



# The Pandemic Planner

## A Monthly Newsletter for Health Care Professionals

Emergency Management Unit, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

December 2006

Another year is drawing to a close and there are many accomplishments to reflect upon and celebrate – from the dedicated and collective efforts to develop and release the third iteration of the Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic - to the successful and important local interagency planning across the province. Coordination of pandemic planning exercises and the important planning in-roads made with the funeral and poultry farming industries should also be celebrated and recognized. December's issue of the *Pandemic Planner* highlights some of the last accomplishments and planning activities during 2006. On behalf of the Emergency Management Unit, thank you for your work, support and dedication to pandemic planning and preparedness over the past year. We wish you a very happy and safe holiday season and we look forward to working with you in 2007!

~ Allison J. Stuart, Director, Emergency Management Unit

## What's New?

### *First Nations Chapter Released*

We are pleased to inform you of the release of the *Guidelines for First Nations Communities* – chapter 20 of the Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic!

This new chapter is the result of the hard work and dedication of the First Nations Technical Working Group, which include representation from the Chiefs of Ontario, Political Territorial Organizations, independent First Nations, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and First Nations and Inuit Health, Health Canada.

The chapter is featured in our "What's New" feature at: [www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic).

### *Improvements to Public Health*

On December 12, 2006, the government introduced the Health System Improvements Bill. A key feature of the proposed legislation would be the creation of Ontario's first-ever arms-length public health agency – the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion. The agency would be a centre for specialized research and knowledge of public health in the areas of infectious disease, infection control and prevention, health promotion, chronic disease and injury prevention and environmental health.

When called on during emergency situations, including provincial emergencies such as influenza pandemic, agency staff would provide scientific and technical support. For more information about the proposed bill, please visit:

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/> (December 12 news release); and <http://www.ontla.on.ca/documents/bills/index.htm>

(Public Bills Index: Health System Improvement Bill).

### *Web Refresh*

We are pleased to inform you that we have launched the refresh of the pandemic and emergency preparedness sections of the ministry's web site! The new design and layout improves user-ability, navigation within and between these web sections and easy access to important information, plans, guides, resources and programs.

The refresh also brought a "What's New" feature, to highlight new information and important updates available to the public, health care providers and other key sectors. Please visit our new sections and share your comments at: [www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic) and [www.health.gov.on.ca/emergency](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/emergency).

## You Asked....?

- The Public Health Agency of Canada released the 2006 *Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan for the Health Sector* on December 9, 2006.

### **Useful Resources On-Line**

*Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan for the Health Sector* can be found at: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cpip-pclcpi/>.

Study shows what helped mitigate the spread of the 1918 pandemic influenza: [http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20061211/ap\\_on\\_he\\_me/pandemic\\_plan\\_2](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20061211/ap_on_he_me/pandemic_plan_2)

Findings from an American think tank's survey of readiness of the health care system in the United States to respond to diseases, disasters and bioterrorism can be found at: <http://healthyamericans.org/reports/bioterror06/>.