Community Pandemic Planning Guide

(Expanded Version, December 2006)

A guide for communities and individuals to assist with community preparedness and planning for a possible human influenza pandemic.

Organisation's name and contact details:

Date that this checklist was competed:

Introduction

This guide is intended to assist your community to be able to meet its needs during a pandemic. The key to successful community emergency readiness is planning positively together. By making the time to read this guide you are taking a positive step toward ensuring that your community is as prepared as it can be.

What will this guide help me do?

Your community can begin to plan for an influenza pandemic now. Many of you have already started, with home and family plans. This guide is to help you work together as a community to address the issues that face all of us in a pandemic situation.

Why Plan for a Pandemic?

An outcome of effective community readiness and response to a pandemic will be a reduction in the demand on health, emergency response and social service organisations during an event, so that people in the most need are more likely to get assistance and support at critical times.

Planning is based around the following assumptions:

- There will be two or more "waves" of influenza infection 3-12 months apart
- Each "wave" will last up to 10 weeks
- Up to 40% of the population will be infected with influenza over the whole period of a pandemic
- Up to 2% of the those infected will die
- Medical and hospital facilities will be overwhelmed
- Planning will reduce the impact of the disease on the community.

Who needs to be involved in pandemic planning at the community level?

Health and emergency management planners agree that the key to effective responses to and recovery from emergency events such as pandemics relies on community members and groups assisting one-another – as the traditional response organisations will only be able to meet critical needs.

Much of the media coverage of potential consequences of an influenza pandemic may lead people to believe that they should stay away from work, avoid public places, public transport, and supermarkets and shops during a pandemic. Alongside this, health agencies predict that a maximum of around 40% of staff will be absent from workplaces during the peak of a pandemic. Community-level pandemic planning will enable community life to continue and to recover to regular daily routines as soon as possible after a pandemic.

An effective community-level response to a pandemic will rely on enough members of each community gaining an adequate understanding of the likely impact on the community and what will be required to get the community through the event as unscathed and ready to recover as possible.

> **Remember: A pandemic ready community is one in which community members and groups are actively working with other community members and groups, health providers, and other support agencies toward a common purpose.**

Who will help during a Pandemic

During a pandemic, everyone in the community will need to work together to help one another. There are some existing structures that can provide an organisational focus for planning – for example, an existing community-level Civil Defence organisation or Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) may form the basis of pandemic readiness and response in your community. However not all communities have these organisations, and where they exist, arrangements don't get right down to detailed community or neighbourhood readiness in all communities.

If a Civil Defence organisation or CERT is established at community level (ie, in your neighbourhood) it should be used as the basis for planning outlined in this guide. If they are not present, a new set of cooperative arrangements may need to be developed through the planning process provided for in this guide. In all cases a link to the Civil Defence Emergency Management office provided by your local council should be established through pandemic planning in your community.

What you and your family need to know about pandemic preparedness

As in all emergency situations, it is imperative that we all look after our loved ones and ourselves first. We can only get into planning for and actually helping others when we are confident in the knowledge that our families are as safe as they can be.

Although what we are planning for is a *human* influenza pandemic, not avian-flu, a "CHIRP" might help you to remember the key parts of pandemic preparedness:

C	**Cover your cough and sneeze** Use tissues, dispose of them properly and then wash your hands
H	**Have hygienic hands** Wash your hands often and well.
I	**Isolate yourself** Maintain personal space of 1.5 metres to minimise exposure to influenza virus from those who may be ill; stay home if you become ill.
R	**Reduce germs in your home and workplace** Regularly disinfect common surfaces such as phones, remote controls, door knobs, light switches, toys, etc.
P	**Prepare yourself and your family** Get vaccinated annually and create an emergency plan and kit for yourself and your family.

Information and guidance on personal, family and business preparedness can be found at:

> http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/pandemicinfluenza-faqs

How will your business continue to function during a Pandemic?

It is also important that we know that work places will be safe during a pandemic, to ensure that as many services to continue to be provided as possible. Those of us who have businesses or are part of the workforce need to plan to keep our businesses and jobs going throughout and after a pandemic.

Most businesses that have good infection control plans in place will not be liable to be closed by health officials during a pandemic. Activities that are very likely to be closed during a pandemic will be those where there large numbers of people would congregate in close proximity to each other for non-essential services (pubs, theatres, concerts, etc).

Links to guidance on personal and family and business preparedness can be found at::

> http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/pdf/businesschecklist.pdf
> http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/pandemicinfluenza-guidelines-forbusinesses

Community Preparedness Checklists

1. Get involved in making sure that your community understands the likely consequences of a pandemic:		

Completed	In Progress	Not started	Key Actions
			Work with partner organisations to call a "Pandemic Ready Community Meeting" Your notes and planning (who, where, when)

| | | | **Invite local health professionals to brief your group on the latest understanding of the potential health implications and health responses for your community**

Who to invite, contact details |

| | | | **Invite a Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) representative to explain likely wider impact of a pandemic on the community and responses that are planned**

Who to invite, contact details |

| | | | **Have the health and CDEM representatives explain how health and other responses will be coordinated during an event**

Notes: |

2. Identify and list the types of community members and their needs that official services may not be able to meet during a pandemic:

Key Actions – **Identify and document:**

Young families – especially solo parents

What are their needs?

Older people living alone

What are their needs?

People with disabilities

What are their needs?

People in isolated areas

What are their needs?

Members of less integrated social groups

What are their needs?

People whose caregiver is sick, and may be unable to care for them (eg. elderly living with a caregiver)

What are their needs?

People who extend on external help (eg. home support)

What are their needs?

Institutions that may struggle – rest homes, hostels

What are their needs?

Any other groups and their needs …

3. Gain an appreciation for how members of your community could safely deliver and receive support during a pandemic:		

Completed	In Progress	Not started	Key Actions – **Develop an adequate understanding of:**
			Social distancing in community settings

			Hand-washing and influenza hygiene in community settings

			Personal protective equipment in community (non-clinical) settings

			Isolation of infected members of the community

			Other issues (these may be raised by individuals, your health representatives, or CDEM representatives)

4. Plan for how members of your community will work together to meet its needs during a pandemic

4.1 Include and work with existing organisations with a local presence – if relevant:

Completed	In Progress	Not started	Key Actions – document your planning **Work with** (where relevant):
			Neighbourhood Support

Completed	In Progress	Not started	
			Schools

			Church groups

			Marae / Runanga

			Ethnic communities

			Local voluntary sector organisations

			Community service clubs

			Local CDEM wardens or office

			Local supermarket, garage, shops

			Others …

			4.2 **Plan how specific needs will be met:**
Completed	In Progress	Not started	Key Actions **Discuss, agree and document:**
			Manageable level of local coordination - break down to smaller sectors if necessary
			A co-ordinator (and alternates) for your community, group or neighbourhood.
			Use existing Civil Defence, Neighbourhood Support of other networks.
			Safe methods to keep in contact with community members – telephone trees, door-knocking roster, text messaging, email, etc.

			Facilities that may be used to deliver services:
			halls or commercial restaurants/cafes for food preparation
			information display sites - advice updates, status of services, etc.
			Processes to be able to use those facilities safely during a pandemic.

			Community groups / put together teams to:
			- collect food, medicines, ...
			- prepare relief parcels
			- provide basic nursing care
			- prepare food
			- deliver food + relief parcels

Completed	In Progress	Not started	Key Actions **Develop and document links with:**
4.3			**Develop and maintain links to service providers - to enable high-priority needs to be communicated, responded to or advice given:**
			Local health service providers
			Community Based Assessment Centres (where relevant – a Health service)
			Welfare / Social Service providers (both government and non-government)
			Community / Local CDEM Groups
			Neighbouring / related / other local "communities"