

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA RESPONSE PLAN

SECTION SEVEN - COMMUNICATIONS TABLE OF CONTENTS

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COMMUNICATIONS

Target Audience

Communications Department, Information Leader – Incident Command System (ICS)

Introduction

Clear communication before, during, and after a pandemic will facilitate implementation of the pandemic response, allow Health Care Workers (HCWs) to function most effectively, and address fears and concerns among the public.

Objectives

The overall objectives of the communications plan are to:

- Provide clear, accurate messaging to internal and external stakeholders during all pandemic phases and;
- Ensure timely communications by a variety of means appropriate to the target audiences.

Internal Stakeholders – Objectives

Communication to HCWs must:

- Allow staff to understand their role in the pandemic response.
- Ensure staff know how to protect themselves, their families and their patients/clients.
- Provide accurate and up to date information regarding the pandemic.
- Address concerns and questions in a timely manner.

External Stakeholders – Objectives

Communication to external stakeholders, including the public and the media must:

- Provide instructions for patients and family members regarding prevention and treatment.
- Clearly describe the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority (ARHA) planned pandemic response at each stage.
- Allow the public to anticipate what to expect next.

Key Spokespersons

Communication Lead

The primary communication lead is responsible for communications execution based on expert information provided by the Medical Officer of Health (MOH). The Chief Communications/ Human Resources Officer and the Communications Coordinator will coordinate all information released to internal and external stakeholders, recommend appropriate response strategies, coordinate the approval of all information for media use, and liaise with Manitoba Health and Cabinet communications.

Primary: Chief Communications / Human Resources Officer
Secondary: Regional Communications Coordinator

As per policy *ADM III-450 "Media Requests and Release of Information to the Media"*, the official spokesperson during a pandemic is the Chief Executive Officer or designate. In the case of a pandemic, the MOH will provide expert medical information to the designate prior to speaking to and answering media queries.

Based on the provincial document, "Health Emergency Communication in Manitoba: A Framework", the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority understands that the majority of pandemic communication messaging will be provided on a provincial basis. Media enquiries and information released to the media will be coordinated at a provincial level. Regional communication messaging will be focused on local actions being taken to address the health emergency in consultation with the province to assure provincial/regional messaging is consistent.

Assiniboine Regional Health Authority

Primary: Chief Executive Officer
Secondary: Medical Officer of Health

Manitoba Health

Communications Coordinator
Telephone: (204) 945-0750
Fax: (204) 948-2147

Communications Coordinator
Telephone: (204) 945-8525
Fax: (204) 948-2147

Director of Public Affairs – Province of Manitoba
Telephone: (204) 945-4971
Fax: (204) 948-2147

Key Messages

Key messages will be developed in partnership with Manitoba Health and Healthy Living (MHHL) and will be coordinated with messages from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and the World Health Organization (WHO). As information will change quickly, ARHA messaging will focus on regional strategies in place to address the pandemic, reassure, as well as inform the public about what they can do to protect themselves and their families (i.e. hand washing and cough etiquette). Given the unknown nature of how the situation will arise, actual key messages will be developed in a responsive manner and should also incorporate the following:

For the Public:

- Where pandemic has been declared and details that can be provided.
- Information on the types of care that may be available in ARHA facilities.

For updated information, **DO NOT** call your local health centre, instead reinforce that regular updates will be posted on the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority website at www.assiniboine-rha.ca or by calling the designated toll-free information line. **Regional communications will also reinforce provincial call-in lines (Health Links-Info Sante)**

- Information on eligible groups for influenza vaccine/antivirals and how and where they are being administered.
- Individuals with flu and flu-like symptoms should stay home – *(for instructions on how to care for yourself and family members see Section 12- Clinical Management Tools 12.2 and 12.4).*
- Instructions on when and where to seek medical care *(see Section 4- Public Health Measures and Section 12- Clinical Management).*

For Staff:

- Please call the staff information line at **1-888-682-2253** for staff specific information.
- Please utilize the private access area of the internet and if available, the intranet, for staff specific information.

Information will include:

- Instructions in the event of staff illness or illness among family members.
- Patient Management.
- Infection Control *(Section 4- Public Health Measures / Section 5- Infection Control).*

For Physicians:

- Please call the staff information line at **1-888-682-2253** for staff specific information.
- Please utilize the private access area of the internet and if available, the intranet, for staff specific information.

Information will include:

- Instructions in the event of staff illness or illness among family members.
- Patient Management.
- Infection Control (*Section 4- Public Health Measures-Tool 4.9 and Section 5- Infection Control*).
- Epidemiology of the Pandemic (*Section 2-Background; Page 12*).
- Infection control recommendations for office settings (*Section 5-Infection Control*).
- Reporting.
- Eligibility criteria for influenza vaccinations and antiviral medication (*Section 8- Antivirals and Section 9- Vaccines*).

Vehicles of Communication

External Stakeholders

External stakeholders include customers and clients, partners, government, non-governmental organizations, industry, funeral homes, veterinary offices and the general public. Methods of communication for external stakeholders will include the following:

Internet Website

www.assiniboine-rha.ca

The ARHA anticipates that the website will be a key vehicle for communication in a pandemic situation. Internet use will be invaluable due to the fact that it can be accessed from anywhere and that members of the public as well as staff will be able to access information from their homes, limiting their need to be in public places.

All pre-pandemic information will be posted under the Disaster Planning section of the website including the most recent version of the ARHA Pandemic Plan. In the Pandemic Phase, a scrolling message will be included on the homepage linking immediately to the latest information available.

Information on the site will include:

- Up-to-date pandemic information.
- Availability and eligible groups for vaccine/antivirals.
- Information on seeking medical care during the pandemic.
- Information on prevention and self care.
- Links to other sites including
 - www.gov.mb.ca/pandemic
 - www.phac-aspc.gc.ca
 - www.cdc.gov
 - www.who.int

Toll Free Hotline for External Audiences

Number To Be Designated

In the case of a pandemic, the toll-free line established for the annual influenza campaign will become a hotline for public inquiries. The toll-free line will have capacity for up to four trunks and will be staffed as needed by trained Health Care Workers able to answer pandemic questions as well as provide appropriate directions related to seeking care. Trained Health Care Workers may include registered nurses currently on disability. The hotline will be manned out of the basement of the Shoal Lake-Strathclair Health Centre and will be fully equipped with desktop computers and access to the internet.

In the pre-pandemic phase the line will have a pre-recorded message that can be updated as needed. This number is advertised throughout the influenza campaign and will be further communicated in all information bulletins in the pandemic response phase.

Media Materials

All media materials will be coordinated by Assiniboine Communications, in particular distribution. All media materials will be developed in coordination with Manitoba Health and other parties as determined. Materials will include:

- Public Service Announcements for radio.
- Public Service Announcements for access television.
- Print materials for all provincial newspapers including weekly community newspapers.

See Appendix A - Local Radio Station Contact Information

See Appendix B - Access Channel Contact Information

See Appendix C - Newspaper Contact Information

Educational Materials

All educational materials will be coordinated by Assiniboine Communications, in particular distribution. It is anticipated that all educational materials will be developed in coordination with Manitoba Health and other parties as determined. Materials may include:

- Question and Answer Documents.
- Brochures and Pamphlets.
- Posters.
- Surveillance Bulletins.
- Travel Advisories.

External Communications Summary

External Stakeholder	Primary Vehicles of Communication	Lead Responsibility
General Public	Internet Toll-free Line Media Materials Educational Materials Mail Drops	Communications
<i>Governments:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Corporations • First Nations • Federal Parks • Provincial Parks • Child & Family Services 	Above listed vehicles as well as faxes and bulletins	
<i>Community Agencies and Groups:</i> School Divisions Day cares Senior Services Churches RCMP Summer Camps Recreation Directors		
<i>Other Businesses:</i> Vet Clinics Funeral Homes		
Media		
Unions (CUPE, MNU, MGEU C/S, MGEU P/T)		

Internal Stakeholders

Internal stakeholders are groups who work, volunteer, reside, and/or are admitted to ARHA health facilities. Internal stakeholders may also be staff who provide contractual services on behalf of the ARHA such as physicians, Community Therapy Services, and Aramark personnel.

Contact information for ARHA facilities, programs and services will be available and regularly updated in the ARHA Directory. This binder is located in the corporate offices in Shoal Lake and Souris.

Intranet Site

www.intranet.arha.ca

The intranet site is not yet developed for pandemic planning but will be worked on in the near future. It is anticipated that the intranet site will contain information for staff and physicians including staff bulletins, policies and procedures, and question and answer documents.

Toll Free Hotline for Staff

1-888-682-2253

The current toll-free line based out of the Souris Corporate Office will be utilized as a hotline for staff and physician inquiries. The line will be staffed by auxiliary staff identified through the Incident Command Centre.

Fax and E-Mail Distribution Lists

Regular faxes and e-mails will be used as a key method of communication to keep all sites informed throughout the region. These communication items will be coordinated through the Incident Command Centre as required.

Other Communication Vehicles will include:

- Posters / Leaflets / Newsletters.
- Memos.
- Question and Answer Documents.

Internal Communication Summary

Internal Stakeholder	Primary Vehicles of Communication	Lead Responsibility
ARHA Board	Fax	Communications
Regional Leadership Team	E-mail/Fax Internet/Intranet Toll-free Line	
General Staff Contract Staff	Fax Internet and Intranet Staff Newsletter Daily Bulletins Bulletin Boards Toll-free Line	
Physicians	Fax Internet or Intranet Physician Newsletter Daily Bulletins Toll-free Line	Chief of Medical Staff and/or Medical Officer of Health in conjunction with communications
Residents and Patients	Newsletter Daily Bulletins Posters Leaflets	Communications
Volunteers	Newsletter Daily Bulletin Posters Leaflet Toll-free Line	

Appendix A

Radio Station Contact Information Re: Public Service Announcements

Station & Website	Phone	Fax	Email
CKLQ 880 AM – Brandon www.cklq.com	726-8888	726-1270	qcountry@cklq.mb.ca
94.7 Star FM – Brandon www.starfmradio.com	726-8888	726-1270	qcountry@cklq.mb.ca
KX96 FM / 101.1 The Farm / CKX www.kx96online.com www.1011thefarm.com www.ckxtv.com	728-1150	725-3794 radio 727-2505 tv	psa@kx96online.com (both radio stations and noon show)
GX94 (940 AM) Yorkton www.gx94radio.com	306-782-2256	306-786-6805	Gx94.reception@sasktel.net
CKDM – Dauphin www.730ckdm.com	638-3230	638-8257	730ckdm@mts.net
CJRB Boissevain	534-6000	534-6825	cjrb@goldenwestradio.com
CBC Radio www.cbc.ca/radio	788-3641 (assignment desk)	788-3674	Go to: www.cbc.ca/manitoba Click on right hand side of screen “Email CBC Radio News”. Complete form

Appendix B

Access Channel Contact Information Re: Public Service Announcements

Community	Address	Phone	Fax	Email
Birtle	Box 503 Birtle, MB R0M 0C0	842-3322	842-3322	
Boissevain	Box 232 Boissevain, MB R0K 0E0	534-7171	534-7171	
Brandon	1906 Park Avenue Brandon, MB R7B 0R9	571-7303	726-1197	psa@westmancom.com
Carberry	Box 143 Carberry, MB R0K 0H0	834-3018	834-3018	
Deloraine	Box 786 Deloraine, MB R0M 0M0	747-2934	747-2934	
Killarney	Box 71 Killarney, MB R0K 1G0	523-7460	523-7460	lrl@mts.net (Lakeland Regional Library)
Melita	Box 102 Melita, MB R0M 1L0	522-8801	522-8801	
Minnedosa	Box 1419 Minnedosa, MB R0J 1E0	867-2369	867-2369	
Neepawa	Box 1657 Neepawa, MB R0J 1H0	476-3351	476-3351	nactv@westman.wave.ca
Rivers	Box 519 Rivers, MB R0K 1X0	328-7494	328-5212	
Russell	Box 1261 Russell, MB R0J 1W0	773-3549	773-3549	
Souris	Box 1079 Souris, MB R0K 2C0	483-2924	483-2924	
Virden	Box 2216 Virden, MB R0M 2C0	748-1797	748-1797	
Binscarth Erickson Elkhorn Glenboro Hamiota Rosburn St.Lazare Shoal Lake Sandy Lake Strathclair	1906 Park Avenue Brandon, MB R7B 0R9	571-7303	726-1197	psa@westmancom.com

Appendix C

Newspaper Contact Information

Newspaper	Address	Phone	Fax	Email
Baldur – The Gazette News	Box 280 Baldur, MB R0K 0B0	535-2127	535-2350	gazette@mts.net
Boissevain Recorder	Box 220 Boissevain, MB R0K 0E0	534-6479	534-2977	brecorder@mts.net
Carberry News Express	Carberry, MB R0K 0H0	834-2153	834-2714	newsexpress@escape.ca
Cartwright (Southern MB Review)	Cartwright, MB R0K 0L0	529-2342	529-2029	cartnews@mts.net
Deloraine Times & Star	Box 407 Deloraine, MB R0M 0M0	747-2249	747-3999	deltimes@mts.net
Erickson (South Mountain Press)	Box 160 Shoal Lake, MB R0J 1Z0	759-2644	759-2521	Display: smpdisplay@mts.net Classified: smpclassified@mts.net News: smpnews@mts.net
Glenboro Gazette	Glenboro, MB R0K 0X0	827-2343	827-2207	gazette2@mts.net
Killarney Guide	Box 670 Killarney, MB R0K 1G0	523-4611	523-4445	kguide@mts.net
Melita New Era	Box 280 Melita, MB R0M 1L0	522-3491	522-3648	newera@mts.net
Minnedosa Tribune	Minnedosa, MB R0J 1E0	867-3816	867-5171	Ads: adsales@minnedosatribune.com News: editor@minnedosatribune.com
Neepawa Banner	Box 699 Neepawa, MB R0J 1H0	476-3401	476-5073	Ads: ads@neepawabanner.com News: news@neepawabanner.com
Neepawa Press	Box 939 Neepawa, MB R0J 1H0	476-2309	46-5802	neepress@mts.net
Reston Recorder	Box 10 Reston, MB R0M 1X0	877-3321	877-3115	recorder@mts.net
Rivers Banner	Box _____ Rivers, MB R0K 1X0	328-7494		
Russell Banner	Box 100 Russell, MB R0J 1W0	773-2069	773-2645	rbanner@mts.net
Shoal Lake Nesbitt Printing – Crossroads	Box 160 Shoal Lake, MB R0J 1Z0	759-2644	759-2521	Display: ctwdisplay@mts.net Classified: ctwclassified@mts.net News: ctwnews@mts.net
Souris Plaindealer	Box 488 Souris, MB R0K 2C0	483-2070	483-3866	spdealer@mts.net
Treherne Times	Box 50 Treherne, MB R0G 2V0	723-2542	723-2754	trehernetimes@mts.net
Virden Empire-Advance	Box 250 Virden, MB R0M 2C0	748-3931	748-1816	empire12@mts.net
Wawanesa (Lionness Express)	c/o Lucy's Flowers & Gifts Wawanesa, MB R0K 2G0	824-2369	824-2008	shilucy@mts.net

Tool 7.1 Novel Influenza Update

A novel influenza virus has been identified outside of Canada. The World Health Organization has confirmed that the number of human cases of infection with this novel influenza virus has increased. Countries where this novel influenza virus has infected humans include: _____ . The activities, which appear to increase risk of infection, are: _____ .

Travellers to the following countries _____ are
advised to avoid the following activities: _____ .

Travellers who return from areas or countries with cases of infection with the novel influenza virus and within _____ days of arrival develop:

FEVER likely with one or more of the following conditions:

- Cough
- Chills
- Muscle aches

should immediately contact their local health care provider and inform them of their symptoms and recent travels.

For more information:

Health Links-Info Santé: 1-888-315-9257

Assiniboine RHA: www.assiniboine-rha.ca

Brandon RHA: www.brandonrha.mb.ca

Manitoba Health: www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cmoh/pandemic.html

Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/pandemic_e.html

Tool 7.2 Pandemic Influenza in Canada

A new subtype of influenza has been causing outbreaks in_____.

People do not have immunity against this new influenza and it has spread rapidly throughout the world. The Public Health Agency of Canada has confirmed that this new influenza virus has now infected people in Canada. There are _____ human cases in _____ provinces.

Influenza is spread from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. It can also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets of another person or an object (such as a doorknob) and then touches their own mouth or nose before washing their hands. The virus enters through the nose or mouth and into the throat and lungs and begins to multiply.

If you have the following:

- Fever of 38°C or higher AND a cough; **AND**
- You have recently traveled to areas in Canada or other countries where people have this new influenza OR you have been in close contact with someone who has influenza:

Immediately call Health Links-Info Santé: 1-888-315-9257

Note: If you have shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

Currently there is no vaccine available for this new subtype influenza. Antiviral medications are expected to be in short supply during a pandemic. Like vaccines, they will be given as they become available, to high-risk groups identified by Canadian influenza experts. Antibiotics are not indicated for influenza.

If you are feeling unwell, but have not been in contact with influenza or travelled to the countries or parts of Canada where influenza has been identified, stay at home. Rest and drink plenty of fluids. *Acetaminophen* may provide comfort for fevers and aches. **Never give ASA (aspirin) to children under the age of 18.**

Protect yourself by frequently washing your hands with soap and water and avoiding groups/crowds of people. Postpone travel to areas where influenza is known to be infecting people. Wearing a facemask will not stop the spread of influenza in the community.

If you have more questions, please contact your **family physician** or **Health Links-Info Santé** (24 hours per day, 7 days per week). If symptoms are severe and need immediate action, call 911 (Ambulance, Paramedics) or go to the closest emergency department.

For more information:

Health Links-Info Santé: 1-888-315-9257

Assiniboine RHA: www.assiniboine-rha.ca

Brandon RHA: www.brandonrha.mb.ca

Manitoba Health: www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cmoh/pandemic.html

Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/pandemic_e.html

Tool 7.3 Pandemic Influenza in the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority

A new subtype of influenza has been causing outbreaks in several countries including Canada. People do not have immunity against this new influenza and it has spread throughout the world. Cases of this influenza have now been confirmed in our health region. There have been _____ human cases in the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority.

Influenza is spread from person-to-person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. It can also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets of another person or an object (such as a doorknob) and then touches their own mouth or nose before washing their hands. The virus enters through the nose or mouth and into the throat and lungs and begins to multiply.

If you have the following:

- Fever of 38°C or higher **AND** a cough

Immediately call Health Links-Info Santé - 1-888-315-9257

Note: If you have shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

If you are well enough, you will be given information about

- Staying at home while you are ill.
- When and how to get medical help if your symptoms worsen.
- How to protect your family from influenza (covering your mouth and nose when you are coughing/sneezing and washing your hands frequently are the best ways of protecting others).

Currently there is no vaccine available for this new subtype influenza. Antiviral medications are expected to be in short supply during a pandemic. Like vaccines, they will be given as they become available, to high-risk groups identified by Canadian influenza experts. Antibiotics are not indicated for influenza.

Protect yourself and others by frequently washing your hands with soap and water and avoiding groups/crowds of people. Postpone travel to areas where influenza is known to be infecting people. Wearing a facemask will not stop the spread of influenza in the community.

If you have more questions, please contact your family doctor or your local public health office.

Further information is also available at:

Health Links-Info Santé: 1-888-315-9257

Assiniboine RHA: www.assiniboine-rha.ca

Brandon RHA: www.brandonrha.mb.ca

Manitoba Health: www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cmoh/pandemic.html

Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/pandemic_e.html

Adapted from the VCH Pandemic Influenza Plan – May 2005