NSW Human Influenza Pandemic Plan

A Sub-Plan of the NSW Disaster Plan

Approved by NSW Cabinet
August 2010

NSW emergency management plans are updated regularly and accordingly printed plans may be out of date. The current plan is always available at www.emergency.nsw.gov.au.
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Section 1 - Introduction

Purpose

1. The New South Wales (NSW) Human Influenza Pandemic Plan (HIPP) is the primary whole of government plan for an influenza pandemic in NSW as authorised by the NSW Government.

2. The HIPP outlines the strategic intent, responsibilities, authorities and mechanisms to prepare, prevent, respond to and recover from an influenza pandemic within NSW.

3. The purpose of the plan is to inform the community, business and government about pandemic arrangements.

4. The HIPP is consistent with the NSW Disaster Plan (DISPLAN) and the NSW Health Influenza Pandemic Plan that identifies NSW Health as the combat agency. It complements the National Action Plan for Human Influenza Pandemic (NAP) and the Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza (AHMPPI).

5. The HIPP is a sub-plan of the DISPLAN, meaning that it is an action plan for a specific hazard, critical task or special event.

6. It is essential that the community, business and all levels of government undertake planning and preparatory action beyond health and emergency planning to protect the community and minimise the impact of any pandemic.

7. There will be a strong reliance on government for timely and accurate information. The NSW Government has well developed public information arrangements to support NSW Health as the combat agency.

8. The HIPP may also be used as a whole of government plan for health emergencies which are similar to an influenza pandemic (e.g. the emergence of a novel respiratory virus with significant morbidity or mortality).

What is a pandemic?

9. Pandemics are epidemics of infectious disease that occur on a worldwide scale.
10. An influenza pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus emerges which:
   • is markedly different from recently circulating seasonal influenza viruses
   • can infect people and cause disease (rather than, or in addition to other mammals or birds)
   • can spread readily from person to person
   • can spread widely because most people will have little or no immunity.

11. Influenza pandemics can be highly variable in their impact, depending on how sick the virus makes people (morbidity and mortality) and the ability of the virus to spread between people (transmissibility). This plan provides for flexibility in response according to the impact of each pandemic.

12. Further information on pandemics can be found at the World Health Organization website (www.who.int).

**Stages of Influenza Pandemics**

**International**

13. The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified a set of pandemic phases that it uses to describe the status of a new influenza virus on an international basis.

14. Pandemics and their spread are strongly influenced by economic and social conditions and therefore the severity/impact of the same virus can vary significantly between continents, countries and major cities.

15. Accordingly, it is important to understand that the WHO pandemic phase might not accurately reflect the situation in Australia and thus may not indicate the response being undertaken in Australia.

16. For example, a global pandemic is considered imminent or in progress when community level outbreaks of a new influenza virus have been found in two or more countries in one WHO region or when found in more than one WHO region. It is possible for this to occur when the virus has not been found in Australia or when there are no community level outbreaks in Australia.
National

17. The NSW Health Influenza Pandemic Plan and the AHMPPI outline additional phases which are linked to events in Australia and used to guide Australia’s operational health response. The Australian phases describe the health strategy in place at a point in time such as to delay entry of the virus to Australia or to contain its spread on entry to Australia. The phases also provide for varying stages of a pandemic in different States/Territories.

18. As indicated above, the phase of the Australian Health response and the WHO phase may not always be the same.

19. While phases can be useful in describing the health operational response, they do not adequately provide for the whole of government response which is tailored to the situation at any one point in time.

NSW

20. The whole of government operational approach in NSW is informed by the international and national pandemic phases which are influenced by the following key milestones:

- Identification of a new human influenza pandemic virus that has sustained human-to-human community transmission anywhere in the world
- Entry of the virus into Australia and NSW
- Determination of the severity of the virus (in terms of both its impact on the health of individuals and its consequential impact on the community)
- A customised pandemic vaccine is widely available
- The end of the pandemic, measured by disease activity returning to seasonal levels
Section 2 - Preparedness

Legal Framework

21. NSW has legislation in place that is able to assist in the prevention, response and recovery relating to an influenza pandemic and similar health emergencies.

*State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989*

22. In NSW an influenza pandemic is defined as an emergency in the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* (SERM Act). Accordingly, the SERM Act provides the NSW Government with significant powers in managing the prevention of, preparation for, response to and recovery from a pandemic in NSW.

23. The SERM Act establishes the emergency management system in NSW.

24. The SERM Act provides for the Premier to declare a ‘state of emergency’ in the whole, or any specified part or parts of NSW where there is a significant and widespread danger to life or property.

25. The Minister for Emergency Services, under the SERM Act is responsible for ensuring that adequate measures are undertaken by government agencies to plan for, prevent, respond to and assist recovery from emergencies.

*Public Health Act*

26. In the event of significant health emergencies the NSW community expects Government to take actions that will preserve life, minimise deaths and prevent the spread of disease. The *Public Health Act* allows for certain actions to be taken to deal with public health risks, either during a ‘state of emergency’ or a non-declared emergency situation.

27. These actions may include measures considered necessary to preserve public health such as closing places where members of the public congregate, segregating or isolating people, or restricting access to an area.

28. Public authorities can be directed to take, modify or cease actions in the interest of public health.
Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002

29. During an emergency there is an expectation that Government will continue to provide public sector services to the community. The Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002 (PSEM Act) provides for strategic redeployment of government employees to maintain essential Government services.

30. The PSEM Act also provides for the redeployment of government employees in support of disaster recovery activities (s88).

Commonwealth legislation

31. Refer to the National Action Plan for relevant Commonwealth legislation, such as the Quarantine Act 1908.

Governance

32. A comprehensive administrative structure is in place across the National and State levels of government to manage all aspects of influenza pandemics.

International

33. Pandemics require a coordinated international response. The Australian Government engages as appropriate with other nations through established forums.

34. The Australian Government actively represents Australian interests in the World Health Organization (WHO).

National

35. By nature, pandemics will cross jurisdictional boundaries. Accordingly, NSW actively contributes to a national, cooperative approach to pandemic planning.

36. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) is chaired by the Prime Minister and includes Premiers and Chief Ministers from each State and Territory and the President of the Australian Local Government Association.

37. COAG is responsible for the NAP, which details Australian Government leaders’ role in leading the national response during a pandemic.
38. Strategic policy and coordination to leaders is provided by the National Pandemic Emergency Committee (NPEC). This committee is chaired by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC) and comprises representatives of First Ministers and Health Departments from all jurisdictions, Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) and other agencies as required.

39. NSW is represented on NPEC by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and NSW Health with expert advice provided by the Chief Health Officer.

**New South Wales**

40. The Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), in consultation with NSW Health and other relevant agencies, is responsible for maintaining this Plan.

41. NSW has established the Influenza Pandemic Advisory Group (IPAG) which has responsibility for providing high level advice and strategic direction to NSW agencies on whole of government arrangements for influenza pandemic planning in NSW.

42. The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC), established under the SERM Act is responsible for state level emergency planning and is a key source of advice to the Department of Premier and Cabinet on the elements of the Plan that involve the NSW emergency management structure.

43. NSW Health is the lead agency for prevention, preparedness, responding to and recovery from influenza pandemics in NSW. NSW Health may request support from the SEOCON where multi-agency support is required.

44. NSW Government agencies and state owned corporations are responsible for developing and maintaining business continuity plans that address the risk of a pandemic to ensure delivery of government services.

**NSW Capability**

45. NSW maintains capabilities to prepare, prevent, respond and recover from emergencies. The development, maintenance, planning and training of NSW capability is shared across government agencies consistent with their core responsibilities and identified capability.

46. Pandemics pose additional challenges to the traditional emergency due to the unpredictable and broad nature of a developing pandemic. The capabilities and capacity
developed through the NSW emergency management arrangements defined by the SERM Act and DISPLAN provide an excellent basis to support the policy, strategic and operational management of a pandemic in NSW.

47. Capabilities specific to an influenza pandemic include but are not limited to:

- **NSW Health** – lead the NSW response to a pandemic including liaison/consultation with other jurisdictions, public information, provide the health response, surveillance and monitoring of a pandemic virus, advise on infection control and social distancing, support border control and quarantine measures, establish and manage influenza clinics, provide exceptions to the Public Health (Disposal of Bodies) Regulation 2002 as necessary to assist the management of large numbers of deaths beyond the capacity of the funeral industry in NSW, provide bereavement and counselling support through Mental Health services

- **NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet** – provide policy, inter-governmental liaison and decision making support to the NSW Government

- **State Emergency Operations Controller (SEOCon)** – may assist a combat agency that is primarily responsible for controlling the response to an emergency in carrying out that responsibility by coordinating multi-agency operational support, coordinating Australian Government assistance and liaising with Functional Area Coordinators

- **State Emergency Recovery Controller (SERCon)** – may assist an agency that is primarily responsible for controlling the recovery to an emergency in carrying out that responsibility by coordinating multi-agency support, coordinating Australian Government assistance, and liaising with Functional Area Coordinators

- **Department of Human Services (Community Services - Welfare Services Functional Area)** – assist in the supply of essential food and grocery items to people in quarantine or home isolation who have no means of accessing these goods independently, where necessary assist in the reception of family and friends of quarantined people at international airports and seaports

- **NSW Public Works – Engineering Services Functional Area** – coordinate procurement processes to support supply of food and essential household items to people in quarantine or home isolation who have no means of accessing these goods independently
• **Industry and Investment NSW (Primary Industries) – Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area** - coordinate support services including food and other materials to ensure welfare of animals impacted by pandemic

• **Industry and Investment NSW (NSW Food Authority)** – work with other agencies, the food industry and Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to support the development of processes to facilitate supply of food and essential household items to the general community and people in quarantine or home isolation

• **NSW Police Force** – assist with public order issues that may arise from a pandemic, plan and implement security of the National Medical Stockpile and State Medical Stockpile in cooperation with NSW Health, develop strategies, policy and processes for the management of pandemic mass fatalities if service providers have exceeded their capacity to do so, ensure where possible that all services consider the cultural and religious requirements and provide services as required for the management of mass deaths

• **Emergency Management NSW** – management of the NSW State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) at the direction of the SEOCon and operational support to the SEOCon and SERCon

• **State Emergency Service** – provide assistance in the emergency response as requested by the SEOCon

• **NSW Police Force (Public Information Functional Area Coordinator)** – support NSW Health in planning for and implementation of public information strategies for pandemic

• **NSW Department of Justice and Attorney General - NSW Coroner** - certify the cause of death where required, ensure autopsies and other investigations are completed where the cause of death is not clear

• **NSW Department of Justice and Attorney General - Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages** - develop and maintain systems to accurately record pandemic deaths, inform authorities and ensure timely processing and provision of documentation registration and evidence of registration (death certificates) and monitor the numbers of influenza pandemic deaths and provide advice to NSW Health and the SEOCon
• **Land and Property Management Authority** - manage cemeteries on Crown land in NSW, consult with the Local Government Division of the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, local councils and Department of Planning on the need for and possible locations of additional sites for cemeteries on Crown Land in NSW, provide geospatial analysis and spatial web services as required

• **NSW Department of Education and Training** – cooperate with relevant government agencies to prevent and slow the spread of the pandemic through a range of planned measures such as communicating information and alerts to staff and parents and quarantine. Implement prevention procedures to protect staff and students from becoming sick as much as possible. Support the NSW community by reinforcing messages from NSW Health to staff, students and parents/carers. Continue to provide educational services, either at NSW Government schools and TAFE colleges and campuses, or through appropriate home schooling arrangements as necessary. Prepare for restoring schools and TAFE to return to normal through an effective recovery phase

• **NSW Fire Brigades** – support NSW Health through the provision of logistics support, portable tent structures, decontamination capabilities and by a network of community first responders

• **NSW Rural Fire Service** – offer personnel (Staff/Volunteers) and/or resources depending on the situation to assist the relevant combat agencies identified in the HIPP, should it be required by the SEOCon

• **Transport NSW (Transport Services Functional Area)** - coordinate the provision of essential public transport and freight services and other tasks consistent with the Transport Services Functional Area Supporting Plan

**Exercise Management**

48. NSW agencies participate in exercises designed to test aspects of a pandemic response at Local, State and Federal levels. Plans are revised as necessary following exercise debriefing sessions.
Financial arrangements

49. Expenditure of funds by agencies during emergency response or recovery operations is to be met in the first instance from within existing operating budgets or arrangements with NSW Treasury. Should the expenditure be of such a magnitude as to prevent the providing agencies from continuing their normal operations for the remainder of the financial year, Treasury may provide supplementation, however agencies cannot be guaranteed that funding will be provided.

Public Information

50. The NSW Government has well developed whole of government arrangements for providing pandemic preparedness advice to the NSW community.

51. NSW Health runs an annual public information campaign prior to and during the influenza season. The campaign provides advice on measures that individuals, business and communities can take to prepare for a pandemic or serious influenza season.

52. The campaign emphasises the importance of individuals taking responsibility in preparing for a pandemic.
Section 3 - Prevention/Mitigation

53. NSW Health conducts an annual winter illness public information campaign intended to reduce the spread of respiratory illness, especially influenza. These hygiene strategies are equally applicable to preventing the spread of a pandemic.

54. NSW maintains a State Medical Stockpile of medications and Personal Protective Equipment to temper a likely surge on these items during a pandemic. NSW Health can also request items from the National Medical Stockpile, maintained by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

55. NSW Health continually monitors levels of illness, including influenza, through existing surveillance mechanisms. Alerts for abnormal levels of activity can trigger early responsive action.

56. NSW Health, in conjunction with the Australian Department of Health and Ageing and health departments across Australia and around the world, monitor new viruses with pandemic potential.

57. Individual NSW Government agencies are responsible for encouraging business, non-government organisations and local government in their areas of responsibility to develop and maintain business continuity plans.

58. A list of links to resources to assist with the development of business continuity plans is detailed at Annexure A.

59. Individuals and households are encouraged to prepare for a pandemic as part of their normal household emergency preparedness, including consideration of caring for pets/animals. Information and resources are available to support preparation including Annexure B to this plan “Household Planning Guide”, the NSW Health website and relevant government messaging.
Section 4 – Response

60. The NSW Government and its agencies are responsible for the whole of government operational response to a pandemic within NSW. The NSW Government will work with the Australian Government and other jurisdictions to coordinate information sharing, decision making and communication strategies as described in the NAP.

Operational Arrangements

61. The Director General NSW Health is the State Incident Controller for pandemic and is responsible for the NSW Health response to a pandemic. Additional information regarding the health system’s operational response to a pandemic is contained in the NSW Health pandemic planning documents.

62. Where coordinated multi-agency support is required, the State Incident Controller will advise the SEOC in writing of a health alert and request support as per s19.2A of the SERM Act. Following this request, the SEOC would notify relevant agencies thereby activating the response and recovery arrangements outlined within this Plan.

63. The SEOC is responsible for controlling and coordinating the emergency response operations of NSW Government agencies in support of NSW Health as the lead agency.

64. If multi-agency coordination is required, the SEOC may be activated under the control of the SEOC.

65. The NSW Influenza Pandemic Committee Officials Group (IPCOG) is established when the HIPP is activated to coordinate strategic level decision making and advice to Government. The IPCOG is chaired by the Director General DPC and membership includes the Director General NSW Health, the Chief Health Officer (CHO), the SEOC, the State Emergency Recovery Controller (SERCon) and other relevant agencies. The IPCOG will inform the NSW position for NPEC members.

66. Dependant on the scale and scope of the pandemic, the Premier may convene the Influenza Pandemic Committee (IPC) to provide leadership and high level policy decision making. Membership of the IPC includes ministerial representatives of relevant portfolios. The IPCOG provides expert strategic and policy advice to support the IPC.
67. Diagram 1 below shows NSW and National Pandemic Arrangements

68. To ensure the continuity of government services during a pandemic, the NSW Government has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Unions NSW. The MoU sets out the conditions which will apply during a pandemic including attendance, salary payments, the ability to require staff to provide wider support by undertaking additional duties that are not in the employee’s job description and approaches to take if NSW Health closes a workplace.

69. The Director General DPC in conjunction with the Director General Health or Chief Health Officer may issue circulars to Government Agency and State Owned Corporation Chief Executives in relation to workplace measures to aid in the continued delivery of services.

Response Strategies and Actions

70. Where there is evidence of an emerging pandemic overseas, NSW Health works with the Australian Government to implement measures to delay entry of the virus to Australia. Border control, quarantine measures and exclusion strategies may be considered.
71. Where one or more cases of influenza pandemic are identified within Australia but not in NSW, strategies may be implemented to delay the potential spread of the virus within NSW. These may include the extension of strategies described above to apply to people who travelled to known infected areas interstate.

72. Following identification of one or more cases of the virus in NSW, the NSW Government may implement a number of strategies and actions in support of the health response. The timing and extent to which these options are implemented will differ depending on the severity, extent and location of the pandemic at any point in time. The implementation of many of these will be coordinated by the SEOCon in cooperation with the Chief Health Officer.

73. Decisions relating to measures implemented are not taken lightly and consideration is given to the social and economic impacts of these measures.

74. Social distancing is a broad term used to describe actions intended to limit people’s exposure to the pandemic virus by reducing activities involving social mixing. Social distancing strategies may be implemented to differing degrees during a pandemic depending on the situation at the time.

75. Examples of social distancing actions that might be implemented include:

   - Quarantine – persons who have been exposed to an infected person may be placed in quarantine for a specified period of time
   - Home Isolation – persons who have contracted the disease may be asked to stay at home in isolation for a specified period of time
   - Exclusions – in some situations, people may be asked to exclude themselves/their children from child care, school, educational facilities, workplaces and other activities (e.g. attending religious services or sport practice)
   - School closures – decisions may be made to close individual schools, those in a specific region/area or more broadly across NSW

76. Where possible, social distancing measures will be voluntary however if necessary, powers are available under the Public Health Act to ensure adherence if needed.
77. Processes will be implemented to provide appropriate support to:
   - Vulnerable groups
   - People who would not normally require government support whose regular support structures are not available due to the pandemic
   - Management and residents of communal living establishments such as nursing homes, group homes, larger residences and correctional facilities

78. When a pandemic causes widespread disruption other strategies to support social and economic well-being may be considered including, but not limited to:
   - Assisting food supply
   - Ensuring medical supplies
   - Ensuring food and care continues for companion animals and animals in large holdings such as zoos, intensive industries, pet care facilities etc
   - Ensuring accommodation
   - Financial support – for individuals, business, industry sectors
   - Support for the management of mass fatalities
   - Ensuring continuity of community lifelines such as energy and utilities, petrol and essential transport

**Public information**

79. Providing the public with relevant and current information is a key priority for the NSW Government during a pandemic.

80. As the combat agency for health emergencies, NSW Health will develop a public information campaign. This will include regular updates on the current situation and evolving strategies relating to:
   - personal hygiene encouragement (tailored to personal, household and workplace)
   - changes to pandemic phases
   - infection control measures
   - social distancing measures
   - appropriate Personal Protective Equipment
   - other measures implemented under the HIPP
81. NSW Health will maintain a website (accessed from www.emergency.health.nsw.gov.au) with current and detailed information for individuals, business and the media.

82. Depending on the scale and scope of the campaign required, NSW Health may require public information support from other NSW Government agencies. The Director General NSW Health may request the assistance of the SEOCon in managing the Government’s response to the pandemic. The SEOCon may task the Public Information Functional Area Coordinator (PIFAC) with coordinating public information support.

83. Communications Managers should familiarise themselves with the Human Influenza Pandemic Public Information Guidelines (Annexure C) which provides guiding principles for the NSW Government’s management of the public information response.

84. During an influenza pandemic or similar health emergency, all NSW Government agencies must comply with official directions provided by NSW Health as the combat agency.

85. All communications, such as public information, that fall within the Agency’s area of responsibility should be cleared according to internal processes. Public information containing any form of a health message must be cleared by NSW Health. If agencies are unsure if messaging has health implications they must seek advice from NSW Health.

86. NSW Health will liaise regularly with relevant Commonwealth agencies to ensure Federal and State messaging is consistent. NSW Health will ensure agencies are updated on any information relating to their area of responsibility.

87. There are a range of call centre and website capabilities at both the National and State level. Activation of advice lines will be determined according to the situation.

88. NSW Health will maintain public information phone lines. Other Government agencies may activate enquiry lines to provide advice specific to their area of responsibility. The Australian Government maintains a hotline for influenza pandemic enquiries. The details for these call centres are publicised at activation.

89. The primary NSW Government website which will host influenza pandemic information and link to other appropriate agency websites is www.health.nsw.gov.au. All NSW agencies must maintain updated websites which include links to the Health website. The Australian Government websites are www.flupandemic.gov.au and www.healthemergency.gov.au.
Section 5 - Recovery Operations

90. Recovery is the coordinated process of supporting individuals and communities impacted by a disaster.

Principles for Recovery from Influenza Pandemic

91. All levels of government will work collaboratively with affected individuals and communities, business and industry.

92. The NSW Government and its agencies are responsible for ensuring that the NSW community recovers as quickly as possible.

93. The nature of an influenza pandemic suggests that efforts following an influenza pandemic are likely to be focused on supporting the economic, psycho-social and health recovery. It is possible that the recovery process will be complex and require integrated and sustained coordination.

94. Effective recovery planning and management relies on community input. Recovery planning will cater for local conditions and include the dissemination of public information in a timely manner.

95. Consideration of recovery issues and the extent to which a formal recovery process is required will initially be undertaken in the early stages of a pandemic and reviewed depending on how the situation evolves.

Roles and responsibilities

96. The NSW Government and its agencies have primary responsibility for recovery from a pandemic.

97. Recovery from an influenza pandemic in NSW will involve all levels of government, with particular emphasis on strong leadership and coordination between the NSW and Australian governments.

98. Recovery operates on a general premise of being locally/community centred. Influenza pandemic however is not limited geographically and will demand a higher level of coordination.
99. At the highest level, strategic policy and decision making in relation to recovery will be initially determined by the Influenza Pandemic Committee.

100. The NSW State Emergency Recovery Controller (SERCon) provides expert recovery input as an advising official to the IPC.

101. Coordination at the State level occurs initially through the IPC. Consistent with DISPLAN, a Recovery Coordinator may be appointed to manage the recovery process.

102. Recovery Committee(s) may be established to provide ongoing coordination.

103. Committees comprise representatives from appropriate government agencies and non-government organisations.

104. The generic role of a recovery committee includes:
   - develop and maintain a Recovery Action Plan
   - monitor and coordinate the activities of agencies with responsibility for the delivery of services during recovery
   - ensure that relevant stakeholders, especially the communities affected, are involved in the development and implementation of recovery objectives and strategies
   - provide regular reports to Government and stakeholders
   - develop an agreed exit strategy

105. Within NSW plans and arrangements are in place to manage recovery from emergencies including an influenza pandemic. These specify which agencies are responsible for recovery services and incorporate local, regional and state level coordination.

106. Regional/district/local committees are necessary where recovery services are administered and delivered on a regional, district or local basis.

107. A variety of non-government organisations also provide many recovery services which are coordinated at the local level.
### Acronyms

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<tr>
<td>AHPC</td>
<td>Australian Health Protection Committee</td>
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<td>AHMPPI</td>
<td>Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza</td>
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<td>AI</td>
<td>Avian Influenza</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALGA</td>
<td>Australian Local Government Association</td>
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<td>AUSVETPLAN</td>
<td>Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCP</td>
<td>Business Continuity Plan</td>
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<td>CHO</td>
<td>Chief Health Officer of NSW</td>
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<td>DPC</td>
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<td>DISPLAN</td>
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<td>HEALTHPLAN</td>
<td>NSW Health Supporting Plan to DISPLAN</td>
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<td>H1N1</td>
<td>A subtype of the Influenza A virus where <strong>H1</strong> stands for the first of several known types of the protein <strong>H1</strong> stands for the first of several known types of the protein neuraminidase. Commonly known as Swine Influenza.</td>
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<tr>
<td>H5N1</td>
<td>A subtype of the Influenza A virus where <strong>H5</strong> stands for the fifth of several known types of the protein hemagglutinin and <strong>N1</strong> stands for the first of several known types of the protein neuraminidase. Commonly known as Avian Influenza or Bird Flu.</td>
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<td>IPC</td>
<td>NSW Influenza Pandemic Committee</td>
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<td>NAP</td>
<td>National Action Plan</td>
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www.emergency.nsw.gov.au
Annexure A - Business Continuity Planning Links

In order for a business or an organisation to manage an adverse event or business disruption and continue to function, it must consider a range of activities and measures that it can take to prevent and prepare for, respond to and recover from the event. A Business Continuity Plan (BCP) can be an effective map and record of these considerations.

Organisations should have a BCP which can respond to an influenza pandemic and reflects the inter-dependence of structures in a particular area and the reliance on external supply chains.

There are many resources, both government and private, available to assist the development of BCPs. This Annexure provides a short list of links intended to provide a starting point for businesses and non-government organisations when developing BCPs.

**Relevant Links:**

A number of Government websites provide guides and tools for developing Business Continuity Plans. These include, but are not limited to:

*Australian Government Information for Business*

*Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)*
Building resilience through business continuity and pandemic planning (for Non-Government Organisations)

*Australian Government Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research*
Business Continuity Guide for Australian Business

*Australian National Audit Office*

*Pandemic Planning in the Workplace*
NSW Human Influenza Pandemic Plan

Annexure B - Household Planning Guide

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www.emergency.nsw.gov.au
Annexure B - Household Planning Guide

Disclaimer: This guide aims to assist the community of NSW better prepare for a potential influenza pandemic or for a health emergency that is similar to an influenza pandemic. Readers should note that the information contained in this document is for guidance and they should exercise their own care in evaluating the accuracy, currency and completeness of the material. The NSW Government does not accept any legal liability or responsibility for any injury, loss or damage incurred by the use of, reliance on or interpretation of the information contained in this guide. The content of this document was based on information available in June 2010 and new information may become available over time. To remain well informed, readers are advised to visit the NSW Department of Health pandemic website at www.health.nsw.gov.au and/or the www.emergency.nsw.gov.au website and other relevant information sources to ensure they have the most up to date information.

WHAT IS INFLUENZA PANDEMIC?

An influenza pandemic is a global outbreak of disease caused by a new influenza virus. The virus may spread readily from person to person. Since there is little natural immunity to the virus, many people may become seriously ill and some will die.

AM I AT RISK?

During an influenza pandemic, most people are at risk of becoming unwell. The effects of an influenza pandemic could impact upon our whole community and will vary from relatively minor to extremely severe depending on the severity of the illness caused in most people by the pandemic influenza virus.

WHAT COULD BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF INFLUENZA PANDEMIC?

- Many people may become unwell and some will die.
- People who are sick with pandemic influenza, or who have been in close contact with sick people, may be asked to stay at home.
- Workplace modification and/or closure: many people will be unable to go to work - because they have been asked to stay at home (to help limit the spread of the disease), because they are sick or because they are caring for others.
- Utilities, transport and other services may be disrupted.
- Schools, businesses and entertainment venues may close.
- Health care may be delivered differently and health care resources may be stretched.
WHAT CAN I DO TO PREPARE FOR A PANDEMIC?

You should prepare by considering the issues outlined in this guide and preparing a home emergency kit. Discuss how you and your household will cope during an influenza pandemic amongst yourselves and with other family and friends.

Most people have family and friends that they could turn to during a pandemic. Make sure you have an up-to-date list of phone numbers, e-mail addresses and household addresses so that you can keep in touch.

HOW CAN I STAY HEALTHY?

The following measures will help you stay healthy:

- Wash your hands with soap and water (or alcohol-based hand cleanser) frequently.
- Try to stay a metre away from sick people to reduce the spread of germs. Delay visits with people who are sick until they are better, if possible.
- Eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly.
- Get an annual influenza vaccination until a customised vaccine for the pandemic virus is available. It won’t protect you from pandemic influenza, but it will prevent seasonal influenza.
- If you are in a high-risk group, such as being over 65 or having a chronic illness, talk to your GP about pneumococcal vaccination. It helps prevent pneumonia, which can follow an influenza infection.

WHAT IF I GET SICK?

Special health arrangements will be communicated through the media. Follow the advice and directions of health officials. Health care may be delivered differently in a pandemic to ensure people are cared for at a time of high demand. Pregnant women or people who have a chronic illness (such as respiratory diseases or cancer) should seek medical attention as soon as they develop symptoms of influenza (see below).

Symptoms of influenza include:

- fever
- chills and shivering
• sore throat
• dry cough
• sneezing
• stuffy or runny nose
• tiredness

If your health deteriorates considerably or you are having trouble breathing, call: triple zero (000).

If a pandemic phone advice hotline is established, the number will be advertised widely.

HOW CAN I HELP STOP THE SPREAD OF THE INFECTION?

• Stay at home and avoid close contact with other people if you are sick.
• Never visit people in hospital if you are sick. Your mild illness could be deadly to someone who is already unwell.
• Ideally, cough and sneeze into disposable tissues. Tissues should only be used once and then thrown away.
• Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve if you don’t have a tissue.
• Put used tissues in the nearest waste receptacle (e.g., in a sealable plastic bag)
• Wash your hands after touching used tissues.
• Avoid shaking hands - coughing into your hand then shaking hands or shaking hands with someone who is sick is an easy way to spread influenza.
• Your doctor may ask you to wear a face mask when you visit the practice.
• Take your temperature at home with a thermometer - this information can help your doctor assess your progress.
• Paracetamol is good for aches and pains, and for reducing high temperatures. Don’t use anything else for children unless you talk to your doctor or pharmacist first.

WHAT IF SCHOOLS AND CHILD-CARE CENTRES CLOSE?

Children spread influenza easily. Schools and child-care centres may close in an effort to control the spread of pandemic influenza or children who have travelled to an affected area may be asked not to attend schools.
• Plan now for children’s care as group care may not be available.
• Have materials such as books, school work, craft and other recreational activities suitable for your children at home
• Help schools plan for pandemic influenza. Talk to your school principal, teachers and parent and citizen’s organisation.

GETTING READY TO STAY AT HOME

During an influenza pandemic people may be requested to stay at home or may be too sick to leave their home.

Your family plan should include:
• identifying who could help with food and supplies if you and your household are ill
• identifying who could help care for dependent members of your family if you are unwell
• a list of your family’s current medical conditions and any allergies
• any medications your doctor has suggested that you need to keep handy
• contact numbers for work and school

HOW CAN I STAY INFORMED?

• Listen to local and national radio, watch news reports on television, and read your newspaper and other sources of printed and web-based information.
  • www.health.nsw.gov.au will be updated with current health information
  • www.emergency.nsw.gov.au will be updated with information regularly

WHAT SHOULD BE IN MY HOUSEHOLD EMERGENCY KIT?

Every family should have an emergency kit. The kit can be used in all types of emergencies, including an influenza pandemic, severe storms, floods and bushfires. The kit should contain:
• a battery operated radio (with spare batteries)
• torch (with spare batteries), candles and waterproof matches
• first aid kit and manual
- medications (including prescription medications), toiletry and sanitary supplies (including tissues, soap or alcohol-based hand cleanser) to last at least a week
- paracetamol suitable for all members of the family
- a thermometer that you have practised using
- special requirements for infants (e.g. nappies, formula), older people and people with disabilities
- three days’ worth of drinking water – at least 4 litres per person per day
- ready-to-eat tinned foods, dried fruit and other non-perishable goods
- manual can opener
- spare clothes and sleeping equipment
- copies of important documents (birth certificates, passports and licenses)
- a telephone list, including numbers of schools, child-care, work and mobile phones
- extra pet food if you have an animal
- playing cards or games

**HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?**

Further household planning advice and links are available from NSW Health [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)


The Australian Government’s Department of Health and Ageing has a public information hotline that will be publicised in a pandemic.

NSW Human Influenza Pandemic Plan

Annexure C - Public Information Guidelines

NSW emergency management plans are regularly updated. Printed plans may be out of date. The most current versions are available on the emergencyNSW website.

www.emergency.nsw.gov.au
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Introduction

1. The *NSW Human Influenza Pandemic Public Information Guidelines* (HIPPIG) provide a framework for coordinating the NSW Government’s public information response to ensure the public is adequately informed before, during and after a pandemic.

2. The HIPPIG supports and complements the *NSW Human Influenza Pandemic Plan* (HIPP) and the *National Influenza Pandemic Public Communications Guidelines* (NIPPCG).

3. Effective public information ensures the NSW community is kept well informed. This will aid in preventing the spread of disease and limiting the potential of elevated anxiety levels within the community.

4. Assisting the community in understanding the threat, preparing for and managing a pandemic will encourage community resilience and help reduce the overall impact of the pandemic by strengthening the recovery of individuals and families, the community and the economy.

5. The NSW Government has well developed public information arrangements to support NSW Health as the combat Agency. These arrangements will ensure that all Government public information is accurate, timely, consistent and coordinated.

6. The HIPPIG provides a framework for the whole of government public information response to pandemic. All NSW Government communications staff must be familiar with the HIPPIG.

Roles and responsibilities

Combat Agency

8. **NSW Health** is the combat Agency for pandemic or similar health emergency.

9. NSW Health **Media and Communications Unit** provides the lead for public information in relation to pandemics. The Media and Communications Unit is responsible for the public information campaign that will provide updates and advice to the community on the pandemic.

10. The Primary Spokesperson during a Pandemic or similar health emergency is the **NSW Chief Health Officer** or nominated representative.

11. The Chief Health Officer communicates regularly with the Australian Government Chief Medical Officer and other health jurisdictions through the Australian Health Protection Committee.

12. During a pandemic, the primary communication tool that NSW Health will use is the Health emergency website ([www.emergency.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.emergency.health.nsw.gov.au)) which will provide up to date detailed information for the media, individuals, business, communities, and NSW Government Agencies.

13. NSW Health websites will contain links to relevant Australian Government websites (i.e. [www.healthemergency.gov.au](http://www.healthemergency.gov.au)) and international sites (i.e. World Health Organization)

14. All relevant NSW Government websites should include links to the primary NSW website (likely to be [www.emergency.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.emergency.health.nsw.gov.au))

15. Other NSW Government spokespersons may speak within their area of responsibility.

16. All NSW Government public information containing any form of health message that is not sourced directly from the NSW Health website, needs to be cleared by NSW Health Media and Communications Unit.
Supporting Agencies

17. Depending on the scale and scope of the pandemic, Health may require support from other NSW Government Agencies.

18. The Director General Health may request the assistance of the State Emergency Operations Controller (SEOC) in managing the Government’s response to the pandemic. The SEOC will task the Public Information Functional Area Coordinator (PIFAC) with coordinating public information support.

19. The PIFAC may source Agency assistance through members of the State Emergency Management Committee’s Public Information Functional Area Sub-Committee (PIFASC). The PIFASC comprises membership of communications specialists from central, emergency management and community Agencies.

Responsibilities under the national arrangements

20. NSW has a number of responsibilities under the NIPPCG to ensure national communications objectives are met. This includes ensuring the NSW Government has adequate communications personnel and arrangements to respond to a pandemic.

21. Under the NIPPCG the National Communications Officers’ Network (CON) may be activated to support leaders during a Pandemic. The CON comprises membership from Commonwealth, State, Territory and local governments. NSW members are NSW Health Media and Communications Unit and the PIFAC.

22. The CON deals with whole of government issues and related public messages. Other national groups, such as the National Health Emergency Media Response Network may also be convened to address issues within specific areas of responsibility.
Agency public information

23. Although NSW Health is the combat Agency, a range of NSW Agencies may also be required to provide information to the public which is relevant to their area of responsibility.

Outgoing

24. Public information that contains any form of a health message must be either sourced directly from the Health emergency website or cleared by NSW Health Communications and Media Unit. Where it is unclear if messaging has health implications, advice is to be sought from NSW Health.

25. Communications that fall within the Agency’s area of responsibility should be cleared according to internal processes.

26. NSW Health will liaise regularly with responding Australian Government Agencies to ensure National and State messaging is consistent. NSW Health will ensure NSW Agencies are updated on any information relating to their area of responsibility.

27. In order to support vulnerable members of the community (i.e. the elderly), public information should encourage individuals to consider their neighbours’ welfare. This would aid to promote the concept of community resilience.

28. These types of messaging should be accompanied by advice on social distancing measures to ensure those helping their neighbours are not at increased risk of infection.

Incoming

29. It is likely that requests will come directly to Agencies through existing media networks.

30. Agency communications managers are responsible for consulting NSW Health on requests that contain any form of a health message.

31. NSW Health may seek the support of the PIFAC to coordinate incoming requests.
Communications tools

32. Consideration should be given to the different media avenues and tools available to ensure information reaches the different audience groups that make up the NSW community and may not access mainstream media sources.

33. It is likely that some or all of the information provided by the Government during a Pandemic will need to be translated into languages other than English. The NSW Community Relations Commission is able to assist with this requirement.

34. All of the common multimedia methods of information dissemination will be considered such as:
   - broadcast and print outputs via media conferences and releases
   - State and National inquiry and information lines
   - websites with information specific to NSW including: www.health.nsw.gov.au and www.emergency.nsw.gov.au
   - Newsletters, notices and other publications
   - Opportunistic presentations
   - Information Centres, both fixed and mobile
   - New social media such as RSS feeds, Facebook or Twitter.

Call centres

35. The Australian Government is responsible for activating a national call centre to provide general information on the pandemic.

36. NSW Health maintains limited call centre capacity. A call centre would be considered if there was a significant need to respond to individual enquiries about health concerns which cannot be address by a national call centre.

37. Other NSW Government Agencies may activate their own call centres to respond to inquiries specific to their area of responsibility if the situation requires.
Attachment 1: Key Messages

38. The type and demand for public information will vary before, during and after a pandemic. An ongoing priority will be to educate the NSW community and raise awareness of the pandemic and measures that can be taken to limit the impact.

39. As the situation will be constantly evolving, messaging should be regularly updated to ensure Government public information is current and consistent.

40. Agencies are responsible for monitoring their information output and providing updated advice where required.

Timing of key messages

Before a pandemic

41. Prior to a pandemic being identified within NSW, public education and awareness is a key priority for the NSW Government.

42. Educating the community at an early stage limits the impacts of a pandemic as it: enables preparation and planning; limits confusion and misconceptions about pandemic; can be used to start building community resilience; and informs the public about what the Government is doing to plan, prevent and prepare.

During a pandemic

43. The key priority of public information during a pandemic emergency within NSW will be to reassure the public by an ongoing awareness campaign and by providing detailed, accurate and timely advice about the evolving situation.

44. An effective public information response during a pandemic will keep the community informed at all times. This will assist in: limiting the spread of infection; limiting community anxiety; and promoting resilience.

45. Messaging will aim at advising individuals, communities and business on measures they can take to manage the pandemic such as personal health protection, support services, planning advice and other information relevant to the situation.
After a pandemic

46. Once the impacts of the pandemic begin to subside, the importance of public information will be aimed at preventing further outbreaks; aiding social, personal and economic recovery; restoring confidence; and providing advice on support services and assistance measures where appropriate.

47. Recovery messaging will vary depending on the scale and scope of the pandemic emergency.

Key messages by theme

48. Messaging suggestions fit within three key themes that the public will want to be informed about: 1. What is it? 2. What are authorities doing? 3. What do I have to do?

49. The detail and type of information will depend on the situation. As the situation evolves, so should the public information strategy. This will ensure the public are always adequately informed.

What is it?

50. Information on the virus. To limit community anxiety, this information should be provided as soon as possible.

51. If the virus eventuates outside of NSW, most of this advice will have been provided at an international or national level. It is important for NSW Government to continue to inform the community about the virus as the situation evolves.

52. Public messaging should be clear and concise and contain limited medical terminology to ensure it is easily understood.
   - what an influenza pandemic is
   - the particular influenza strain and its likely origin (i.e. avian)
   - safety messages about consuming animal products
   - how the strain differs to seasonal influenza
   - how influenza pandemic differs to a cold
   - most at risk (everyone/elderly/young/pregnant)
   - information about confirmed cases (eg numbers, location – where possible)
• information about likely transmissibility (spread) of the virus
• Information about confirmed deaths

What is the Government doing?

53. The NSW Government should provide detailed information on strategies and measures being taken to prepare for and prevent entry/spread including:

• actions being taken to monitor the international situation (NSW involvement)
• how the health system is preparing for an influenza pandemic
• how other Agencies are preparing
• stockpiles of medications and personal protection equipment (national and state)
• effort and money being directed towards preventing, preparing, responding and recovering to the pandemic
• vaccination advice
• the possible need to implement extreme social distancing measures which could include closure of facilities such as schools/day care/universities and cancellation of events with mass gatherings
• once implemented, extensive detail on the social distancing measures in place
• the potential need for quarantine or isolation
• once implemented, significant detail on the quarantine/isolation measures in place

What should I do?

54. Individuals and business will want to know what they can do to prevent or prepare and how they can manage. Messaging should include advice on:

• measures in relation to personal hygiene (hand washing, avoid close contact in public places, cough-etiquette, sneeze etiquette, tissue disposal)
• pandemic planning guidance (individual and workplace)
• when to start planning and what to plan for
• suggestions for appropriate food and medical stocks
• what to do if you get sick or caring for a sick person
• how are the social distancing measures (potential/anticipated /implemented) going to affect me and my family
• how are the quarantine/isolation measures going to affect me and my family
• available assistance
• where to find further information
## Acronyms

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<td>NIPPCG</td>
<td>National Influenza Pandemic Public Communications Guidelines</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIFAC</td>
<td>Public Information Functional Area Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIFASC</td>
<td>Public Information Functional Area Sub-Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEOCon</td>
<td>State Emergency Operations Controller</td>
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