Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING FOR DISEASE OUTBREAK

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Manitoba

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last two decades we have become more aware of the eventuality of a disease outbreak and its potential for affecting public health, provision of essential services and our economy.

A disease outbreak is much more than just a problem for the health care system - it is a societal problem. An outbreak will be best managed by the coordinated participation and cooperation of governments, businesses, organizations and citizens.

A disease outbreak could cause a great deal of illness and death with major effects on society. Manitobans, like others around the world, are preparing to respond when the next disease outbreak arrives, even if we don't know when that will be.

Why should your business or organization prepare?

An outbreak will likely result in significant and long-term shortages, including the availability of employees, supplies and services. This will be enough to affect your ability to provide goods and services to your customers. During a pandemic, some businesses in areas such as hospitality, tourism, transportation and retail will also suffer loss of customers as the public may be cautious about visiting public places.

The results will be potential financial losses and a drop in productivity and revenues. Your reputation and market share may suffer, and you could face potential liability for not meeting contractual or regulatory requirements.

Can you recover? Possibly. However, businesses, particularly small-and medium-sized businesses that experience outages during disaster, have shown a poor track record of recovering financially. The majority fail within a few years of the disaster.

Fortunately, these issues can be managed through appropriate planning and preparedness activities. If you have already developed a business continuity plan you should be aware that it may not address all of the issues surrounding a disease outbreak. Your plan should be revisited and updated to address these issues.

This guideline is intended to help businesses plan and prepare for a disease outbreak. Given the wide range of business specialties, it cannot cover every sector. Instead, it highlights general issues and provides general guidance. It is up to the creativity and judgement of your business how to approach disease outbreak planning and preparedness that will best meet your organization's needs.

For further information, see the contacts at the back of this guide.

1. UNDERSTANDING THE HAZARD AND ITS EFFECTS

In order to develop a contingency plan, it is useful to use a most likely scenario that describes the nature of the event causing the emergency and the specific challenges your business will face.

This section provides some background on an disease outbreaks and its potential effects. Consider this information and apply it to your business to create a scenario as to what a pandemic would be like and the specific problems and issues it may create within your business and in your community.

1.1 Characteristics of new illnesses

Most people have not built up any immunity to new strains of different illnesses, including coronaviruses.

As a result, large numbers of people will become infected as a new virus spreads. An epidemic like this that spreads throughout the world is known as a pandemic.

For a new virus to be capable of causing a pandemic, it must be able to:

- infect people (not just mammals and birds)
- cause illness in a high number of infected people
- spread easily from person to person

Although no one knows exactly what the next pandemic will look like, a number of assumptions based on previous pandemics and medical research have been made for planning purposes..

1.1.1 Effects on the population

During an disease outbreak, much of the population will become infected, many will get sick and some will die. It is expected that there will be greater amounts of

illness and death during a pandemic than experienced during a regular influenza season. This may be made worse by decreased availability of hospital care during the pandemic.

1.1.2 Area affected by a disease outbreak

A pandemic will be widespread and will affect all of Manitoba, the rest of Canada, North America and the world.

In other emergencies, neighbouring local governments, other levels of government and non-government organizations can focus their personnel, material resources and other support in a small area. In a pandemic, demand for resources will be high from communities across the province, and therefore, resources and available support will be limited.

1.1.3 Disease Spread

Given the mobile nature of today's society, a disease can spread very quickly. Disease surveillance and attempts to contain a pandemic may slow the spread of the disease, but it will likely continue to spread.

1.1.4 Duration

To learn more about disease outbreaks consult with your regional health authority or see the resources in Appendix A.

1.2 Effects on society

The widespread nature of a disease outbreak is expected to have significant effects on many aspects of society in Manitoba.

1.2.1 Impacts to business operations

There are three anticipated effects on the operation of private businesses:

- employee absenteeism

- supply chain problems

- customer loss

a) Employee absenteeism

One of the most serious organizational risks posed by a disease outbreak is loss of personnel. This may be due to several factors, including:

- fear of becoming infected at work and other public places

- family commitments related to caring for sick family members, friends or neighbours, school or day care closures

- volunteering their time in the community to other essential disease related needs

- recommendations for self-isolation at home if they are a contact to someone who is ill

- illness/death

Absenteeism will also be affected by subsequent waves of an outbreak.

- Also, consider that some key employees may get sick or even die during an outbreak. This could result in a significant loss of knowledge and skills.

b) Supply chain problems

Your business operations depend on suppliers for services, materials, equipment, parts or supplies. You should expect that, during a pandemic, suppliers and business partners both locally and those located in other affected areas are likely to experience operational, production and shipping difficulties. This could be due to loss of workforce or loss of their own suppliers, as well as shipping difficulties related to potential border closures or delays as countries try to contain the spread of the disease.

To make matters worse, the demand for certain types of supplies may increase dramatically during a pandemic. Therefore, they may be very difficult to obtain in a timely manner. Some supplies may not be available at all.

c) Customer loss

Businesses where large numbers of people congregate including transit systems, restaurants, most retail businesses, theatres, sporting venues, community centers, etc. will be financially hard hit as public fear may cause downturns in business.

1.2.2 Financial effects of a disease outbreak

These operational problems may have a variety of serious financial implications for many businesses, including:

- lost productivity, revenue or sales while ongoing operating costs remain constant or increase during a pandemic. Under these circumstances, it may not take long for profits to fall, financial reserves to drop or credit to become less available for many small- and medium-sized businesses.

- loss of reputation and business with customers, especially if you are unable to provide products and services. This may take place regardless of a disease outbreak as customers, particularly larger businesses and government purchasing departments, may give preference to businesses and business continuity plans.

- loss of market share to competitors who are better prepared and can remain operational. Once you have lost customers to competitors, it may be difficult to get them back.

- civil legal liability or contractual penalties if you are unable to meet contractual obligations or regulatory requirements.

It is likely that a disease outbreak will cause significant financial losses to businesses that have not considered a pandemic and are ill prepared and unable to adapt to the needs of this emergency. With other types of disasters, history has shown that many businesses are not able to recover financially and some fail, adding to the long-term economic consequences for the community.

1.2.3 Effects for government

Municipal, provincial and federal governments will be affected by the same personnel and supply chain issues as your business. Most governments have plans for key departments and agencies to maintain basic services. However, you should assume that service disruptions will occur at times.

a) Health care

In addition to the workforce challenges, the health care system is expected to face heavy demands for health care. Manitoba Health and regional health authorities have plans and resources to manage these issues.

b) Schools

Decisions about ordering school closures will be made by public health officials after considering the current situation at the time of a disease outbreak.

2. OBTAINING MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT

Management commitment is needed to get resources needed to develop a contingency plan.

Most businesses and organizations do not have disaster management programs. The main reason is that most people believe "it won't happen here". Because of this, getting management to develop a plan may not be easy. Selling a disease outbreak preparedness program may require doing some groundwork to educate management about the risks of a disease outbreak and the costs and benefits associated with preparing for one. Here are some suggestions:

- Develop an outbreak-based scenario demonstrating the effects on your organization. This should include direct operational effects and associated costs, as well as the effects of production/service outages and shortfalls on revenues, market share and reputation. You could also highlight that most businesses, particularly small - and medium-sized businesses that are not prepared for emergencies, fail following a disaster.

- Provide information on the costs, time required and commitment of other resources in order to develop and maintain an outbreak preparedness program.

- Highlight the benefits of disease outbreak preparedness and general business continuity. This information can be obtained from this document or the many Internet resources dedicated to this topic.

Once management commitment is gained, the disease outbreak preparedness program should be communicated as an organizational program and priority.

3. BUILDING AND PREPARING YOUR PLANNING TEAM

3.1 Appoint a planning coordinator

Management should appoint a contingency planning coordinator to develop and maintain a plan, develop subject matter expertise, and coordinate response during a pandemic.

When selecting a person to fill this position the following qualities may be desirable:

- management authority
- team leader/facilitator
- good overall knowledge of the business
- familiar with other aspects of risk management and emergency response

3.2 Assemble a planning team

Assemble a planning team that includes representatives from all areas of the organization. Members assigned to the team should have a good knowledge of their respective area and the authority to make decisions on behalf of their department.

This type of joint planning helps build better working relationships, share knowledge and ideas, and understand roles, resources and limitations. It also helps coordinate plans, reduce overlap and duplication and make sure that all emergency needs are addressed.

3.3 Delegate responsibilities and tasks

Assign responsibility for tasks needed to coordinate the development and maintenance of the disease outbreak plan.

Individual areas within the organization also need to be made aware that they need to develop their own plans. These plans should address the continuity of their own operation and support the business' disease outbreak plan.

3.4 Establish a planning framework

Establish a framework for plan development, including:

- creating a planning schedule. This should include deadlines for stages of project completion and deadlines for reporting to senior management to get approvals and maintain awareness and support for the plan
- developing particular methods, standards or formats to be put into place at various stages of the planning process

3.5 Support departmental planning

It is likely that some of the people on the planning team will have never done any emergency planning before. They will need some help to get started and at various points in the planning process. Providing this help, identifying links to government and non-government sources of emergency preparedness information and having regular meetings to share ideas, information and suggestions will help others finish their plans.

4. PLANNING OBJECTIVES

The objectives of a disease outbreak response plan should include:

- Maintaining production of critical products or services

- You should consider how you will maintain the production of products and/or services that are time sensitive and critical for your customers.

Employee protection

Plans should include information on how your company can take reasonable measures to reduce employee absenteeism by making sure the workplace reduces the risk of a virus exposure. Provide a caring and supportive work environment during times of increased stress.

Respond to the needs of the community/provincial emergency

Some businesses may be asked to take part in local response by providing volunteers, facilities or other goods or services. Check with your community emergency program to see if they have identified any needs. If so, be sure to include this into your disease outbreak plan.

Manage financial issues

Your organization will need to manage the financial costs and economic effects of an emergency. This may include:

- dealing with potential reduced revenues and increased expenditures

- tracking preparation, response and recovery costs for re- imbursement under any announced financial recovery programs

Facilitate recovery

Your organization will also need to plan for operational recovery between outbreak waves and when the outbreak is declared over.

5. PLAN DEVELOPMENT

With your most likely outbreak scenario (section one) and plan objectives (section three) in mind, start to think about and develop the content of the disease outbreak plan. This will really be a set of sub-plans, each including the problem, the solutions, the responsibilities and the resources needed to solve each problem.

5.1 Planning process

5.1.1 Identify and analyze issues

This section shows ways to break down disease hazards and to gather the information needed for your plan.

a) How would this hazard affect my business?

Learn about the possible effects of a disease hazard (section one). Apply these effects to your business and community to identify and estimate the types of problems and how serious the problems might be.

b) What are the specific problems we need to solve?

Break down the outbreak problems to create a list of specific issues you will need to deal with if there is a pandemic.

c) What actions are needed to solve the problem?

List the actions that are needed to deal with each issue. Be creative when developing and selecting solutions. Remember to develop a flexible range of solutions since there are many things we will not know about a pandemic until it happens.

Once strategies are determined, develop procedures to apply the action. Procedures should be action-oriented, to the point and easily understandable.

d) Who is responsible for undertaking this action?

Plan who is responsible to carry out a solution. It may be a specific organization or an individual position. Don't forget to identify backups. For organizations outside of the business, simply outline their role.

e) What resources are needed to take these actions? Where can these resources be found?

Decide which resources (staff, facilities, equipment, supplies or information) will be needed for them to carry out the actions, where these resources may be found, any anticipated timelines and necessary details about how they can be obtained.

5.2 Plan guidelines

This section includes suggestions for things to be included in your disease outbreak plan and what may be needed, depending on your specific situation, to respond to an outbreak emergency.

5.2.1 Coordination during an outbreak.

a) Coordination team

Your organization should work to coordinate business operations during an emergency. This will need a coordinated management team. This group should focus on a number of human resource issues, including: workplace safety and protection measures; communication within the organization; tracking the health status of employees; tracking employee availability; how to suspend non-critical operations; and the re-assignment of staff to critical jobs.

b) Emergency operations center

Usually, the best way to coordinate a crisis operation is from an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). This is a place where the coordination team can work from during an emergency. The team should meet regularly to monitor operations, get and share information, and make and put decisions into place about operations and activities related to the crisis.

When planning an EOC, remember that it is a critical part of the response to the situation. The people in the room are critical to the operation of the business. Make sure there are backups for all coordination team members, and use a larger facility with more separation between participants to reduce the risk of catching the virus. You could also consider developing a virtual EOC, with coordination team members in different locations using telephone and computers for sharing information and making decisions.

5.2.2 Disease monitoring and information collection

Preparing now saves lots of time. However, the earliest possible warning will help provide the lead time needed to put business plans in place to be ready to respond to a disease outbreak. Monitoring information from dependable government and media sources will give you insight into the status of an outbreak and provide up to date information on the disease and preventive measures. These topics are critical to help your organization determine when and how to take further action. Assign responsibility to someone to monitor these sources and alert your pandemic coordination team.

5.2.3 Communication plans

Effective responses to a disease outbreak will include frequent and effective communication with all the people and organizations that your business works with regularly. Open and honest lines of communication will build better working relationships, coordination and cooperation and will help create confidence and alleviate fear, disruption and inconvenience.

Your communication plan should address:

a) Audience

Consider the types of audiences that will need to be contacted. This can include customers, the public, employees, unions, contractors, business partners, government agencies and other people and organizations.

b) Messages

Decide what kinds of messages will be used for each audience.

Messages should provide brief and factual information about:

- the effects of the disease outbreak on your business

- what that audience can expect from your business

- what they can do to work with you most effectively

- when suspended or reduced services will be restored

Be realistic and honest about limitations or delays in service.

c) Ways to communicate

Determine the most appropriate and effective ways to communicate with each audience. This can include websites, telephone, email, signs and advertising in print or electronic media.

d) Feedback

You should also have a way to collect feedback to check on the effectiveness of communications. Your messages should help various groups understand your situation and accept changes during the crisis.

5.2.4 Measures to minimize transmission

In order to help protect employees from the virus and to reduce fears about catching the disease in the workplace, your business should provide information about hygiene and avoid having infected employees and customers come to the workplace.

a) Hygiene measures to reduce the risk of catching a virus

The spread of a virus can be reduced by using proper hygiene. Provide this information to staff, contractors, customers and visitors.

- Frequent and thorough hand- washing, particularly after coughing, sneezing or before bringing your hands near your nose or mouth when eating, drinking or smoking, can reduce the risk of viruses. Make sure facilities and supplies are available for staff and customers to wash their hands. Ordinary soap and water are useful or, if running water is not available, alcohol-based hand rubs can be a good substitute.

- Cover your nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing, preferably with a disposable tissue. Be sure to dispose of tissues immediately.

- Avoid touching your nose, mouth or eyes; these are points of entry for the influenza virus.

b) Managing sick workers

During a pandemic, it will be important to reduce the spread of the virus at work. Organizations will need to adjust their policies and communicate with employees to make sure that sick employees do not come to the workplace until they are well. This will require:

- setting out clear policies and guidelines at the beginning of a pandemic about when employees do or do not report to work

- assuring employees that people who do not report to work due to illness or quarantine that financial benefits such as sick time and other benefits will be covered while they are away from work. You may need to consider adjusting policies to provide special sick time coverage for those who do not have any sick time available

- providing Manitoba Health Seniors and Active Living health advice to staff.

This will include information on how to look after yourself, others and your children during an outbreak and other pertinent information about viruses

- monitoring and tracking individual employee absenteeism

Your plan should also contain procedures for managing staff that get sick at work.

Procedures should include:

- sending employees home if they are sick. Staff should follow the advice of public health officials at the time of a pandemic

- providing them with Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living disease outbreak health advice

- backfilling key positions as required

c) Reduce employee interpersonal exposure

A strategy to reduce your staff's exposure to a virus is to reduce close contact with customers or coworkers for the duration of the pandemic. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways.

i. Reduce interaction with customers

As a general rule, visiting people experiencing symptoms of a disease or having them visit the workplace should be avoided wherever possible. Communicate this through notices, signs and by talking to employees.

When preparing for a pandemic, determine which customer interactions can be:

- done in different ways, such as in writing (mail, fax or e-mail) or by telephone

- postponed

If it is essential that certain types of customer service can only be done in person, consider:

- creating buffer zones of at least two metres (six feet) between an employee and a customer

- keeping meetings as short as possible

ii. Work from home

Businesses should consider allowing key employees to work from home during an outbreak, if possible. This may reduce their level of exposure to the virus and maintain a set level of productivity. When possible, develop a plan to support employees to work from home and test on a limited basis to make sure technical and procedural issues are identified and fixed.

d) Outside of work

Pass on to your staff any Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living advice about avoiding locations or activities that may represent a high risk of exposure to the disease.

e) Travel health advice and travel restrictions

Those travelling should seek and follow travel advice provided by public health officials. As usual, travellers should speak with a travel medicine provider, their public health office or their doctor about the trip and any measures they should take. During an outbreak, this information will be available by calling Health Links – Info-Santé (204-788-8200 in Winnipeg or 1-888-315-9257- outside Winnipeg) or by calling your local public health office in your regional health authority.

5.2.5 Maintaining essential services - business continuity planning

During a disease outbreak, staff absenteeism could be very high. In fact, you may not be able to keep every part of your business operating. Therefore, it is important to set priorities.

- Decide which products and services must be provided at all times. They may operate at a reduced service level if appropriate. Develop plans and focus resources to make sure your priority services are protected, supported and maintained.

- Decide which non-critical services may continue to operate but can be temporarily suspended as needed and staff and resources are re-assigned, as necessary, to critical services.

Information about changes to production or service provision and delays should be passed on to customers, business partners and the public as needed so effects are minimal.

a) Document all goods and services your business provides

Create a list of all goods, products and services your business provides to customers. Remember to focus on the goods and services and not the part of your business unit that provides the service. Some parts of your business units may provide several kinds of goods and services - some critical and some not - and some goods and services may be produced by several parts of the business working together.

b) Set priorities for good and service production

From your list, consider each good or service and identify those that are critical to your customers. Estimate how long production could be suspended or provided at a reduced level without becoming a critical problem. You may wish to interview customers about these issues. It is also useful to consider priorities in terms of the needs of your customers. Consider what their needs might be during an outbreak.

These can include tangible issues, like income and market share, legal and contractual obligations and the safety and security of the staff or the public. You should also consider issues like the reputation of your business and the reputation of your customer, client confidence and staff morale.

You may either rank the goods and services and/or divide them into categories (critical, non-critical) as a way to make decisions about which goods and services get cut first when resources become limited.

c) Document required resources

For each critical good or service that you identify, list the resources needed to create or provide that good or service. This will give you an inventory of critical staff, information, equipment and other resources that need to be protected. It also identifies different ways to operate if the resources become unavailable.

i. Human resources

List key positions, staff and skills.

Identify backups for key employees who may be unavailable because of an outbreak. Backups can include existing employees, contractors or recently retired employees who have the basic skills and knowledge to do the job. Make sure backups know their roles and receive any needed training so they can do the work. The plan should also contain ways to have necessary decision making or financial authority transferred to backups so they can do required tasks without long delays.

List contact numbers for each key employee and their backups so they can be contacted when needed.

Establish a system for tracking the health status of all employees so you can manage and re-assign staff to areas where they are needed.

Remember that once employees recover from the disease, they will be immune to that strain. At that point, they could take on responsibilities that might put other employees at risk of becoming infected with the disease.

In order to make sure they are available to work, key staff should be encouraged to prepare their families and teach them how to cope with a disease outbreak.

ii. Physical resources

Identify key physical resources that are essential to produce critical goods and services. Critical physical resources can include equipment and parts, vehicles, computer and communication systems, supplies and other material resources needed to support production of critical goods and services.

Supplies and sources

• Look where you obtain goods, materials and services for your critical business operations. Determine whether your regular suppliers (and their suppliers) have undertaken reasonable planning activities about business continuity.

• Check if they have addressed the specific issues related to a pandemic, including staffing and their own supply chain issues.

• Identify alternate suppliers or alternative products that can be used as backup if your usual suppliers are not available.

• Consider if resources may be available from non-critical departments.

• Remember that some resources may have long lead times or may become very difficult to get during an outbreak, either due to supply chain problems or because some supplies will be in very high demand. Consider increasing inventories of critical supplies and parts, to carry your business for a longer period of time.

iii. Equipment

For each critical system or piece of equipment (computer, manufacturing or processing), consider:

Does it rely on regular maintenance to operate properly? How long can it operate without maintenance?

Are there components that fail or need replacement on a regular basis?

Are there replacement parts readily available in-house or in the community? Can worn or damaged parts be fixed rather than replaced, and can this be done locally, in a reasonable amount of time?

iv. Information resources

Identify key information needed to support business operations or critical systems.

Make sure there is enough information and/ or training for backups to complete their roles without the help of the employee they are replacing.

Make sure written information for key processes or equipment is kept up-to-date and in known and easily reached locations.

5.2.6 Recovery plans

Planning for recovery will help accelerate a return to normal and reduce stress and long term costs to your business.

Although there will be no physical damage, your business may face a number of internal recovery challenges that need to be considered and have plans in place. These include:

- Psychological stress, low morale and temporary loss of productivity related to the death of coworkers, family or friends. Stress counseling and ceremonies to mark lost employees may be required

- Loss of corporate knowledge is possible if employees die during a disease outbreak

- A need to recruit and train replacement employees and temporary or permanent reassignment of employees to maintain operations

- Catch up on a backlog of work created by business disruptions including resuming normal services and full service levels

- Communication with customers, business partners and others to let them know the status of your business, what they can expect in terms of service, and when operations and services are completely restored

- Compiling necessary information to take part in any financial recovery programs that may be announced

5.3 Complete the plan

5.3.1 Create the plan

Once the necessary information is collected, compile it into a working plan.
Remember to organize and standardize information so that it as easy to use as possible.

Foreword	A brief statement by the most senior person showing commitment to the plan
Purpose	A broad statement to show the general goals and objectives of the plan
Activation	A description of who can activate the plan, the factors that would define an emergency and require the plan to be activated
Definitions	Include any definitions, technical terminology or acronyms that may not be easy to understand or could be misunderstood
Organizational Structure	Provide an organization chart showing the organization and reporting structure to be used during the crisis. Give brief descriptions of the key individuals roles within the structure, particularly if they are very different from regular roles
Contact Lists	A current phone list of all key personnel and their alternates
Departmental Plans	Include departmental plans for all business units, both critical and non-critical
Date	The plan should be dated so people know if they have the current version
Record of Amendments	As the plan changes maintain a list of all changes that have been made to the plan and when they were made
Distribution List	Maintain a current list of all personnel who have copies of the plan

5.3.3 Print and distribute the plan

Once approved, print and distribute the plan to all key personnel identified
in the plan and their backups.

6. PREPAREDNESS

6.1 Maintain the plan

Your disease outbreak plan will need to be updated regularly to account for new information or practices related to the disease, to reflect changes in your business and its operations and to keep contact and other information current. Assign responsibility for regular meetings to update information to make sure the plan is relevant, accurate and useful.

6.2 Training and awareness

Education sessions raise awareness of the risk and help prepare people and departments for their roles during an outbreak. Your business should consider:

- sending staff on general emergency preparedness and response training or disease specific training offered by government or private sector organizations

- conducting employee training and awareness on the risk and internal organizational response to a pandemic

- providing necessary job training to staff who are expected to serve as backups to other key personnel

6.3 Training exercises

Training exercises are a powerful tool that can be used to practice, educate, motivate and test plans, procedures or technology. Your business should consider conducting specific exercises to evaluate the effectiveness of a disease outbreak contingency plan. For information on planning and conducting an exercise, contact the Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization (Appendix A).

6.4 Resource development

Resources are critical to carrying out a disease outbreak contingency plan and making sure that critical equipment and services stay working. Your business may wish to consider budgeting to develop certain resources with long lead times or anticipated high demand to help cope with a pandemic.

CONCLUSION

The success of disease outbreak planning and preparedness efforts depends on what we all put into the process. Diligent planning by businesses and all levels of government will pay big dividends in the event of a disease outbreak. Plans can help protect your employees and help control the economic, social and psychological effects associated with this type of hazard.

In addition, consider this an opportunity that has the added value of increasing your businesses overall level of preparedness. Parts of a plan can be used during many other crises, such as a labour interruption.

They also improve your business' ability to manage other operational risks associated with supply chains and transportation disruptions.

APPENDIX A - Further Information

GOVERNMENT OF MANITOBA

Public Health
www.manitoba.ca/health/publichealth

Public Health – COVID-19 webpage
www.manitoba.ca/COVID19

Preparing for Pandemic Influenza in Manitoba
www.manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/pandemic

Manitoba Health - Office of the Chief Provincial Public Health Officer
www.manitoba.ca/health/cppho/

Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization
www. manitoba.ca/emo/

Manitoba Emergency Plan
www.manitoba.ca/emo/provincial/mep

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Public Health Agency of Canada
www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection

World Health Organization (WHO)
www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

APPENDIX B - Hand Hygiene

Hand-washing/hand hygiene reduces the number of bacteria and viruses on the hands. Hand-washing is the most important way to prevent the spread of infection.

When to wash your hands

Before:

- direct hands-on care of others
- preparing, handling, serving or eating food
- feeding others

After:

- contact with items known or considered to be contaminated
- personal use of toilet, wiping nose or coughing

Products to use

Plain soap and water:

- recommended for routine hand washing

Alcohol-based hand rub:

- Products containing a minimum of 60 per cent alcohol are an alternate when plain soap and water are not available.
- If hands are visibly soiled, heavy soiling should be removed before using alcohol based hand rubs for the best results.

How to wash your hands

Using plain soap and water:

- wet hands under warm running water
- apply soap and distribute over hands
- rub hands together vigorously for 15 to 20 seconds to create a good lather
- using friction, cover all hand surfaces including fingernails, web spaces, thumbs and palms
- rinse under warm running water
- dry hands gently and thoroughly with a disposable towel
- turn off faucet using a clean disposable towel

Using an alcohol-based hand rub:

- Apply two to three millilitres of the product to the palm of one hand.
- Rub hands together covering all surfaces including fingersails, web spaces, thumbs and palms
- The product generally dries within 15 to 20 seconds.
- Make sure hands are completely dry before performing another task.

APPENDIX C - What can I do to prevent myself from getting infected during a Disease Outbreak?

Public health officials expect that if a new type of virus emerges and causes a disease outbreak, this virus will spread in a similar way to the influenza viruses that cause outbreaks each winter. Influenza is highly contagious, so it spreads quickly in families and communities. There are, however, some steps you can take to reduce your risk of infection.

Improve your overall health.

In general, healthier people are better at fighting off disease. To stay healthy, you should eat healthy foods, live an active lifestyle and not smoke. Avoid heavy alcohol consumption and try to maintain a positive and balanced outlook.

Wash your hands often.

Washing hands is the most effective way to prevent the spread of disease. Get into the habit of washing your hands often with soap and warm water, scrubbing your wrists, palms, fingers and nails for 15 to 20 seconds. Rinse and dry with a clean towel. This should be done especially before meals, after using the toilet, and after you cough, sneeze or blow your nose. Teach your children to do the same.

If you can, avoid visiting people who are sick.

This will help to prevent you from getting infected. This advice must be balanced with the need to provide support and care to sick people. Caregivers to sick people should wear a mask when coming face-to- face with a coughing individual to reduce the spread of the virus.

Avoid large crowds.

Remember that large crowds are ideal for the spread of viruses, so consider staying at home. Wearing masks to prevent transmission of a virus is not helpful when it is circulating in the community.

Don't share eating utensils or drinks.

If a family member is sick, keep their personal items (ex: towels and toothbrushes) separate from those of the rest of the family.

What if I think I have the virus?

Avoid going to work or social gatherings if you are sick. Wear a mask if you need to visit your doctor. At the time of a pandemic, Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living will provide information on steps you can take to help care for yourself if you have the virus.

What if my child is sick?

Sick children should be kept home from school and daycare. At the time of an outbreak, Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living will provide information on steps you can take to help care for your children if they have a virus.

DURING A DISEASE OUTBREAK, IT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO:

Follow directions given by public health.

These may change as more information becomes available about the characteristics of the particular virus causing the outbreak.

Follow infection control procedures if caring for a person with influenza.

Providing care to an individual with a virus will be common during an outbreak. The likelihood of transmitting the disease is reduced by taking basic precautions.

APPENDIX D - Disease Outbreak Contingency Planning and Preparedness Checklist

Activity

UNDERSTANDING THE HAZARD AND ITS EFFECTS	COMPLETE	IN PROGRESS	NOT STARTED
Have you developed a basic understanding of the characteristics and effects of a disease outbreak and applied these effects to your business and community?			
MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT	COMPLETE	IN PROGRESS	NOT STARTED
Have you obtained management commitment and allocated human and financial resources to go ahead with planning and preparedness activities?			
PLANNING TEAM	COMPLETE	IN PROGRESS	NOT STARTED
Has an outbreak contingency planning coordinator been assigned and a planning committee established that includes representatives from all business units?			
Have you outlined a planning schedule and assigned responsibilities to planning committee members and business units?			
Have you identified key business partners, labour organizations and other key organizations that should be consulted or communicated with as part of the planning process?			
PLANNING - Business Continuity	COMPLETE	IN PROGRESS	NOT STARTED
Have you evaluated possible increases or decreases in demand for your products or services during a disease outbreak?			
Have you evaluated and prioritized your business activities considering possible demand during a disease outbreak?			
Has this priority list been approved by senior management?			
Have you evaluated potential financial costs and identified reserves or financing to remain operating?			
Does your plan allow for expected employee absenteeism due to illness or family commitments?			

Activity

PLANNING - Business Continuity *cont'd*	COMPLETE	IN PROGRESS	NOT STARTED
Have you identified critical personnel, assigned and trained backups or replacement personnel?			
Have you identified critical equipment and have reliable sources in place for servicing, parts and repairs?			
Have you identified key materials and suppliers and evaluated contracts and suppliers and shippers abilities to maintain an adequate flow of supplies during a disease outbreak?			
Have you identified alternate supply sources or increased key inventories in case of existing supply chain problems?			
PLANNING - Crisis Coordination	COMPLETE	IN PROGRESS	NOT STARTED
Have you assembled and trained a coordination team to address operational and communication needs during a disease outbreak?			
Have you developed plans and resources to establish an emergency operations centre?			
PLANNING - Employee Protection	COMPLETE	IN PROGRESS	NOT STARTED
Have you developed policies, programs and information materials to reduce exposure by promoting respiratory hygiene, excluding ill employees and reducing or modifying customer and employee contact?			
Do you have a policy regarding employee sick time and benefits that encourage ill employees to remain at home?			
Has this been communicated to all employees?			
Have you developed a policy for dealing with employees who develop symptoms in the workplace?			
Have you obtained enough hygiene supplies for a disease outbreak?			

Activity

PLANNING - Employee Protection *cont'd*	COMPLETE	IN PROGRESS	NOT STARTED
Do you have ready access to reliable, local and up-to-date information about the disease and recommended actions to take?			
Do you have a policy for travel restrictions and guidance for employees returning from affected areas?			
Do you encourage employee well being and provide for and track annual influenza vaccination for employees?			
Communications Plan	COMPLETE	IN PROGRESS	NOT STARTED
Have you developed a communications plan to regularly communicate with customers, employees, business partners and other target groups during an outbreak?			
Have you developed a means of tracking employee availability and re-assigning employees in a timely manner?			
Have you evaluated potential effects of travel and border closures?			
Have you evaluated and implemented ways for employees to work from home or to work alternate hours?			
Have you established a system to monitor reliable information sources and triggers for implementing specific components of your plan?			
Have you consulted with local, regional or provincial authorities to determine if you will be requested to render assistance to community response?			
Have you provided information to employees and others about your plans and personal ways to reduce the effects of an outbreak?			

Activity

COMPLETION	COMPLETE	IN PROGRESS	NOT STARTED
Has the plan been approved by senior management?			
Has the plan been assembled and distributed to key personnel?			
PREPAREDNESS	COMPLETE	IN PROGRESS	NOT STARTED
Have key personnel received necessary training?			
Have backups been cross-trained in their responsibilities?			
Have you exercised the plan?			
Is the plan being kept current?			