Pandemic Preparedness and Availability of Basic Utilities

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Why are we here today?

- Pandemic: It’s a viable threat
- We’re all in this together
- Practice good corporate citizenship
  - Help each other
  - Share knowledge
  - Why recreate the wheel?
Pandemic: It’s a viable threat

- H5N1 exists today
- Experts fear the H5N1 virus will mutate into a highly pathogenic virus
- No vaccine is currently available
- WHO reports H5N1 avian flu virus infections
  - Human infections: 252 with 148 deaths in 9 countries
  - Animal infections: flocks in at least 3 continents
History of Pandemics

- At least 10 pandemics recorded in last 300 yrs
- Pandemics in history have occurred within a range of 10 – 49 years of each other (avg = 24 yrs)
- The last pandemic began 38 years ago
- Statistically speaking ... the world is overdue for a pandemic
Patterns of a Pandemic

- Pandemics come in waves
  - Estimated duration of each wave is 6-8 weeks
  - First wave is estimated to be the most deadly
    - (if a vaccine is not available)
- Pandemics commonly experience 3 waves
- Estimated duration of a pandemic …
  may last as long as eighteen months
Pandemic: What's happening in the world?

Bird-to-human transmission is being increasingly reported. As of August 11th 2006, the World Health Organization has reported 236 human cases with 139 deaths in seven countries.

H5N1 avian flu virus has infected flocks on at least three continents. Experts fear this virus will mutate into a highly pathogenic form that may ultimately kill hundreds of millions of people in a matter of weeks or months.

Public health officials are anticipating hospitals and morgues will be overwhelmed. Medical supplies will be in great demand and short supply.

Scientific interpretation of the possibility of an Influenza Pandemic (not necessarily this strain):

"It's not a matter of if, it's a matter of when. It could be tomorrow or 2 years or 10 years from now, but it's going to happen."
How can we prepare for this threat?
Begin Mitigating Risk via . . . Social Distancing

- Social distancing - what does it mean?
  - Centers for Disease Control (CDC) rule is 4 feet
- We can mitigate risk with …
  - Working a safe distance from employees
  - Teleconferencing instead of meeting in person
  - Video conferencing
Precautionary Measures

- Mitigate transmission via precautionary measures
  - Washing hands frequently
  - Discontinue hand shaking custom
  - Sneeze into hanky or sleeve – do not allow your sneeze to be transmitted airborne
  - Sanitize surfaces, keyboards, telephone, door knobs and anything that you touch
  - Use personal protective equipment (PPE): respiratory mask, hand sanitizer, rubber gloves
  - Avoid contact with birds
The “Seasons” of the Influenza Virus

- Reservoir for 16H and 9N Influenza Viruses
- High/Low Path Avian Influenza
- ?
- "One-Off" Avian Influenza Transmission to Humans

- Reassortment Pandemic
- Reassortment or Key Mutation Pandemic
- Seasonal Influenza
Evaluate Essential Business Functions

- Identify and evaluate essential business functions
- Prioritize these essential business functions
- Detail essential business functions within your business continuity plan
- Identify non-essential business functions and document these as well
Essential Equipment & Supplies

- Identify essential equipment & supplies needed to support essential business functions
- Are these supplies & equipment in stock at your facility?
- Are these supplies listed in your business continuity plan?
Essential Vendors

- Identify essential vendors utilized within essential business functions
- Are these essential vendors listed in your Business Continuity Plans?
- Do we know if these vendors have excess supplies in stock that can fulfill future orders?
- What steps are vendors taking to prepare themselves for a pandemic?
- Have we identified back-up suppliers for the critical vendors used for our business?
Tele-commuting (Working from home with laptop)

- Can some employees work remotely with a laptop?
- Do they have a company laptop?
- Are laptops taken home on a consistent basis?
- Is the laptop configured for dial-up or VPN access?
- Does the employee have a Secure-id card or token?
- Have employees successfully connected to the network remotely?
- Are employees comfortable using a computer remotely?
Tele-commuting (Working from home without a laptop)

- If employees can work remotely but do not currently have a laptop ....
  - Do we know what software applications are necessary?
  - Have these applications been identified within the Business Continuity Plans?
  - Is it practical to consider acquiring a laptop now?
- Can other work be accomplished remotely without a laptop?
  - Do these employees have the proper tools to accomplish productive work from home?
Essential Records & Documents

- Identify records and/or documents which are essential to the essential business functions
- Are these records/documents listed in your Business Continuity Plans?
- Are these records/documents unique?
  - Are they the only copy which exists within the corporation?
    - If yes – it’s highly suggested they be scanned and retained electronically on a corporate drive
  - Is there a defined retention schedule for these documents?
Uniquely skilled or qualified employees

- Identify uniquely skilled or qualified employees
- Is this employee the only individual within the company with skills to perform a certain job which is critical in nature?
- How will you backfill for this person if they become ill?
- Document detailed tasks & cross train employees now
- Consider other options
  - Are there other employees who previously held this position that could potentially perform this job?
    - Retirees?
Employee Compensation

- Compensation for employees
  - Employees who are home ill
    - Sick Leave
    - Short term disability
    - Long term disability
  - Employees who are home taking care of ill family members
    - Family Leave (FMLA)
    - Vacation
    - Leave of absence (paid or unpaid?)
Internal Practices

- Identify internal practices (not corporate policies or procedures) which may require alteration during a pandemic situation
  - Example: employees on call for emergencies
    - Do practices exist which facilitate a change to the on call schedule rather easily?
    - Does ‘going off call’ require manual intervention?
    - Can this be automated?

- Document internal practices which may be affected in a pandemic situation & add to Business Continuity plans
Medical Supplies

- Medical supplies - great demand & short supply
- Use of PPE (hand sanitizer, respiratory masks & rubber gloves) are encouraged
- Are PPE supplies available in your supply room at work?
  - Does a local store have these supplies readily available now?
  - Are these necessary supplies which should be added to your Business Continuity Plan?
Payroll Considerations

- Identify and document how payroll is accomplished
- Evaluate the need to establish guidelines or procedures for entering time for absent employees
  - Who has the authority to do this?
  - Who has the authority to approve payroll?
- Cross train & re-train employees
- Evaluate the need for special software installation
- Evaluate the need for required software access or proxy rights to enter payroll information
In summary …

Create a plan & be prepared

- Create a Business Continuity plan (living document)
- Test or drill the plan
- Document lessons learned & incorporate back into Business Continuity Plan (BCP)
- Use the materials & resources provided today to move forward
- Utilize this opportunity to become prepared
- Contact peers & share information, after all we’re in this together!
Questions?
Thank you

Have a safe and secure day!