



Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic

Executive Summary

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The Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic (OHPIP) is an evergreen document that will continue to be improved and updated with additional detail and information in the months and years to come. Regular updates on changes and revisions will be announced and posted on the ministry's website at www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic. We encourage you to check the website regularly for these updates.

Enhancements and Revisions to OHPIP 2006

The structure of the OHPIP has been re-organized and streamlined in an effort to make the plan more user-friendly and accessible. The plan is now structured in the following three parts:

- I The Context for Planning for an Influenza Pandemic
- II System-Wide Issues, Activities and Tools
- III Setting-Specific Issues, Activities and Tools

In addition, the appendices from the 2005 version have either been merged into an existing chapter or put in a separate chapter after the chapter where they are discussed (e.g., Chapter 5: Surveillance, Chapter 5A Surveillance Tools). The goal is to make the plan more user-friendly by keeping all information on a specific topic in the same part of the plan. Each chapter concludes with key issues still to be addressed.

Specific Enhancements and Revisions to the plan include:

1. The addition of Chapter #4 *Resources*: a list of resources referred to throughout the plan as well as additional resources listed by topic.
2. The insertion of influenza pandemic surveillance reporting forms for institutions in Chapter #5A: *Surveillance Tools*.
3. A description of specific Public Health Measures that may be implemented during an influenza pandemic by each phase of the pandemic in Chapter #6.
4. Revisions to the Occupational Health and Safety section (previously an appendix to the 2005 OHPIP) to form part of Chapter #7: *Infection Prevention and Control and Occupational Health and Safety*. This section describes the hierarchy of controls that should be implemented in all health care settings.

Infection control principles outlined in OHPIP 2005 remain unchanged for this chapter. In terms of Personal Protective Equipment, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is currently developing a provincial position. Chapter #7 will be updated when that work is complete.

5. Chapter #8 – *Optimizing Deployment of the Health Workforce* – describes an approach to competency-based health human resources during an influenza pandemic. It also contains information for volunteers, individual health care professionals, employers and regulatory colleges on how best to assess the need for additional health human resources as well as strategies to consider in

addressing that need. Chapter #6A contains tools that can be used to help health care providers and organizations assess the competencies required for influenza care.

6. In Chapter #9 – Antivirals and Vaccine - priority groups for access to antivirals have been removed as the government has committed to increasing the provincial stockpile to treat 25% of the population (which, according to the World Health Organization, will be enough to treat anyone who needs antivirals). A policy regarding the use of antivirals for prophylaxis is being discussed nationally and OHPIP will be updated when the national policy is developed.

Priority groups for vaccines have been removed from the plan. Vaccines will initially be available in limited amounts and the priority groups are currently being reviewed to ensure they include all critical infrastructure sectors.

7. OHPIP 2006 includes a community strategy for the assessment and treatment of patients with influenza-like-illness during a pandemic and includes guidelines for the set-up and staffing of Influenza Assessment, Treatment and Referral Centres at the local level. These Flu Centres will be the primary distribution point for antivirals for treatment. The strategy is outlined in Chapter #11.
8. A Communications Toolkit for healthcare organizations has been inserted as a tool in Chapter #12A.
9. Laboratory guidelines (Chapter #14) have been further enhanced with additional detail regarding tests which will continue to be offered and those that will be curtailed in a pandemic.

10. Chapter #17 -- Acute Care Services – now includes a section on Critical Care Unit Admission/Triage/Discharge criteria as well as guidelines for the use of antibiotics to treat complications related to influenza.
11. Chapter #18 -- Paediatric Services -- is new and provides an overview of the issues related to the assessment and treatment of children in a pandemic. It will be supplemented with additional material on an ongoing basis.
12. Chapter #19 -- Long-Term Care Homes – is new and includes guidelines to assist long-term care homes in developing pandemic plans for outbreaks within the home. The Guidelines were released in December 2005 and are available as a standalone document.
13. A First Nations chapter (#20) is currently in development and should be finalized by December 2006.

The diagram in Figure 1 is a summary of the activities described in detail in the OHPIP by each of the WHO Pandemic Periods.

If you have any questions about the 2006 OHPIP, or related pandemic planning initiatives, you can contact the ministry's Emergency Management Unit through the Healthcare Provider Hotline at 1-866-212-2272 (available Monday-Friday from 8:30am – 5:00pm), or you can send an email to emergencymanagement@moh.gov.on.ca.

Figure 1: Summary of Activities by WHO Pandemic Periods

