

# During an influenza pandemic there will be information from many sources – who should I believe?

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## FACT SHEET FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

**This fact sheet provides an overview on credible sources of information for health care providers and organizations.**

When a pandemic emerges but has not yet reached Canada, where can I go for credible information?

- Influenza pandemics have historically emerged outside of North America.
- When the next influenza pandemic emerges, credible sources of information on the status of outbreaks globally will be available through the World Health Organization, the United States Centers for Disease Control and the Public Health Agency of Canada. Do not rely on media reports on information coming from these organizations; you should access this information directly through their websites. The website addresses are as follows:
- World Health Organization: **[www.who.int/en](http://www.who.int/en)**
- Public Health Agency of Canada: **[www.phac-aspc.gc.ca](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca)**
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control: **[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)**

When the pandemic arrives in Ontario, where can I get information that is relevant to me?

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is the single point of access for health information at the provincial level during an influenza

pandemic. The ministry will communicate with health care providers through:

- The ministry website at **[www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic)**
- The Ministry Emergency Operations Centre (MEOC) Call Centre (a hotline will be established once the MEOC is activated and the number will be provided on the ministry website and through INFOLine).
- Important Health Notices (IHNs) will be circulated by fax and e-mail on an as needed basis to health care providers with general information about the outbreaks and how providers should respond. They will also be posted on the ministry's website in real-time at: **[www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic)**. To get on the distribution list, please contact the Emergency Management Unit at: 1-866-212-2272.
- Directives to the health care system will also be sent on an as-needed basis to specific sectors of the health care system (i.e., community physicians, home care, hospitals) with information and direction for their sector. Directives will also be issued by fax and e-mail and posted on the ministry's website in real-time at: **[www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic)**.
- To get on the distribution list, please contact the Emergency Management Unit at: 1-866-212-2272.

- INFOline 1-866-801-7242 will be the point of contact for the public and will be a source of general information.

## Who is in charge of the health response for my community and how will they get information to me?

During a pandemic, outbreaks will occur at different times across the province. Public Health Units sit on municipal emergency management organizations that will provide direction on the response for your municipality. As a result, Public Health Units will provide advice on the timing of the implementation of government directives based on the timing and severity of the outbreaks in your local community.

In your community, the Medical Officer of Health will be the primary spokesperson for relaying information and direction to the public as well as local health agencies. You should contact your public health unit to find out how they will communicate with you during a pandemic.

To find out which public health unit is responsible for your community, go to the ministry website at:  
**[www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/contact/phu/phuloc\\_mn.html](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/contact/phu/phuloc_mn.html)**

## Worker health and safety information

How can I get information about worker health and safety during a pandemic?

Even when a provincial emergency has been declared, the Occupational Health and Safety Act remains the law. Your organization's joint health and safety committee or health and safety representative are credible sources of information.

## Workers compensation information

Procedures and protocols for insurance claims may be subject to change depending on the impacts of the pandemic on regulatory organizations, employers and unions. For accurate information and updates on workers compensation information during a pandemic, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) is a credible source of information. Contact information for the WSIB is available on their website at: **[www.wsib.on.ca](http://www.wsib.on.ca)**

## For more information

Visit our website at:  
**[www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic)**

Or call

INFOline 1-866-801-7242