



Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic 2006

About Influenza (Seasonal and Pandemic)

- Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by a group of viruses:
 - Influenza A;
 - Influenza B; and
 - Influenza C (type C rarely affects human health)
- Common symptoms of influenza may include: fever, headache, aches and pains, fatigue and weakness, stuffy nose, sneezing, sore throat, cough, and nausea
 - In addition to the above, children may have vomiting and diarrhea
 - Elderly individuals may not show the usual range of symptoms; extreme malaise, fever and a mild cough may be evident
- The difference between the seasonal flu and influenza pandemic:
 - Seasonal:
 - Most seasonal influenza (flu) are caused by types A and B and can cause mild to severe illness. The flu season typically runs from October to April (may start earlier or end later each year)
 - Pandemic:
 - An influenza pandemic is a large and severe world-wide epidemic of the human influenza virus. It spreads easily and rapidly through many countries and affects a large percentage of the population
- Only influenza A viruses are associated with pandemics. Influenza pandemics arise when all four of the following occur:
 - A novel (new) influenza A virus emerges
 - The new virus can spread efficiently from human to human
 - The new virus causes serious illness and death
 - The population has little or no immunity to the new virus

Why Plan for an Influenza Pandemic?

Global Context:

- Although no one can predict when the next influenza pandemic will hit, public health experts, officials, and organizations - including the World Health Organization (WHO) - have warned that a global influenza pandemic is overdue.
- Asia, Africa and Europe are currently dealing with highly pathogenic H5N1 virus in domestic poultry and wild birds. It is possible that the current highly pathogenic H5N1 virus could mutate resulting in sustained human-to-human transmission.
- Because of farming practices and close contact between animals and humans, these potential events are more likely to occur first in China or Southeast Asia.

Ontario:

- In the case of an influenza pandemic, appropriate pandemic planning can reduce:
 - the number of people infected (i.e., the extent of the outbreak),
 - the amount of illness, the number of deaths, and
 - the amount of socio-economic disruption.
- Every jurisdiction must be prepared to mobilize resources quickly and effectively to limit the impact of an influenza pandemic.

Pandemic Planning in Ontario

- Pandemic planning in Ontario is an evergreen process. Each year, the provincial plan continues to be improved and updated.

2004:

- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care developed and released the first iteration of the influenza pandemic plan
- Working with 200 stakeholders in the health care sector, labour representatives and regulatory bodies, this first plan focused on context setting and roles and responsibilities

2005:

- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care released the second iteration of the pandemic plan in June 2005
- Working with over 300 stakeholders, the influenza pandemic plan built on the 2004 plan, and expanded to include operational/institutional direction. It was also re-organized and streamlined to assist the health care sector in undertaking pandemic planning activities

2006:

- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care release the third iteration of the pandemic plan – Ontario Health Plan for and Influenza Pandemic (OHPIP) in September 2006
- Working collaboratively with over 400 stakeholders, the 2006 plan focuses on community response and planning and includes a number of enhancements and tools to support local activities

Influenza Pandemic Planning

- Context for the Ontario's Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic (OHPIP) and Health Care Sector Planning:
 - Activities correspond to the WHO pandemic phases (Inter-pandemic, Pandemic Alert and Pandemic)
 - Aligned with direction in Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan (will be reviewed against updated Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan when released)
 - Provides detail on federal, provincial and local roles/responsibilities and commitments
 - Outlines health emergency management approach (e.g. use of Incident Management System, role of Provincial Infectious Disease Advisory Committee and coordination with EMO/other levels of government)
 - Includes an ethical framework for decision-making
 - Focuses on the health care system's preparedness and readiness, including stocking supplies and equipment
 - Supports and guides community response and includes a number of tools designed to undertake effective local planning and preparedness.
 - Continues to be updated and improved with emerging clinical, epidemiological, and operational information.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Each iteration of the OHPIP includes details on roles and responsibilities which are key to effective planning measures:
 - Federal Government
 - Vaccine/antiviral procurement and supply to provinces/territories
 - International liaison with World Health Organization (WHO) and other national agencies (e.g. US Centers for Disease Control)
 - Focus on coordination and consistency across the country
 - Provincial Government
 - Establishment of provincial influenza plan
 - Consults Ontario's health stakeholders and works collaboratively to develop and update the plan
 - Ensures it is aligned with the Canadian Influenza Pandemic Plan
 - Provide overall direction and advice on local preparedness and response activities for an influenza pandemic (no direct statutory authority to require compliance)
 - OHPIP reflects health response; other sectors/ministries develop own annexes
 - Local Government
 - Led by local public health units, establishes local influenza pandemic contingency plans in alignment with the OHPIP
 - Provides input, advice and required surveillance data to provincial health authorities

2006 OHPIP

The goals of the OHPIP are:

- Minimize serious illness and overall deaths
- Minimize societal disruption in Ontario

The strategic approach of the OHPIP is:

- Be ready –comprehensive planning
- Be watchful –active screening and monitoring
- Be decisive – act quickly and effectively
- Be transparent – communicate

The 2006 OHPIP is organized into three parts which reflect and incorporate the goals and the approach:

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

Part I: The Context for Planning for an Influenza Pandemic

- This section provides basic information about influenza and pandemics and summarizes the impact that an influenza pandemic would have on Ontario in terms of the number of people who will become ill and need some form of health care
- It outlines the context, goals, purpose and objectives of influenza pandemic planning and readiness in Ontario and describes how to use the 2006 OHPIP
- This section is key to understanding the importance of planning and the relationships between federal, provincial and local levels, as well as defining clear roles and responsibilities
- For example:
 - The Federal government has the responsibility of vaccine procurement and supply, and will take the lead role in establishing national policy of prophylaxis (which will inform a provincial policy)
 - Ontario will identify clusters of respiratory infection. In addition to routine influenza surveillance, Ontario has an established active screening and surveillance program – an early warning system – that will identify individuals with febrile respiratory illness (FRI) – including influenza like illness (ILI)
 - Local public health units are responsible for developing local contingency plans and undertaking active surveillance activities

Part II: System-Wide Issues, Activities and Tools

- The first part of this section focuses on monitoring for an influenza pandemic outbreak, as well as on-going surveillance requirements, managing the spread of influenza, infection prevention and control (including occupational health and safety), and workforce capacity needs
 - **Surveillance -- Detecting and Monitoring the Spread of Influenza** – this is key to effective planning. This section describes the surveillance activities in place now to monitor influenza in Ontario and detect a pandemic virus strain, as well as those that will be added, enhanced or curtailed during a pandemic
 - **Public Health Measures -- Managing the Spread of Influenza:** describing the public health measures that Ontario may use during a pandemic, and the factors that will determine which measures are used
 - **Infection Prevention and Control and Occupational Health and Safety:** setting out the range of steps that the public, health care organizations and health care providers can take to prevent the spread of influenza and to protect the health workforce (hand hygiene, cough and sneeze etiquette, personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, eye protection, facial protection). NOTE: this chapter will be updated when a provincial policy on PPE (i.e., masks) is complete
 - **Optimizing Deployment of the Health Workforce:** describing a competency-based approach to health human resources planning for a pandemic, and the steps that planners, employers and health care providers can take to make the most effective use of knowledge and skills during an influenza pandemic

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Part II: System-Wide Issues, Activities and Tools Con't

- Part II also identifies, describes and outlines critical activities and tools that are required in an influenza pandemic, including:
 - **Antivirals and Vaccines:** setting out the policies for antiviral and vaccine supply, distribution and use, and describes the steps Ontario will take to acquire and distribute antivirals and vaccine during a pandemic, including stocking enough antivirals to treat 25% of Ontario's population (as recommended by the WHO) by 2007-08. Currently, Ontario has enough antivirals to treat 10% of the province's population
 - **Equipment and Supplies:** describing the steps that Ontario and health care organizations will take to ensure an adequate, secure supply of equipment and supplies during a pandemic. Currently, the province has resources in place to stock a four-week supply of equipment, such as gloves, masks and gowns
 - **Influenza Assessment, Treatment and Referral Centres:** describing temporary Flu Centres that Ontario will establish, if required, during a pandemic to give the public easy one-stop access to assessment, information, treatment and referral services. The Flu Centres will also help reduce the demands on primary care providers and acute care hospitals, allowing them to focus on meeting the needs of people who need that level of care
 - **Communications:** describing the steps that the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care will use to communicate with the public, health care workers and other stakeholders during an influenza pandemic

Part III: Setting-Specific Issues, Activities and Tools

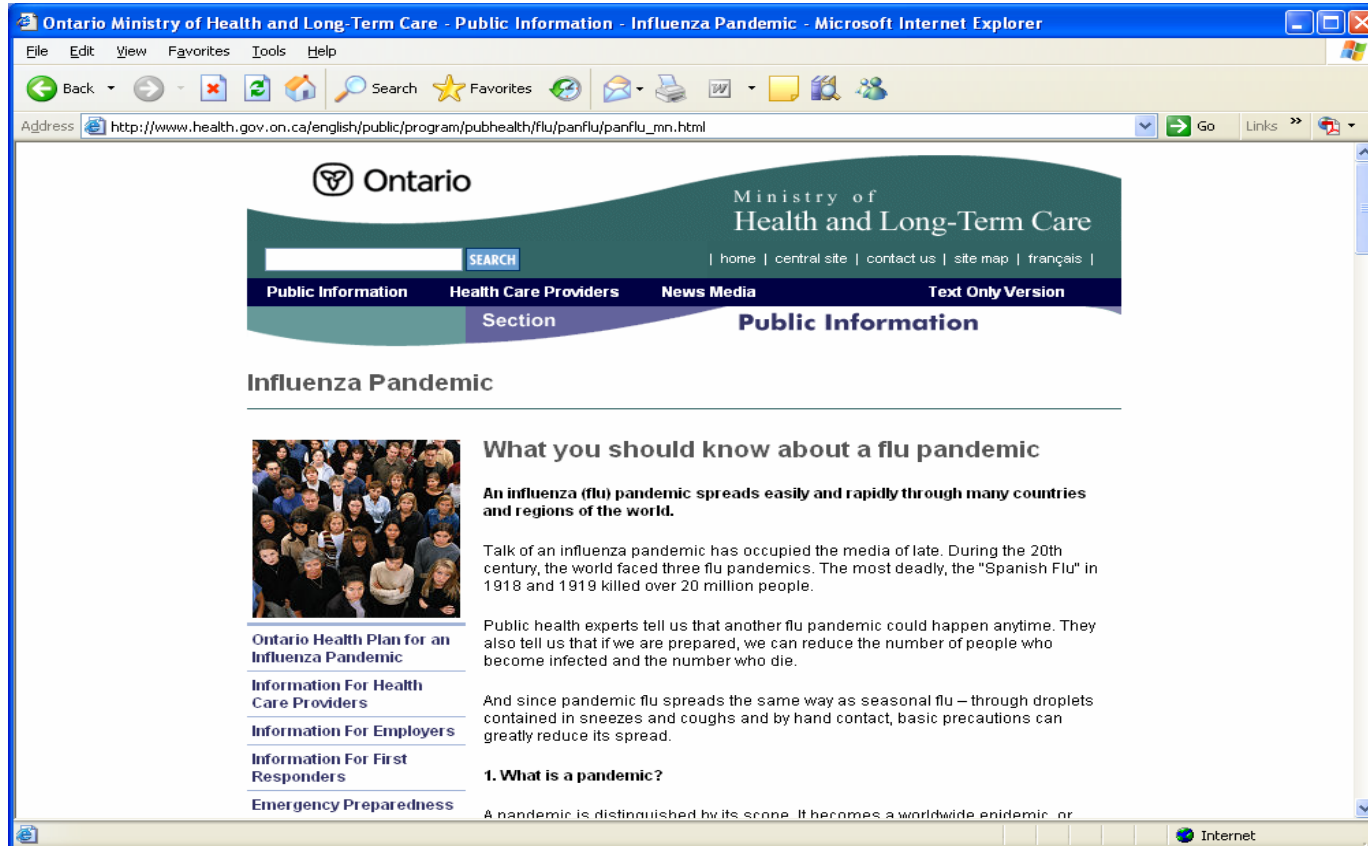
- The section of the plan sets out actions, guidelines and activities for specific health care facilities such as public health units (the influenza pandemic planning leads in communities), laboratories, and acute care setting.
 - **Public Health Services:** setting out the steps the public health system will take to manage the demand for services during an influenza pandemic
 - **Laboratory Services:** describing how the laboratory system will function during a pandemic, including tests that will be provided and those that may be curtailed or reduced
 - **Community Health Services:** providing preliminary information on community health services during a pandemic; to be developed
 - **Acute Care Services:** setting out approaches that acute care hospitals can use to manage their resources during a pandemic, including determining who will be admitted to critical care
 - **Paediatric Services:** providing preliminary information on the impact of pandemic on health services for children; to be developed
 - **Long-Term Care Homes:** setting out guidelines for long-term care homes designed to protect residents and staff during a pandemic, and continue to provide high quality care

On-going Planning

- The OHPIP is a living document. It is be reviewed annually (or more often if required) and revised to reflect current knowledge and best practices.
- Currently the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is working to develop:
 - A First Nations chapter that would describe the operational roles and responsibilities among the Ontario Ministry of Health; First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, Health Canada; and First Nations Communities in responding to an influenza pandemic
 - A chapter on the pre-hospital sector and will include plans for land and air ambulance services
 - Further development of the Community Health Services chapter to guide community health facilities and services in planning for an effective response to pandemic
 - Provincial policy on personal protective equipment (i.e., masks)
 - Provincial policy on prophylaxis and priority groups (which will be based on a national policy)

Other Related Pandemic Planning Initiatives

Information and Communication Improvements – www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care website. The address bar shows the URL: http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/program/pubhealth/flu/panflu/panflu_mn.html. The website header includes the Ontario logo and the text "Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care". Below the header is a search bar and navigation links for "home", "central site", "contact us", "site map", and "français". A dark blue navigation bar contains the following items: "Public Information", "Health Care Providers", "News Media", and "Text Only Version". Below this bar, the "Public Information" section is highlighted, and the word "Section" is visible. The main content area is titled "Influenza Pandemic". On the left side, there is a photograph of a diverse group of people. To the right of the photo, the heading "What you should know about a flu pandemic" is followed by a sub-heading "An influenza (flu) pandemic spreads easily and rapidly through many countries and regions of the world." Below this, there are two paragraphs of text. The first paragraph discusses the historical context of flu pandemics, mentioning the "Spanish Flu" of 1918 and 1919. The second paragraph states that public health experts believe another flu pandemic could occur at any time and that preparedness can reduce the number of infections and deaths. Below the text, there is a list of links: "Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic", "Information For Health Care Providers", "Information For Employers", "Information For First Responders", and "Emergency Preparedness". The bottom of the browser window shows the "Internet" icon in the taskbar.

Other Related Pandemic Planning Initiatives – Con't

Information and Communication Improvements – the Pandemic Planner A monthly newsletter for health care providers



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, preparations 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/about/prepare/pandemic/planner/planner.asp. 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. Grant, 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 Ontario's Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic (OHPID). The Ministry is finalizing the 2006 iteration of the plan.

We would like to thank all the members of the OHPID 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/about/prepare/pandemic/planner/planner.asp.

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 (HP) 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 development of an operating plan to be used to monitor, prevent and limit 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 include contact lists, check lists and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) information.

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

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 institute 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/

Useful Web Resources

<http://www.fgibrazil.com/whatsnew/fgi.html> - FGIworld provides consulting services on workplace health and well-being. The firm has developed information on pandemic planning for employees and business.

<http://www.cbc.ca/health/060824/cbce060824.html> - The Conference Board of Canada issued a report "A State of Unpreparedness: Canada's Organizational Readiness for a Pandemic". To access the report, click on the e-library section of the web site.


<http://www.nyc.gov/html/ohsp/html/about/ohsp.html> - New York City's updated Influenza Pandemic Plan.



Other Related Pandemic Planning Initiatives – Con't




Emergency infection control kits for licensed community physicians, midwives, Community Health Centres and Aboriginal Health Access Centres

HEALTH - Protection - EMO - Emergency/Preparedness



Emergency Infection Control Kit

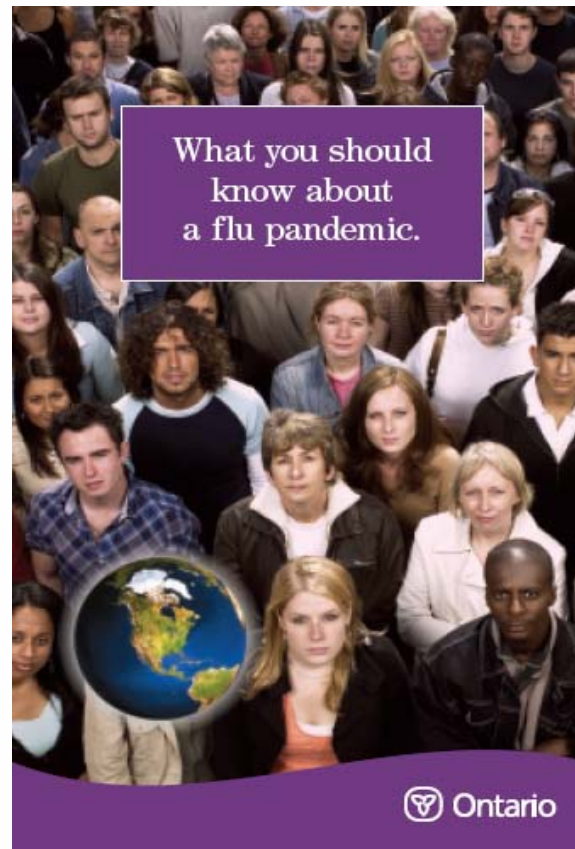
Inventory

Item	Details/Features	Intended Use	Photo
Emergency Infection Control Kit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand Sanitizer Procedure Masks Goggles/Goggles Eye Protection Disposable Gowns Surface Cleaner Disinfectant Wipes Documentation 	For health-care providers to protect themselves, staff, and patients from infection. For the first 30 days to 10 days of a respiratory illness outbreak of a large-scale infectious disease.	
Hand Sanitizer Quantity = 6 bottles of 250ml	Hand hygiene is the most important infection-control practice. Hand sanitizer with 60-95% alcohol is portable and is easily accessible in office settings.	Physicians/staff before and after seeing a patient, before touching face, after removing PPE. Patients entering waiting room.	
Eye drop procedure masks Quantity = 500	Fluid-resistant eye drop procedure masks provide the same level of droplet protection as surgical masks, along with increased ease of use.	Masks for physician and/or staff when providing care within one metre of patient. Masks for any patient with influenza-like illness (ILI) in the waiting room.	

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/about/prepare/long_term_health_prep/kit_03060804.pdf

Other Related Pandemic Planning Initiatives – Con't

Approximately 3.5 million copies of the public brochure *What you should know about a flu pandemic* have been distributed to physician offices, hospitals, public health units, drugstores and other stakeholders. It is also available for download in 24 languages on the ministry web site: www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic.



Pandemic planning (including the 2006 OHPIP):

web site: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic>

Emergency Management Unit:

Web site: http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/program/emu/emu_mn.html

email: emergency.management@moh.gov.on.ca

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care:

web site: www.health.gov.on.ca

Media Inquiries: (416) 314-6197 or 1(888) 414-4774

Public Inquiries: (416) 327-4327 or 1(800) 268-1153