and working groups, for their dedication, commitment and efforts on this important planning initiative.

The EMU will be sending out notices to stakeholders when the plan is released. We also encourage everyone to watch the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care’s web site for the posting of this important plan at:

www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/emu/pan_flu/pan_flu_plan.html

Emergency Management and Preparedness Institute:

The EMU, in partnership with the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO), Centre for Professional Nursing Excellence, will be hosting the first Emergency Management and Preparedness Institute. This week long session starts on September 17th and runs through to September 22nd, 2006.

Details on the Emergency Management and Preparedness Institute, including registration, can be found on the RNAO’s web site at:

www.rnao.org/

Operational Plan: Outbreak of Avian Influenza:

The EMU has also been actively engaged in the planning and monitoring for the possible entry of the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza (AI) virus into wild birds and domestic poultry populations in Ontario. While AI is not the same as a human influenza pandemic, it is important that we be prepared for the potential economic and health impacts of an AI outbreak.

The EMU has led the developed of an operating plan to be used to monitor, protect and treat the impact of AI on poultry farm workers and others who may be at risk. The document will outline the roles and responsibilities of provincial and federal agencies, and includes contact lists, check lists and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) information.

This operating plan had been distributed to key stakeholders for review and feedback.

Useful Web Resources

<http://www.fgiworld.com/eng/default.asp> - FGIworld provides consulting services on workplace health and well being. The firm has developed information on pandemic planning for employees and business.

<http://www.conferenceboard.ca> – The Conference Board of Canada issued a report “A State of Unpreparedness: Canada’s Organizations’ Readiness for a Pandemic”. To access the report, sign in through the e-library section of the web site.

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cd/cd-panflu-plan.shtml> - New York City’s updated Influenza Pandemic Plan.

Information, Communications & Enhancements:

In the last few months, the EMU has developed and enhanced key sections of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care's web site relating to emergency and pandemic planning and preparedness.

Improvements and new features include:

- Information for First Responders
- Information for Faith Groups
- Information for Employers and Business
- Health care worker resources and workplace tool kits
- Infection Control Tool Kits
- Information on Avian Influenza and other infectious diseases

Visit the new and improved web sections for more details at:

www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/program/pubhealth/flu/panflu/panflu_mn.html;

www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/program/emu/emu_mn.html;

or

www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/emu/emu_mn.html

Please take the time to visit the web site periodically for new information and updates related to pandemic planning and preparedness.

Important Dates – August to September 2006:

- **August 24 – 25, 2006** – Great Lakes Border Health Initiative: Pathways and Partnerships in Cross-Border Health. Dearborn, Michigan. http://www.michigan.gov/mdch/0,1607,7-132-2945_5104_5279_40279---,00.html
- **September 17-22, 2006** - Emergency Management and Preparedness Institute. Hockley Highland Resort and Conference Centre, Orangeville Ontario. <http://www.rnao.org/>

National Activities and Initiatives

2006 Wild Bird Survey

The Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre is undertaking the 2006 nation-wide survey for Avian Influenza in wild birds. Information about The Survey will be done in most parts of Canada, and includes testing of healthy live and dead wild birds. The species of most interest are birds that normally live in wetlands or other aquatic habitats. For more information on the Survey visit: <http://wildlife1.usask.ca/en/aiv/index.php>

The Great Lakes Border Health Initiative

The EMU, representing the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, is the provincial partner on the Great Lakes Border Health Initiative (GLBHI). This project is focussed on improving early warning infectious disease surveillance at international borders. The jurisdictions involved are: New York State, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Ontario and most recently Ohio.

GLBHI initially started out as the Michigan-Ontario Border Health Initiative in early 2004. Experts in public health, laboratories, infection control, emergency management, planning, legal and communications are working together to make progress on this initiative.