

**UNIVERSITY
of GUELPH**
**KEMPTVILLE
CAMPUS**

**CHANGING LIVES
IMPROVING LIFE**

**Contingency Plan for Pandemic Influenza
Infection Control**

October 2009

Contingency Plan for Pandemic Influenza Infection Control

Objective

The primary concern for the Kemptville Campus is maintaining essential services and ensuring proper care for all students while experiencing potential workforce shortages due to employee illness or infection as a result of an infectious disease outbreak, anything from a cold to serious illnesses such as influenza.

Effective pandemic planning will reduce the spread of the disease, decrease the number of cases as well as the number of hospitalizations and allow the Kemptville Campus to maintain essential services and to reduce the economic and social impact of a pandemic.

Goal

The goal of this document is:

To identify the issues that may impact or affect business operations of the Kemptville Campus and;

- To identify defensive measures that can be implemented to help ensure operational continuity, with particular attention to times of infectious disease outbreak.
- To provide employees and students with guidelines for day-to-day procedures to be used to reduce contamination and the spread infectious diseases on both a daily basis and/or during a pandemic. The information provided looks at each of these key issues during the various phases of an emergency:
 - Preparedness /mitigation,
 - Prevention
 - Response and
 - Recovery.

Safety Officer

To help meet this goal the Kemptville Campus has designated a Safety Officer. The Safety Officer is a member of the management team of the Kemptville Campus and is responsible for the health and safety for all Campus students, staff and visitors. The duties of the Safety Officer include the development, review, and maintenance of the infection control initiatives. The Safety Officer reports to senior management and will provide advice as to the need to restrict admittance to the premises, closing facilities etc., based on his accumulated knowledge of the situation at any point during the pandemic.

Summary

An infection control program is not a static program or document; it will be monitored, evaluated, and updated on a regular basis to ensure continued effectiveness.

Ongoing evaluation of procedures will occur to ensure compliance with current emergency management practices and health and safety standards.

Employees and students are encouraged to bring any suggestions or address any issues to the Safety Officer as soon as practically possible.

PREPAREDNESS/MITIGATION PHASE

Surveillance

Senior management ***WILL*** notify the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit (LGLDHU) whenever absenteeism due to influenza or any abnormal clusters of respiratory illness reaches 10% of staff. It is each department head's responsibility to report these figures to the Safety Officer every day.

Communication

The Campus administration will keep employees and students informed on all matters relating to a possible pandemic in as timely a manner as possible.

- Monitor health unit website on a regular basis

- Participate in any briefings with health unit
- Ensure staff and students are up to date with current situation.
- Publish any information from the LGLDHU on notice boards, website and media as it becomes available.

Immunization

Campus management *encourages* staff and students to have annual influenza immunization.

Posting LGLDHU sponsored clinic dates on Campus or in the village will ensure staff and students are aware of dates and locations where vaccinations will be available.

Key Issues

The primary infection control issue for the Kemptville Campus is the transmission of the virus.

Note: for purposes of this document the emphasis is on influenza virus causing respiratory illnesses. Should another form of pandemic develop any new issues that may need taking into consideration will be added or substituted as they become known.

- Viruses tend to spread easily and quickly throughout the population via direct and indirect contact.
- Influenza transmission occurs predominantly via large respiratory droplets that are expelled from the body during coughing or sneezing. Transmission of the virus occurs through contact with these respiratory droplets and absorption of them through the eyes, mouth or nose. Influenza particles are not airborne (i.e. they do not remain suspended in the air), and close physical (i.e. direct) contact of less than 1 metre is normally required for person-to-person transmission.
- The influenza virus normally resides in a living host, and cannot multiply outside of a living cell. Virus transmission can occur through contact with inanimate surfaces that are contaminated with body fluids or blood containing the virus (indirect contact). The virus can survive up to 48 hours on non-porous surfaces such as telephones, keyboards, doorknobs, desktops, and kitchen utensils.

Infection Control Initiatives

Management and staff **must** consider those initiatives that will minimize virus transmission and, therefore, lessen its impact on students and staff.

It is essential to note that hand-hygiene and good general health practices are the most important measures in mitigating the spread of influenza.

The Campus Safety Officer will provide orientation to the initiatives in place. Initiatives include one or more of the following components:

- Procedures for hand-hygiene and health maintenance
- Procedures for workplace and equipment disinfection
- Procedures for personnel screening
- Procedures for workspace and workplace access restrictions
- Procedures for use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

Hand-Hygiene: Regular hand washing with soap and warm water is the most important component of the infection control program. Hand sanitiser is an acceptable alternative if soap and water is not available.

Cough Etiquette: Cough into a sleeve or cover nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Use the appropriate receptacle to dispose of tissues. Wash hands post-cough/sneeze.

Distance: To help minimize virus transmission personnel are encouraged to maintain a certain distance from one another - 1-2 meters is considered an acceptable distance.

Personnel Screening: When an employee or student is sick it is essential that he or she not report to work while sick with a contagious illness. A person is considered to no longer be contagious 24 hours after all fever symptoms cease.

Workplace screening supports employees' and students' health and a sustained operational capability during an epidemic. To this end, ALL Kemptville Campus employees and students will report to the main entrance of the administration building, each working day regardless of where they work.

- Screening questions will be provided by the MOHLTC at the onset of an infectious disease emergency. Personnel conducting workplace screening at building or departmental entrances need not be health professionals but should be advised as to protocols to be followed.
- Personnel who may be ill will be denied admission to the Campus until assessed by a health professional
- Non-essential personnel and visitors will not be permitted access to the workplace.

Workspace and Equipment Disinfection: During the pandemic, management will make arrangements for additional daily cleaning regimes.

- Employees will be required to disinfect their individual workplace at the beginning or end of each day. All work surfaces including telephones, desktop and keyboard are to be cleaned with products supplied by the Safety Officer.
- Garbage containers used for disposing of cleaning materials will be covered and kept separate from food preparation and rest areas.

Workplace Access: While the Kemptville Campus' facilities are a public facility, during a pandemic, at some point during the outbreak it may become necessary to limit visitor access to those who have essential business on campus. Telephone meetings are to be strongly encouraged. The same screening procedures as those used for employees will be strictly applied.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care will identify any PPE requirements at the onset of an infectious disease outbreak. Protecting staff and students with proper PPE is of the utmost importance. If it is determined that the use of PPEs is necessary, the Safety Officer will,

- Identify individuals requiring PPE.
- Identify proper procedures for storage, distribution, and disposal.
- Provide training of personnel on equipment, and ensures proper fit of equipment.
- Ensure timely access to PPE by personnel.

Disposal of PPE: All contaminated PPE must be disposed of in covered containers.

Cross-Training of Staff

During a pandemic, staffing of essential services could be seriously affected. Staff identified as non-essential during a pandemic will be trained to relieve staff in positions deemed essential. A list of positions identified as non-essential is included in **Annex E** of this contingency plan. Employees will be trained accordingly and the plan reviewed on a regular basis.

RESPONSE PHASE

In the event of an outbreak campus staff will follow the above procedures as well as the new or modified procedures below.

SURVEILLANCE

Report to health unit **all** students or staff members ill with influenza like symptoms.

VACCINES/ANTIVIRALS

Ensure accuracy of priority list. Track vaccination (when available) or antiviral use (if available).

Note: At this time storage / distribution of antivirals/vaccines is considered to be the LGLDHU's responsibility.

COMMUNICATIONS

Campus administration will keep employees and students informed on all matters relating to the pandemic in as timely a manner as possible.

- Monitor health unit website for daily situation reports
- Participate in daily debriefing with health unit and all other municipal emergency operation centres.
- Ensure campus staff and students are up to date with current situation.
- Ensure the public is aware of which services have been suspended or scaled down.
- Publish any information from the LGLDHU on notice boards, website and media as it becomes available.

INFECTION CONTROL

Campus administration will support any public health measures and restrictions recommended and implemented by the Medical Officer of Health. Infection control interventions may be the only method available to delay the spread of infection during the first wave of the pandemic.

These interventions may affect human behavior and human rights therefore it will be essential that the campus administration, students and staff comply with any restrictions i.e.

- Stopping public gatherings including activities such as hockey games, bingo's etc.
- Ensure implementation of any travel or trade restrictions recommended by government authorities.
- Implement enhanced infection control that is increased frequency of cleaning particularly frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, handrails etc.
- Enforce recommendations regarding persons who are ill. The Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit recommends that visitors, students and staff with influenza like illness be excluded from the workplace until 24 hours after all fever symptoms cease and they "FEEL BETTER". Any changes to these directives would be available from the local health unit and should be in line with provincial recommendations. Implement all other directives (local/provincial/federal).
- Maintain at a minimum the number of people/public flowing through the campus. Encourage individuals to limit their movement to meet essential needs.
- Determine which services will be maintained, which will be scaled back and which will be temporarily suspended.
- Redeploy staff to areas needing assistance.
- Ensure access to counseling for staff.

RECOVERY PHASE

- Each department should develop recovery plans for their service
- Ensure counseling for staff.

SURVEILLANCE

- Continue to monitor staff and students and report cases of influenza to the health unit.
- Surveillance should be maintained, as another wave is possible.

VACCINES/ANTIVIRALS

Continue to encourage influenza vaccination for all staff and students. It is possible that a vaccine may only now become available.

COMMUNICATION

- Continue to participate in debriefing sessions if still being held. Frequency will depend on situation.
- Continue to monitor health unit and other Websites for updates.
- Inform students and staff.
- Review and evaluate communication strategies used during pandemic. Modify and improve communication plan as needed.

INFECTION CONTROL

- Continue to promote good hygiene and follow recommendations established by health unit.
- Return to routine infection control practices on campus.
- Restock supplies in preparation for potential second wave.

EMERGENCY MEASURES

- Evaluate emergency response.
- Do incident debriefing at the College level, as well as for staff.
- Modify and improve the plan.
- Each department should also review and modify their plans as needed.
- Follow steps for financial recovery (if available from provincial/federal government).
- Conduct Post-Trauma Stress Management seminars.