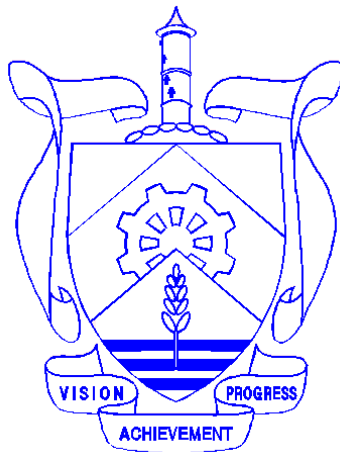


# City of Weyburn

## PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PREPAREDNESS PLAN



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

It is accepted by members of the medical profession that the world is due for another influenza pandemic and plans have been developed world wide to monitor for signs of a novel strain of influenza which would signify the start of a pandemic. It is also known that there will be a considerable lag time between the identification of a novel stain of influenza and the production of a vaccine for the strain.

In Canada, the federal government has developed a plan for response to an influenza pandemic part of which identifies priority groups for vaccination once the serum is developed, manufactured and ready for distribution. Distribution will be strictly controlled by Health Canada and it will be distributed in a predefined equitable and consistent manner across all provinces and territories.

In Saskatchewan, the vaccine will be distributed to the Regional Health Authorities (RHA) for distribution to target groups. Health Canada has made recommendations for priority groups to assist the RHA's in establishing distribution priorities within each jurisdiction's population.

The City of Weyburn believes that response to an influenza pandemic is a health issue and as such, will recognize the Sun Country Health Region as the lead agency in any local response. However, as a provider of essential services, the City must develop a plan to maintain the safe provision of these services throughout the pandemic period and to have a recovery plan in place for the post pandemic period.

## **2. Planning Assumptions**

In order to develop a plan which covers all municipal operations some assumptions must be made. Many of these assumptions are taken from the Saskatchewan Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan and others were developed based on the services the City provides.

- Vaccines will be the principle means of prevention and will be in short supply
- The vaccine will be injected and will require two doses
- Vaccine will require safe, secured and refrigerated storage
- Municipal Police and RCMP forces will not be capable of providing required security for vaccine
- Pandemic Influenza will occur during the winter months
- In Saskatchewan
  - 150,000 - 350,000 people will become clinically ill
  - 60,000 - 160,000 people will require outpatient care
  - 1,000 - 2,800 people will require hospitalization

- 300 - 1,000 people will die
- The attack rate will be up to 25%
- The virus will spread very quickly across Canada with the first peak being 2 - 4 months after the virus arrives in Canada
- The first peak in mortality will be 1 month after the peak in illness
- A second wave will occur 3 - 9 months after the first wave
- Each wave will last 6 - 8 weeks
- Outside assistance and mutual aid will not be available

### **3. Essential Services**

It is important to identify the services provided by the City of Weyburn and to prioritize them in order to identify which employees are critical to the safe provision of services and materials by the City. For the purposes of this plan, three levels of service have been identified – essential services are those which are critical to the safety of the citizenry and must be maintained at all costs, required services are those that are necessary but may be delivered at a reduced level or delayed for a period of time and non-essential services are those which can be terminated for the duration of the emergency.

- Essential Services
  - Water treatment and delivery including infrastructure maintenance
  - Police protection
  - Fire protection
  - Sewage disposal
- Required Services
  - Garbage pickup<sup>1</sup>
  - Snow removal<sup>1</sup>
  - Fiscal services
  - Administrative services
  - Legislative services
- Non-Essential Services
  - Recreation services
  - Tourism
  - Planning and Development - Building services
  - Parks and playgrounds

## **4. Immunization Priorities**

Using the Health Canada framework for immunization priorities, positions in the City of Weyburn corporate body have been assigned a priority from 1 to 3. Within each of these positions, further discussion may need to be made at the time to determine which individuals filling those positions will in fact be eligible for immunization. (See Attached Immunization Priorities)

## **5. Preventative Measures**

There are a number of measures which can help stop the spread of influenza whether it be pandemic or epidemic. First and foremost is proper hygiene. Influenza is spread by droplets from mucus membranes often transmitted through hand contact. Proper hand hygiene is required of all workers dealing with infected persons. The best prevention is washing the hands with soap and water on a regular basis.

Regular influenza vaccination will build up the bodies resistance to viral infections and thus it is recommended that all employees participate in an annual vaccination program.

Finally, the urge to return to work after a bout of influenza may cause the virus to spread as the person may feel better after 3 to 4 days but is infectious for up to 7 days after the onset of illness. Employees are to be encouraged to stay home until the infectious period has passed.

## **6. Other Municipal Issues**

The health system could become overwhelmed very early in a pandemic and may need to set up alternate sites for immunization, care of inpatients and outpatient care. The City may be asked to assist in identifying possible alternate sites and setting up these alternate sites.

The mortality rate could overwhelm the funeral industry and temporary morgues may be required to store corpses until they can be dealt with in the proper manner. This will raise other issues around religious and ethnic beliefs which must be handled in a compassionate manner by the municipal authorities.

It may be necessary to quarantine certain facilities to prevent the spread of the virus. In particular, the nursing homes may need to be quarantined. The quickest avenue of spread for the disease is through the schools. It may be necessary to close

schools to prevent the spread of the disease but this will bring about other problems for parents such as child care requiring them to stay home from work. Employee absenteeism will be a major problem for the community in general and in particular for the City as it tries to provide essential services with reduced staff.

## **7. Communications**

Public communications will be very important during a pandemic. However, it must be remembered that the pandemic is a health issue and as such, all press releases regarding a pandemic should come from the RHA. The City will only make press releases related to the delivery of its products and services.

### **NOTES:**

1. Garbage pick up and snow removal may be moved to category 1 based on the time of year and weather conditions. Garbage pickup can be delayed indefinitely in the winter but must be picked up in the spring and summer or it may create an additional health problem and snow removal will be entirely dependant on the amount of snow and the ability for emergency services to respond to incidents.