

How is Ontario preparing to respond to an influenza pandemic?

FACT SHEET FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

This fact sheet provides an overview of the strategies Ontario is developing to prepare for and respond to an influenza pandemic in Ontario.

What is the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care doing to prepare for a pandemic?

- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) is working with local public health units, and health care providers in primary care, hospitals, long-term care homes, and home care to prepare for a flu pandemic.
- The Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic (OHP/IP) outlines the steps that Ontario can take to prepare for a flu pandemic before it arrives, and to respond to the pandemic once it is here.
- The OHP/IP was developed by the MOHLTC, who consulted with organizations concerned about the health and safety of employees, including the Ministry of Labour and employer representatives.
- The OHP/IP is available on the ministry's website at www.health.gov.on.ca

What steps are being taken now?

Ontario's plans include:

- Developing information for the public and health care providers
- Developing the Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic to support the health care system's response to a flu pandemic

- Ensuring that all reasonable precautions are taken to protect health care providers
- Monitoring circulating influenza strains and their effect in Ontario and in the rest of the world
- Stockpiling antiviral drugs, equipment needed for immunization and personal protective equipment
- Setting up distribution systems so drugs and protective equipment can be quickly distributed where they are needed
- Developing strategies to optimize the availability of health human resources
- Planning for the implementation of alternate assessment, treatment and referral centres (flu centres) to help keep individuals who are ill with flu away from hospitals
- Setting up communications systems that will provide fast and accurate updates to Ontarians on how to protect and care for themselves and their families.

The MOHLTC also coordinates its efforts with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). The agency developed the national flu pandemic strategy called the Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan.

What happens when an influenza pandemic arrives in Canada?

When a virus that can cause a flu pandemic has been found in Canada, public health officials and health care providers will follow the guidelines laid out in the Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan, the Ontario Health Plan for an

Influenza Pandemic, and their local pandemic plans to control the spread of the virus.

Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health is responsible for keeping Ontarians informed. This will be done through a variety of different media outlets, including:

- Influenza bulletins and fact sheets on our website
- Free telephone advice and information via TeleHealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000), or INFOline (1-866-801-7242)
- Media briefings and press conferences
- Advertising campaigns.

For more information

Visit our website at:

www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic

Or call

INFOline 1-866-801-7242