

**Message from the
Commissioner/Medical Officer
of Health**

Planning for an influenza pandemic is challenging. Traditional response activities and mechanisms may not be appropriate and will need to be modified. In addition, the effect an influenza pandemic will have on Waterloo Region will not be certain until it occurs, making it difficult to plan for these uncertain impacts.

Despite these challenges, the representatives and senior administrators of organizations involved in the planning process have embraced this unprecedented community planning effort. In addition, there are certainly many benefits emerging beyond pandemic planning, as we continue to build linkages that will have broader impacts.

I am always impressed by our stakeholders and their willingness to assist us as we collectively work to protect the health and safety of the citizens of Waterloo Region. I thank everyone for their ongoing commitment to this process.

Dr. Liana Nolan

The Planning Process

Since May 2006, several Working Groups have been developing the tools and guidelines that will be used by individuals and organizations involved in Waterloo Region's influenza pandemic response and recovery effort. Most groups are expected to complete their work by the end of November. The primary deliverables for each Working Group, for this planning phase, are listed below:

**Acute Health Services
Sub-group (AHSSG)**

- Develop a clinical care plan which includes adult and paediatric assessment forms, disposition algorithms, order forms, and discharge criteria
- Create a deferral of services plan for all three hospitals

**Community Health Services
Sub-group (CHSSG)**

- Create guidelines pertaining to the establishment of Influenza Assessment, Treatment and Referral Centres (Flu Centres) and Convalescent Centres (services provided, location/site

- selection, lead agency or agencies)
- Determine patient flow through the health care system (assessment, triage and/or treatment)

**Community Support Working
Group (CSWG)**

- Define the scope of community support services/functions that will be provided during a pandemic
- Identify lead and support agencies for these services/functions (where possible)
- Develop a framework mechanism to organize the sector response effort

**Occupational Health & Safety
and Human Resources
Working Group (OHSRWG)**

- Create infection prevention & control guidelines for health care settings
- Develop Fit to Work/Return to Work guidelines
- Develop planning guidelines/checklists to assist health care organizations in completing their pandemic-specific human resource plans

Equipment and Supplies Working Group (ESWG)

- Create guidelines/recommendations equipment & supplies (stockpiling, distribution, storage)

Emergency Management Working Group (EMWG)

- Determine the pandemic response structure (how the response effort will be coordinated)
- Develop a critical infrastructure mutual assistance plan
- Determine tiered protocol and standard operating procedures for emergency responders (police, fire, ambulance)
- Plan for a surge in natural deaths (pandemic-specific mass fatality plan)



Crisis Communications Working Group (CCWG)

- Determine how information will be communicated (to the public and responding agencies) during a pandemic
- Identify key spokespeople (and the communications cycle)
- Develop key messages (by phase)

The CPIPP will also contain information on surveillance efforts, public health measures (guidelines and directives related to social distancing) and vaccine and anti-viral distribution.



Approvals Process

Once finalized, the Steering Committee will bring together the materials developed by the Working Groups into one coherent response plan called the Community Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan (CPIPP). Upon completion, the draft CPIPP will be forwarded to the organizations that have committed to providing resources that will assist with community response and recovery efforts. These organizations will be expected to formally approve the plan. The draft CPIPP is expected to be distributed for stakeholder approval in February 2007. More information on the approvals process will be available in January 2007.

Waterloo Region's Pandemic Website

Region of Waterloo Public Health updates its pandemic website on an ongoing basis. Visit www.waterlooregionpandemic.ca for more information.

If you have any questions or comments, or if you wish to be added to our newsletter distribution list, please e-mail Region of Waterloo Public Health at publichealth@region.waterloo.on.ca

2006 Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic is released!

In late September 2006, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care released the Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic. This version is focused on community response, and provides tools and guidelines to support the healthcare sector in their planning efforts. Our Waterloo Region's planning groups are currently reviewing the various chapters and ensuring our planning efforts are consistent with provincial recommendations. The various components of the plan can be downloaded at

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/emu/pan_flu/pan_flu_plan.html

Useful Resources

OtoRhinoLounsburgology Productions developed a humorous video to promote proper cough and sneeze etiquette. You can view the video at www.coughsafe.com/media.html



Pandemic Planning Update