

State and Local Public Health Preparedness for Pandemic Influenza

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Pandemic Influenza: an infinite threat

Today, seasonal flu causes approx. 36,000 deaths/year
in the US (mainly young/ill/elderly)

- Several pandemics of influenza in the 1900s:
 - 1918: 675,000 US deaths; 20-50m deaths ww
 - 1957-8: 70,000 US deaths; 1-2m deaths ww
 - 1969: 34,800 US deaths; 700,000+ deaths ww
- How pandemics occur: Virus mutation, lack of immunity in population, human-to-human spread

Pandemic Flu: Implications

- Rapid spread of disease worldwide
- Possible mass fatality worldwide
- Lack of health care surge capacity
- Medical treatment/prophylaxis limited
- Severe economic impact
- Societal disruption

Preparedness Activities

- Federal: guidance on planning, federal funding to states, Strategic National Stockpile, NRP
- States: Pan flu plans, state-wide surveillance, exercising, some stockpiling
- Localities: Pan flu plans, exercising, local surveillance, public education, cross-sector coordination (law/fire/transport/schools, etc.), communication, continuity planning

Response Activities

- Localities: surveillance, public education, incident command, distribution of antivirals/vaccines (if available), social distancing measures (school closures), cross-sector coordination
- States: channel federal and state resources, provide laboratory capacity, provide support to localities, state and regional situational monitoring, border control
- Federal: release resources to states and localities, monitoring
- Also: Private sector has responsibility: economy, infrastructure, food supply, etc.

Response Reality

- Workforce may drop 30%+ in ALL sectors
- Antiviral supplies will be limited
- Effective vaccine may not exist for the first several months of pandemic
- Very little surge capacity in hospitals/healthcare
- Negative impact to U.S. and global economy
- During a severe pandemic, self-care at home will be the only alternative for the majority of ill

Current National Policy Discussions

- Community Mitigation Strategies
- Vaccine Prioritization
- Antiviral Prioritization
- Antiviral Stockpiling (Public and Private)

Community Mitigation Strategies

(From CDC's guidance document, Feb. 1 2007)

- Isolation and treatment with antivirals of all persons w/ confirmed or probable pandemic flu
- Voluntary home quarantine of members of households with conf./ prob. flu case
- School and daycare closures
- Social distancing measures to reduce contact among adults in the community and workplace

Vaccine Prioritization Discussions

CDC held several public and stakeholder meetings across the country to assess public opinion

Issues:

1. Limited supply, timing
2. Ethics (workforce first or children/elderly?)
3. Distribution logistics

Antiviral Prioritization/Stockpiling Discussions

Issues:

1. Limited supply, although more available than vaccine
2. Distribution through both public and private sector: equity of access issues
3. Use as prophylactic (prevention) vs. treatment
4. Ethics (workforce or children/elderly first?)
5. Worthwhile investment?: antivirals have 5-year expiration date

State/Local Preparedness Progress

- \$250 million in federal funding for pandemic flu planning released to states in 3 phases, beginning May 2006
- States now submitting pan flu plans to CDC
- States and localities conducting drills on: school closures, vaccine/antiviral distribution, mass fatality management, surveillance, hospital surge capacity, isolation/quarantine
- Also, public education activities, mutual aid agreements, government/business continuity planning

Examples: NACCHO's Model Practices

- El Paso County/Colorado Springs community collaboration formed Disaster Response for Health in El Paso County (DR HELP)
- Massachusetts Local Board of Health Emergency Operations Plan Template
- Baltimore City Health Department's Medicare Part D Surveillance and Response Initiative
- Rockland County (NY) Department of Health's Protocol for the Isolation and Quarantine of Communicable Disease

Sources of Tools and Information

- www.NACCHO.org
 - Local Health Department Guide to Pandemic Influenza Planning
 - EQUIPh Toolbox: planning templates/guides
- www.pandemicflu.gov
 - State by state pandemic planning information
 - Home health care services checklist
- www.cdc.gov
 - Fact sheets, infectious disease information

What YOU can do:

- Educate yourself and your family about pandemic influenza
- Ask your employer about their business continuity plans
- Prepare your household: stock a supply of food, water and medications
- Stay healthy!

Thank You!

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