

DORVICT HOME AND HEALTH CARE SERVICES

PANDEMIC PLAN MANUAL

Revised Aug. 2009

Clearly, Ontario's business community is at risk when there is an outbreak of influenza or other related diseases. It is therefore critical that businesses have a Business Continuity Plan in place in the event of a catastrophic event, whether related to terrorism, power supply, natural disaster or a pandemic influenza outbreak.

Unlike natural disasters, where any disruption to business service provision is likely to be hardware related, disruption to business operations in the event of a pandemic will be mainly human-resource oriented. In view of this Dorvict has put together this Pandemic Plan to help us address both present and future emergency health situation.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) PANDEMIC PERIODS AND PHASES.

Phase 1

No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. An influenza virus subtype that has caused human infection may be present in animals. If present in animals, the risk* of human infection is considered **Interpandemic** to be low.

Phase 2

No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. However, a circulating animal influenza virus subtype poses a substantial risk of human disease.

Phase 3

Human infection(s) with a new subtype, but no human-to-human spread, or at most rare instances of spread to a close contact.

Phase 4

Small cluster(s) with limited human-to-human transmission but spread is highly localized, suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans. **Pandemic Alert Period****

Phase 5

Larger cluster(s) but human-to-human spread still localized, suggesting that the virus is becoming increasingly better adapted to humans, but may not yet be fully transmissible (substantial pandemic risk). **Pandemic Period**

Phase 6

Increased and sustained transmission in general population.
Postpandemic Period Return to interpandemic period.

Source: World Health Organization, 2005.

* The distinction between phase 1 and phase 2 is based on the risk of human infection or disease from circulating strains in animals.

** The distinction between phase 3, phase 4 and phase 5 is based on the risk of a pandemic.

WHO PHASE	CANADA PHASE	WHO/CANADA PHASE	DEFINITION
6	0	6.0	Outside Canada increased and sustained transmission in the general population has been observed. No cases have been detected in Canada
6	1	6.1	Single human case(s) with the pandemic virus detected in Canada. No cluster(s) identified in Canada
6	2	6.2	Localized or widespread pandemic activity observed in the Canadian population.

THE GOAL

The goals of influenza pandemic preparedness and response are:

First, to minimize the spread of the infection amongst Dorvict’s staff, client and the society at large; to minimize serious illness and overall deaths.

These goals will be realized through education, awareness and the coordinated efforts of management, office staff, front line staff, and our clients (organization’s served).

The objectives of the Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan for the Health Sector are:

1. To assist and facilitate appropriate planning and response at all corporate levels.

2. Developing a collaborative process that is practical, acceptable and applicable to stakeholders and that clearly identifies roles and responsibilities;
3. To provide a Plan that is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the incorporation of new developments and to ensure consistencies with best practices.

To help guide pandemic planning and response in Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada has developed a numbering system to reflect pandemic influenza activity in Canada:

- 0 indicates no activity in Canada
- 1 indicates low activity and low risk in Canada
- 2 indicates higher activity and risk in Canada.

The Canadian activity level number will be used with the WHO phase number to confirm the level of pandemic activity in Canada. **Dorvict would use the same indicators (no activity, low activity and higher activity).**

STAFF ABSENCES CAN BE EXPECTED FOR MANY REASONS

In our business the major concern for us will be staff absences that may happen due to:

- Personal illness/incapacity
- Employees may need to stay at home to care for ill family members
- People may feel safer at home (avoiding crowded public places)
- Others may need to stay at home to look after school-aged children (schools are likely to be closed).

IMPORTANT: YOU CAN ONLY UTILIZE PEOPLE WHO ARE HEALTHY, FREE OF THE DISEASE AND CAN MOBILIZE TO A NON-INFECTED AREA.

LEGAL ISSUE REGARDING STAFF ABSENCES

In fact, Bill 56, which amends the province's Emergency Management Act, also amended the Employment Standards Act, 2000 to provide for job protected leaves of absence for employees in urgent circumstances. It is important for Dorvict and her leadership team to respect this clause and work honestly with stakeholders in order to provide for continuity of service.

That is, an employee may be entitled to leave work where the provincial government declares an "emergency", which is broadly defined as:

“A situation or an impending situation that constitutes a danger of major proportions that could result in serious harm to persons or substantial damage to property and that is caused by the forces of nature, a disease or other health risk, an accident or an act whether intentional or otherwise;”.

In such circumstances, the government may authorize (but not require) any person to provide services for which they are qualified. Such persons are expressly protected from termination during this period (unless for reasons unrelated to their absence to provide such services).

During the emergency, employees may request a leave of absence but only for the following specific reasons:

1. Because they are the subject of an emergency order by the government to certain work;
2. Because they are the subject of an order by the government under the Health Protection and Promotion Act;
3. Because they are needed to provide care or assistance to defined relatives;
or
4. Because of some other reason later prescribed by regulation

Once the emergency is over, the right to a protected leave ceases unless the government passes a regulation specifically providing that the time for leave is being extended because of the effects of the emergency and because of one of the foregoing reasons.

The emergency is deemed terminated at the end of the 14th day following its declaration unless extended a further 14 days by order of the government. After this point, the legislature must vote on any further extension and this is limited to a further 28 days. The legislature may also disallow the claimed emergency.

Health Care Workers and those who care for the vulnerable persons within a home setting may be requested to remain on job site despite an epidemic outbreak.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

BE AWARE, BE INFORMED, KNOW ALL THE SPECIFIC INFORMATION AND APPROACH ABOUT THE SPECIFIC INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC!!!

- **Be ready** - establish comprehensive influenza pandemic contingency plans
- **Be watchful** - practice active screening and monitor emerging epidemiological and clinical information
- **Be decisive** - act quickly and effectively to manage the epidemic

- **Be transparent** - communicate with health care providers and Public Health department

ETHICAL FRAMEWORK

- **Open and Transparent:** decision-making process **MUST** be open to scrutiny and the basis for decisions explained.
- **Reasonable:** decisions should be based on evidence and be made by people who are credible and accountable
- **Inclusive:** decisions should be made with stakeholder views in mind and stakeholder should have opportunities to be engaged in process
- **Responsive:** decisions should be revisited and revised as new information emerges and stakeholder have opportunities to voice any concerns they have about decisions
- **Accountable:** mechanism should be established to ensure that ethical decision-making is sustained throughout the epidemic

This plan requires leadership and it requires that the whole organization follows the direction of the leadership in response to a pandemic plan. All employees working for Dorvict both in the office and on the field will be affected by this plan because the provision of health care services is our main business. Viruses do not respect borders, so serious planning must occur.

Given that an influenza pandemic is the public health event that is most likely to have a major national impact, a specific plan to address this national public health emergency will be curled from the information on the epidemic as stipulated and directed by the public Health Department.

Upon receipt of this guideline from the public health department, Dorvict will move to enforce the stipulation and make adjustments as it pertains to the health care sector.

Dorvict will develop her own pandemic plans that use the overall approach in the public health department Plan.

STRUCTURE OF THE PLAN

Under this framework, the types of preparedness and response activities needed for comprehensive pandemic planning can be summarized as follows:

Prevention: Once the epidemic is known, the first step is advocating prevention of the epidemic. These actions would include ensuring that all existing or known or unavoidable risks are contained. In conjunction with infection control recommendations (e.g. hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, coughing and sneezing in the tissue etc.). In most cases, vaccination is the primary means of most preventative actions. Therefore, if there is immunization and or vaccines Dorvict will encourage all staff to be vaccinated.

1. The Executive Director or designate will contact the Public Health Department for information and direction upon the discovery or knowledge of an epidemic or virus.
2. The Executive Director or designate will select office personnel's to be trained on the type of epidemic. These personnel's will be available in rotation for staff's questions and enquiries.

SPECIFIC ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/DESIGNATE

- Identify and prioritize key roles and services needed
- Set up a core team of staff to respond to the emergency, making decision of who can work from home
- Communicate with your employees so they understand pandemic illness and preventative measures
- Communicate with your employees steps your business is taking to prepare for the possibility of a pandemic
- Cross-train employees to perform essential functions to ensure resiliency
- Establish or expand policies and tools that enable employees to work from home with appropriate security and network access to applications
- Follow the guidelines as in The Pandemic Plan Manual

- Identify essential communication networks
- Setup Internal and External pandemic communication plans
- Back up essential business information

- Represent company on community emergence team/s

- Seeks legal counsel when necessary

- Access central inventory of all employee passwords for emergency purposes

SPECIFIC ROLES OF THE BRANCH MANAGER/DELEGATE

- Arrange with transportation company for mobility issues

- Verify the availability of supplies and equipments
- Identify and assign responsibilities to office staff
- Assumes signing authority for basic emergency needs
- Manage employee absenteeism
- Communicates with frontline staff
- Maintain communication with clients and stakeholders
- Liaise with Public Health Department and other allied health agencies for updates and direction
- Represent company on community emergence team/s
- Staff counselling
- Hire temporary and contract workers and take on volunteers

Each Branch Manager will make sure that each employee is called on the phone to inform them of the epidemic and ask related questions as developed by the Public Health Department. In addition to telephone calls, appropriate communication strategies with staff will be used (e.g. web-based, telephone/teleconference; automated information services, fax, mail).

The Branch Manager will make sure that a register is kept of those who may be at risk or those who might have been exposed to the virus. For such cases, the number of days for quarantine will be exercised and such individual will be requested to contact the Public Health department.

SPECIFIC ROLES OF OTHER AUXILLIARY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

- Contacting staff, scheduling and updating telephone numbers
 - Updating administrative staff contact list
 - Track absences and complaint issues
 - Record significant decisions made during the epidemic
 - Tracking overtime hours
 - Arranging transportation, food services
 - Equipment supply
 - Communicate basic infection control guidelines
 - Arranging for housing
1. Exposure questions asked by staff will determine the cause of action for each staff (i.e. quarantine, cancellation of shifts in a suspected facility). In addition, office staff will alert employee of the need for safety precaution for

example: hand washing, travel alert and person to person contact limitation with vicinities and persons on the watch list.

2. Those under quarantine may not return to work until the quarantine days are over and there is a clearance in communication from the Public Health Department.
3. Staff will be asked to avoid densely populated public areas and any place where people congregate in confined spaces, to cut down on travel and leisure related activities, including transportation, hotels, cruises, entertainment, and visits to theme parks and other public venues.
4. The acquisition and distribution of relevant and applicable medical supplies must be reasonably stocked.
5. Employees are expected to actively participate in efforts to reduce the spread of the influenza, to comply with any public health measures, and to participate in their own care in a pandemic through the following measures.
 - control of infections
 - immunization
 - the use of disinfectants
 - use of sanitizers and hand washing practices
 - the handling, cleaning and disposal of soiled linen, sharp objects waste
6. Dorvict's 24 hour pager system will be available for staff to contact for information, questions and or concerns.

Protecting Our Staff Against Influenza

In addition to the above-mentioned precautionary measures, the following measures must also be communicated to staff.

The flu is spread through direct contact with the secretions from an infected person; either through sneezing, coughing or by touching an object that has been contaminated. The flu virus can live on a surface for up to 48 hours. It is important for staff to engage in the following activities:

- Regular exercise
- Eat well
- Get enough rest
- Keep stress levels in check

- Wash hands regularly/use alcohol based hand sanitizers if not able to wash hands
- Get an annual flu vaccine
- When feeling sick stay home
- Avoid touching face/eyes
- Cough/sneeze etiquette: cover mouth and nose; dispose of tissues; wash hands

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Should an employee comes in contact with the virus while at work, the following procedure must be followed:

- i. Employee will notify Dorvict immediately at the office or through the pager system (after hours),
- ii. Employee may be requested to remain at the location where a quarantine measure is being observed.
- iii. If an employee has already been in contact with the virus at home, such employee will be requested to contact Department of Public Health and to observe the quarantine at home and not to return to any work setting until the quarantine days are over.
- iv. Individual liberty (i.e.respect for autonomy) is a value enshrined in our laws and in health care practice. During a pandemic, it may be necessary to restrict individual liberty in order to protect *the public* from serious harm. Individual liberty can be preserved to the extent that the imposed limits and the reasons for them are transparent. This decision may come in form of
- v. Dorvict has an obligation to protect the public from harm hence all precautionary measures must be utilized in times of epidemic. For these measures to be effective, employees must comply with them. The seriousness of the epidemic has to be conveyed to all staff.

CAUTIONARY MEASURES

- Office staff will require private information only if there are no less intrusive means to protect public health
- Office staff will limit any disclosure to only that information required to achieve legitimate public health goals

- Office staff will take steps to prevent stigmatization (e.g. public education to correct misperceptions about disease transmission)
- Where the plan contains any reference to the collection, use or disclosure of information or data, it is referring to non-identifiable information or data whenever possible. Any collection, use or disclosure of personal information will be done in compliance with governing legislation, including the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004*.

RECIPROCITY

Dorvict has an ethical responsibility to support those who face a disproportionate burden in protecting the public good. During a pandemic, the greatest burden will fall on our front line staff and their families. Dorvict staff will be asked to take on expanded duties. They may be exposed to greater risk in the workplace, suffer physical and emotional stress, and be isolated from peers and family. Individuals who are placed in isolation may experience significant social, economic, and emotional burden. Dorvict will take steps to ease the burden of health care workers, clients, and client families wherever and whenever possible.

Trust

Trust is an essential part of the relationship between Dorvict, her staff, clients and other organizations that we may have a working relationship with. During a pandemic, some people may perceive measures to protect the public from harm (e.g., limiting access to certain health services) as a betrayal of trust. In order to maintain trust during a pandemic, Dorvict will:

- take steps to build trust with staff and stakeholders before the pandemic occurs (i.e. engage stakeholders early)
- ensure decision making processes are ethical and transparent
- communication and open collaboration within and between these stakeholders to share information and coordinate health care delivery. By identifying the health of the general public and health care workers as resources worth protecting, these stakeholders can model values of solidarity and encourage others to broaden traditional ethical values focused on the rights or interests of individuals.

Under the (Health Protection and Promotion Act)HPPA:

- physicians, laboratories, school, hospitals and health care facilities, principals and others must report certain diseases, including influenza to medical officers

of health. In view of this Dorvict will follow such law by reporting to the Public Health Department an outbreak or an inset of communicable disease or influenza.

- persons who pose a risk to the public health may be ordered to do, or to stop doing anything to reduce the risk of disease transmission.
- information about patients who are infected with communicable diseases must be disclosed to the medical officer of health, while protecting the confidentiality of other sensitive health information .

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

“Business continuity” means ensuring that essential business functions can survive a natural disaster, technological failure, human error, or other disruption. Pandemic flu demands a different set of continuity assumptions since it will be widely dispersed geographically and potentially arrives in waves that could last several months at a time.

Your Pandemic Plan Should:

Copies of essential company documents and corporate records must be secured in a safe, locked away fire proof cabinet:

- Constitution, bylaws,
- Accounts payable and receivable
- Bank and audit records
- Capital and fixed assets records
- Contracts and agreements
- Licenses and permits
- Leases, deeds, property and land files
- Blueprints and technical drawings
- Inventories
- Business computer equipments must have external power backups that can last up to 24 hours in case of power outage
- Mailing lists
- Organization charts
- Financial signing authorities
- Union agreements
- Software
- Supplier listing
- Insurance policies

- Procedural manuals
- Personnel records, payroll documents, pension fund files, salary deduction lists
- Annual reports
- Research, technical data and specifications on specialized projects
- Special agreements with clients
- Sales records and guarantees
- Other documents essential to the operation business

FINDING OUT MORE INFORMATION

In the event of an emergency situation, it is always prudent to consider contacting the local Medical Officer of Health. The Medical Officer of Health is responsible for critical services governed by the Board of Health in each local Health Unit. The Medical Officer of Health is endowed with broad powers under the Health Protection and Promotion Act and these may impact on your business and employees.

Depending on the nature of the emergency, a key source of objective information will emanate from Emergency Management Ontario (“EMO”). The EMO is an agency of the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services and is responsible for coordinating emergency response activity in the Province. EMO acts pursuant to the Emergency Management Act.

The federal Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness (“OC�PEP”) is the federal equivalent to EMO. It will take a lead role in coordinating information on emergencies that span multiple provinces or have an impact on national infrastructure (e.g. inter-provincial transport, telecommunications, banking etc.).

Finally, consider consulting the following resources to assist with your planning and deployment efforts:

- Ontario Ministry of Health & Long Term Care - web-site contains information on the flu pandemic including business planning guidelines.
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/program/pubhealth/flu/panflu/panflu_mn.html
- Public Health Agency of Canada - web-site dedicated to the Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan. The web-site does not contain information specifically pertaining to the business community, however, it does have useful information about the pandemic and Canada's national plan. The web-site can be found at:
www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cpip-pclcpi/index.html

World Health Organization - gives up to date information on the spread of the flu pandemic.

The web- site can be found at: www.who.int

CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS

Government of Ontario Emergency Management Unit

1-866-331-0339

Public Health Agency of Canada

1-866-999-7612

416-973-4389

Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness Canada (PSEPC)

613-991-3301

Dorvict'S 24-Hour emergency pager

Toronto: 416-417-1740

Barrie: 705-795-8200

Ottawa: 1-888-825-3804

Confidential internal staff telephone numbers will be shared amongst office staff for ease of communication.