



## PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR MEDICAL OFFICES AND CLINICS

Planning for pandemic influenza is critical for ensuring a sustainable healthcare response. The following checklist is designed to help medical offices and clinics assess and improve their preparedness for responding to an influenza pandemic.

Note: The items in this checklist are generic and may not be applicable to all settings.

### PLAN FOR THE IMPACT OF AN INFLUENZA PANDEMIC ON YOUR MEDICAL OFFICE OR CLINIC

- Incorporate pandemic influenza into emergency management planning for your medical office or clinic
- Establish a pandemic committee to specifically address pandemic influenza preparedness for your medical office or clinic. Members of the committee should include persons from administration, medical staff, nursing, reception, environmental services, clinic personnel etc.
- Identify a pandemic influenza response coordinator with responsibility for coordinating preparedness planning for the medical office or clinic
- Identify an internal or external point of contact for questions/consultation on infection control measures to prevent transmission of pandemic influenza
- Identify a person responsible for monitoring public health advisories and informing members of the pandemic influenza committee and/or the pandemic influenza response coordinator when Bermuda is at increased risk of pandemic influenza
- Determine the minimum number and categories of personnel necessary to keep the office/clinic open on any given day
- Plan ways to manage staff shortages within your medical office or clinic due to illness in personnel or their family members
- Plan for either closing the office/clinic or recruiting temporary personnel during a staffing crisis if feasible
- Estimate consumable resource needs (e.g. masks, gloves, hand hygiene products, medical supplies). Develop a plan to address supply shortages. Consider stockpiling at least a week's supply of consumable resources, when there is evidence that Bermuda is at increased risk of pandemic influenza

### PLAN FOR SURVEILLANCE AND DETECTION OF PANDEMIC INFLUENZA IN PERSONNEL AND THE POPULATION SERVED

- Develop a system to monitor and review influenza activity in patients cared for by clinical staff and among medical office or clinic staff
- Develop a system to report unusual cases of influenza-like illness and influenza to the Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit, Department of Health
- Develop a system for evaluating symptomatic personnel before they report for duty

### PLAN FOR TRIAGE AND MANAGEMENT OF PATIENTS DURING A PANDEMIC

- Reinforce Standard and Droplet precautions for all relevant patient contact
- Create a list or database with contact information on patients who have regularly-scheduled visits and may need to be contacted during a pandemic for purposes of rescheduling office visits or assigning them to other points of care

- Create a list or database of patients in high-risk groups. This is helpful for prioritizing services, and eventual use of antivirals, vaccines, etc.
- Develop a system for phone triage of patients to determine who requires a medical evaluation and to limit office visits to those that are medically necessary
- Develop plans to manage patient care at the height of a pandemic including temporarily cancelling non-essential medical visits and designating separate hours for non-influenza and influenza-related patient care
- Consider designating a specific waiting area for patients with symptoms of pandemic influenza that is segregated from other patients awaiting care
- Consider distributing masks to symptomatic patients who are able to wear them (have adult and paediatric sizes).
- Post signage directing patients and those accompanying them to notify reception personnel if they have symptoms of pandemic influenza
- Consider ways to protect reception and triage personnel at initial patient encounters
- Establish roles of medical and nursing personnel in providing health-care guidance for patients with pandemic influenza

#### **PLAN FOR INCREASING ADHERENCE TO RESPIRATORY HYGIENE AND COUGH ETIQUETTE AMONG STAFF AND PATIENTS**

- Post signage on respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette instructing symptomatic persons to use tissues to cover their cough to contain respiratory secretions and perform hand hygiene
- Provide facial tissues, receptacles for their disposal and hand hygiene materials in waiting areas, examining rooms, etc.

#### **SET UP POLICIES TO FOLLOW DURING A PANDEMIC**

- Set up policies for staff leave for personal illness or care for sick family members during a pandemic. Consider the handling of staff who become ill at work, when personnel may return to work after recovering from pandemic influenza and when personnel who are symptomatic, but well enough to work, will be permitted to continue working
- Set up policies for flexible work hours; personnel who are at increased risk for influenza complications may be placed on administrative leave or their work locations altered
- Set procedures for activating your organization's response plan when an influenza pandemic is declared by the World Health Organization

#### **COORDINATE WITH EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS AND HELP YOUR COMMUNITY**

- Understand the role of the Department of Health and emergency responders and what to expect and what not to expect from them in the event of a pandemic
- Work with the Department of Health and other agencies in sharing what your medical office can contribute to pandemic response efforts
- Coordinate with other medical offices/clinic to improve availability of advice and services for your staff, members and persons in the population you serve