Health & Social Services Dept.

NORFOLK   HALDIMAND

Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit
Ontario Works & Social Services
Social Housing

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HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

Influenza Pandemic
Response Plan

A Tool Kit For Business Continuity Planning

HALDIMAND-NORFOLK
HEALTH UNIT

Message from the Medical Officer of Health

September, 2007.

A wise man once said: "The further back I look, the further ahead I can see." The adage speaks eloquently to the wisdom of learning from history. With that lesson in mind, the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit has been engaged in a major planning effort in recent years to prepare our community for the inevitable occurrence of the next influenza pandemic. I am pleased to introduce this Business Continuity Planning Tool kit as one of the products of this planning process.

Thanks to the telescopic lens of history, we know for certain that there will be another flu pandemic. What we don't know is when that outbreak will take place and how virulent the attack will it be. We can, however, take some reasonable precautions that will prepare us for such an event.

A pandemic is an outbreak that covers a wide geographic area and involves a large portion of the population. In the last century alone, we faced three major influenza pandemics, including the Hong Kong flu of 1968, the Asian flu of 1957 and the Spanish flu of 1918, the latter resulting in considerable loss of life worldwide.

It is predicted by some that the next pandemic could very likely impact 30-35% of the population. In Haldimand and Norfolk counties, with a combined population of 111,043, it is estimated that this could result in thousands of our local residents seeking medical treatment. How will our businesses and services cope with such a rate of employee absenteeism? How will we continue to provide even a minimum of service? Preparation is the universal key. Within these pages you will find a comprehensive guide on how to develop a personalized influenza pandemic plan for your business or organization. I would encourage you to make use of this tool, as we have customized it specifically to meet your needs.

I also wish to advise the community that this is just one of the many tools and contingencies your Health Unit is developing in preparation for a flu pandemic. We are working in concert with health authorities within the provincial, national and international levels to ensure that every possible mechanism is in place to best protect the health of our community as needs arise.

Dr. Malcolm Lock, MD, MPH
Acting Medical Officer of Health
Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit

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Disclaimer: This Tool Kit is intended to be a guide only. The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit is not responsible for any errors, omissions, misuse and/or misinterpretation.

Influenza Pandemic Response Plan
Business Continuity Planning Tool Kit

Background

Influenza has been with us for centuries. It causes severe illness and death every winter in North America, attacking the elderly and the debilitated with particular ferocity. Every winter, outbreaks of influenza in hospitals and long-term care homes require public health resources to control the spread and minimize the impact of influenza.

Outbreaks of influenza have been known to occur for centuries, and three influenza pandemics have occurred in the previous century alone – the Spanish (1918), Asian (1957) and Hong Kong (1968) pandemics. The Spanish pandemic killed an estimated 20 million people worldwide in two short years with some experts reporting death tolls as high as 40 million. Entire towns were devastated and many families were wiped out as a result of influenza. Physicians tending to soldiers in military camps wrote letters home about young, healthy men who came to the infirmary in the morning with a cough and were dead by nightfall. The virus quickly made its way around the globe.

Experts predict that another influenza pandemic will occur, although the timing and pattern of the pandemic are unpredictable. When it does occur, the impact will be devastating. Estimates suggest up to eight million people in Ontario will be infected. Of those infected, up to four million will become clinically ill and 12,000 will die.

In terms of preparing for the impact of a pandemic in the work environment, it has been projected that approximately 35% of the workforce may be absent due to the effects of the virus on individuals and families. This clearly underscores how important it is for agencies and businesses to prepare plans to ensure continuity of essential services.

Based on information taken from previous pandemics, the impact of an influenza pandemic in Haldimand and Norfolk, based on a population of 111,000 with a 35% attack rate, could be:

- 38,500 people infected.
- 17,325 people will need medical advice.
- 20,405 people requiring outpatient care.
- 462 people requiring hospitalization.
- 115 deaths (80 of which would occur in hospital).

Work has occurred at the federal level that has resulted in the development of a contingency plan that reflects the role of the federal government in an influenza pandemic response. Similarly, at the provincial level, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has undertaken a planning process in collaboration with various stakeholders for an Ontario-wide response to an influenza pandemic.

Given the federal and provincial forecasts, municipalities across Ontario need to prepare for such an event. The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit has been actively preparing for this event for several years so that we will be positioned to meet the challenges of an influenza pandemic, whenever it occurs.

The next step in this process is the development of Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) to maintain essential services or functions during a pandemic emergency. For both government and business, there is an expectation from the public and from employees that services will continue as usual and uninterrupted. In this context, the experiences and disruptions created by the 2003 power outage and the SARS outbreak emphasize the benefits of the emergency planning process.

Your agency/organization could be faced with extremely high absenteeism during an influenza pandemic. For this reason, your organization should plan ahead to ensure you have the capacity to maintain service delivery during that time.

Response plans are necessary to ensure business continuity is maintained during a pandemic. To help businesses, this Tool Kit for Business Continuity Planning has been prepared to make the planning process easier and to provide a consistent approach for all those involved.

This kit will lead you through the process of identifying:

- Your essential services.
- Required staffing needs to keep essential services running.
- Staff skill sets in your organization.
- Opportunities for reallocation of staff to fill positions vacant due to absenteeism during a pandemic emergency.

This Tool Kit provides you with all of the resources you will require to develop your organization's Business Continuity Plan.

Influenza Pandemic Business Continuity Planning Process

The Business Continuity Planning process consists of the following steps:

1. Establish a Corporate Steering Committee or individual to oversee the planning process.
2. Establish a Business Continuity Planning Committee or Working Group.
3. Identify Essential Services/Functions (see definition on page 7).
4. Identify required skill sets and opportunities for staff reallocation.
5. Identify any relevant issues/implications for implementation.
6. Prepare a Business Continuity Plan for each essential service/function.
7. Compare with the Preparedness Checklist (see Appendix F on page 18).
8. Review your Business Continuity Plan with the Corporate Steering Committee.
9. Revise and test the plan and update as required.

STEP 1: Establish a Corporate Steering Committee or Individual

Corporate Support and Commitment

The key to the success of any initiative of this significance is corporate support and commitment. Corporate leaders, through their actions, communications, priority setting and direction, must instil the importance of influenza pandemic business continuity planning throughout their corporations. This may require direct communication and training/education on the subject matter.

The first step in the planning process is to establish a Corporate Steering Committee or a person to oversee, support and/or direct the process. The steering committee should establish terms of reference with timelines. The corporate committee/representative will also provide a valuable review forum as work proceeds towards developing a Business Continuity Plan. Documentation throughout the process is highly recommended. There are several templates in the appendices of this Tool Kit that can facilitate your documentation needs during the business continuity planning process.

In addition to a Corporate Steering Committee, it is recommended that your organization establish a Business Continuity Planning Committee or Working Group that will be responsible for developing the Business Continuity Plan.

STEP 2: Establish a BCP Committee/Working Group

Representation on this committee/working group is very important. Participants should be able to identify essential services/functions and understand the implications of service disruptions.

The following points should be considered when establishing the committee/working group:

- Use an existing committee/working group that is already in place that deals with emergency planning issues.

- If necessary, establish a new committee/group to conduct the business continuity planning process.
- The committee/group members should be from the senior level with decision making authority.
- Representatives from each business unit should be involved and must be able to identify the resources, issues and solutions related to the business continuity planning process.
- Representatives must understand the reporting structure and decision-making process within their respective divisions, departments and/or corporations.
- Develop terms of reference and submit them to the Corporate Steering Committee for review and/or approval.
- Involve union and/or association representatives if relevant.

Members of the committee should review the templates contained in the appendices and make any changes to suit the needs of their business units. The templates, in addition to serving as tools for essential services/functions identification as outlined in Step 3, can also be used as documentation tools.

STEP 3: Identify Essential Services/Functions

The objective of the business continuity planning process is to determine how an organization will maintain essential services/functions in the event of significant staff absenteeism.

To begin the discussions related to essential services/functions, it is important to reach a common understanding of what determines an "essential service and/or function."

An essential service is defined as:

- A service and/or function that when not delivered creates an impact on the health and safety of individuals.
- A service and/or function that may lead to the failure of a business unit if activities are not performed in a specified time period.

In some organizations, there are also essential services and/or functions that must be performed to satisfy regulatory requirements. Also, depending on the nature of the service/function, the impact may be immediate or may occur over time.

Experts suggest that during an influenza pandemic, organizations may experience staff absenteeism rates of 30% to 35 % for extended periods of time. This figure does not include the "sympathetic sick" (i.e., people that may be required to stay home to care for ill family members). This means that organizations may be forced to modify, reduce or even eliminate specific services/functions to cope with the impacts of a flu pandemic. The impact of staff absenteeism may be across the organization or localized to specific business units.

As you begin discussions about essential services/functions, you may find that you have existing resources that you can use to extract information about essential services in your organization (e.g., emergency plans, Y2K plan, etc.). You may recall that the focus of emergency planning for Y2K was on contingency plans to deal with equipment and technical disruption. For an influenza pandemic, the focus is on how to maintain essential services from a staffing perspective. Your experiences during the 2003 power outage may also be helpful in identifying essential services.

Another important element of the business continuity planning process is to identify not only the generally accepted essential services/functions, but any additional services/functions that will be created as a result of the influenza pandemic response. This type of service is generally referred to as "surge activity" or "enhanced services demands" (e.g., increased demand for customer service due to service interruptions resulting from staff shortages). This will have a significant impact on Health and Emergency Services Departments.

The following steps may help your organization identify essential services/functions:

- Identify **all** the services/functions performed by the business units.
- Identify any "surge activities" that may be created or increased as a result of the influenza pandemic response.
- Identify any services that may be performed from home and/or by external sources or contracted out.
- Sort the services/functions by department/division and/or the business unit into three categories:

- Priority A: essential services /functions.
- Priority B: services/functions that can be suspended for a short period of time (e.g., services that can be suspended for one month).
- Priority C: services/functions that can be suspended for an extended period of time.

You have now identified your Essential Services/Functions.

STEP 4: Identify Required Skill Sets and Staff Allocation

A critical step in the business continuity planning process is to identify the number of staff and necessary skills required to perform and maintain essential services/functions.

This information will be vital when it becomes necessary to reallocate staff resources within the business unit or across the corporation. The following steps may help:

- Identify the number of staff (by classification) required to maintain the essential services/functions. Include essential services/functions created or increased by the "surge activity." Examples of staff classifications include customer service agents, electricians, chartered accountants or data entry clerks.
- Identify any special requirements necessary to perform the essential services/functions (e.g., a licence to operate heavy machinery).

Continue to use the document in Appendix B as you move through the process of identifying staff allocations for essential services/functions. This will help you capture the information necessary to develop your plan.

STEP 5: Identify Any Relevant Issues/Implications for Implementation

An important step in the process is to identify any issues and/or implications that may result from, or be created through, any essential service/function reduction, modification and/or elimination.

Each should be discussed, and any relevant comments/solutions should be documented.

It is recommended that part of this process include documentation and a planned response for each Priority A essential service/function.

You may find the following list useful when developing your plan and documenting the responsibilities of designated individuals within the business unit for the identified essential services/functions. (This provides a quick of overview of key areas to consider. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care have also prepared a more detailed Emergency Preparedness Checklist, located in Appendix F.)

A sample template to facilitate the documentation of action plans required for an essential service is included in Appendix E.

Activation of Plan

- Has a notification system been documented to activate/terminate the contingency plan?
- Who has decision-making authority, and what are the identified essentials services/functions?
- Who are their alternates if they are unavailable?

Planning

- Have there been discussions with key external partners regarding their pandemic readiness plans for business continuity?
- Is there a need to involve external individuals in the preparation and review of a Business Continuity Plan for your organization (e.g., elected officials, unions, legal counsel, etc.)?
- Has the process for decision-making been reviewed and documented?
- Have all relevant issues/implications and action plans been documented?
- Have alternatives to face-to-face group meetings during a pandemic emergency been considered? This is par-

ticularly important to prevent the spread of influenza, as it is transmitted easily from person to person (before a person begins to exhibit symptoms) through coughing and sneezing or contact with contaminated surfaces such as unwashed hands, phones and eating utensils.

- Have plans been developed for potential work alternatives such as alternate work sites or work-at-home arrangements for key people at risk?
- Has each essential service been reviewed to consider the implications of service modifications, reductions and/or elimination?

Policies and Procedures

- Have existing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) been reviewed and modified and/or revised as needed?

Surveillance/Attendance

- Is there a process established to monitor staff absenteeism within each business unit?
- What level of staff absenteeism will necessitate a change in the delivery of any essential service/function?
- If your organization can no longer function due to extremely high absenteeism, what are the implications and which business units/divisions would still be required to continue (e.g., finance, human resources) to provide employee support?

Delivery of Essential Services to the Community

- Does your business have responsibility for providing services to the community during an emergency?

Delivery of Services

- What are the implications when a specific essential service/function needs to be modified? (Consider direct community impact with reduction in services.)
- Identify any options that may exist to maintain each essential service/function, such as cancellation of vacations; approval of overtime; re-deployment of staff; cross-training; contracting services out; use of volunteers, part-time staff, retired staff or other staff resources; mutual aid, etc.
- Consider the sustainability of service reductions for a period of a number of weeks or months.

Human Resources

- Will cross-training be required?
- Do re-deployed staff and/or volunteers require security checks or special clearance?
- Are single incumbent positions, security codes, access and passwords an issue? Do you have staff from other areas that can be re-allocated to these types of positions?
- Are there issues relating to a collective agreement?
- Do you require any advance approval to use staff that may not possess the necessary certifications (e.g., licences, etc.)?
- What are the implications pertaining to due diligence, liability (legal and civil), public image and confidence?
- Has a list of resource needs been developed including procurement of people, equipment/materials, source and contact information for each?

Communications

- Have you prepared a communication strategy for internal and external partners?

Testing the Plan

- Has the Business Continuity Plan for your organization/business been tested?
- Has a process been established to conduct regular reviews of the Business Continuity Plan for your organization/business?

STEP 6: Documentation for each Essential Service/Function

The documentation of decisions and actions for each essential service/function is the final step in drafting a Business Continuity Plan. This step should be taken once you have:

- Identified essential services/functions.
- Identified any relevant issues/implications that may arise when the level of service/function is modified.

This portion of the plan details how each essential service/function is maintained, reduced, modified and/or eliminated; who has decision-making authority; what solutions will be put in place; any necessary actions to follow and any communication strategy. A template has been provided in Appendix E to document this process.

STEP 7: Compare to the Preparedness Checklist

Review the Preparedness Checklist (Appendix F) to ensure that all issues have been addressed, including the decision-making process/authority for implementing service reduction. As part of this review, additional documentation may be required to ensure that all critical elements have been addressed. Some of the issues may fit best in your overall organizational emergency response plan.

STEP 8: Review with the Corporate Steering Committee

A draft of the Business Continuity Plan should be presented to your Corporate Steering Committee for review and/or comment. This will help establish consistency for all business units/departments in the business continuity planning process and ensure that all critical elements in the plan are addressed. In addition, the Corporate Steering Committee will monitor the progress of the initiative and develop a better understanding of the overall corporate impact of an influenza pandemic emergency.

STEP 9: Revise and Test the Plan and Update It.

Once the Business Continuity Plan is complete, you need to circulate the plan for information and training purposes within your organization. As with any other plans, the Business Continuity Plan will require at least an annual review for any necessary revisions.

Last but not least, conducting an emergency exercise to test the plan will help your staff understand the Business Continuity Plan, how and when it's activated, who is responsible for what and how it fits with your corporate strategy to deal with an influenza pandemic emergency.

Appendix A:
Essential Service Response Priority Listing

Complete the attached form (Appendix B) by working through the following process. A completed template is provided as an example.

1. Identify all services/activities within a program/division/business unit and list them in the Service/Activity column.

2. Services that must be maintained throughout staff shortages should be identified as Priority A. Services that can be discontinued for a short period of time, such as four weeks, should be identified as Priority B. Services that can be discontinued during the entire influenza pandemic due to staffing shortages should be identified as Priority C.

3. List Priority A services together. List Priority B services together. List Priority C services together.

4. Identify and describe the type of staff needed to deliver the services (e.g., electricians, chartered accountants or information technologists). Fill in the additional columns as required if more than one group of staff is involved in the delivery of the essential service/activity.

5. Indicate the number of staff currently assigned to the service/function.

6. Identify the number of staff remaining in the event of a 35% staff absence rate, and record the number in the column "FTEs available at 35% absence."

7. Identify whether the service/function is expected to experience a surge in demand during a pandemic.

8. Indicate whether there is a potential to have the service/function delivered by volunteers, the private sector or other agencies.

9. Indicate whether the service/function can potentially be performed from home.

10. Develop a plan for dealing with each essential service/function to respond to staffing shortfalls or surge demands. A sample template is provided in Appendix C (page 13).

Appendix B:
Essential Services/Functions Staffing Allocations Template

Priority	Service/Activity	Current # of _____ staff	Number remaining with 35% absenteeism	Current # of _____ staff	Number remaining with 35% absenteeism	Current # of _____ staff	Number remaining with 35% absenteeism	Potential for surge increase	Private sector assistance	Work from home potential

Appendix C:
Completed Template for Essential Services/Functions Staffing Allocations

Priority	Service/Activity	Current # of nursing staff	Number remaining with 35% absenteeism	Current # of nursing staff	Number remaining with 35% absenteeism	Current # of nursing staff	Number remaining with 35% absenteeism	Potential for surge increase	Private sector assistance	Work from home potential
A	Immunization clinics	8	5	3	2	-	-	Yes	Yes	No
A	Inspection of restaurants	-	-	-	-	9	6	-	No	No
A	Customer service	3	2	1	None	3	2	Yes	No	Yes
A	Disease investigations	3	2	2	1.5	3	2	Yes	No	No
A	Medication distribution	1	None	1	None	-	-	Yes	Yes	No
B	Inspection of pools	-	-	-	-	3	2			
B	Travel health clinics	3	2	1	None	-	-			
C	Education programs	1	None	-	-	3	2			

Staffing resources from **Priority B and C** services/functions can be reallocated to staff **Priority A** services/functions during periods of increased staff absenteeism and surge increases.

Appendix D:
Action Plan for Maintaining Essential Service/Function

An action plan for each essential service/function should be documented during the planning process (one page for each essential service). The action plan should include details about:

- The essential service/activity.
- Key emergency staff, i.e., the individual(s) responsible for implementing the action plan.
- Details of the activation procedure.
- Identification of corporate and community impact issues.
- Reallocation potential of staff from other service/function areas.
- Communication strategy to staff, business partners and customers/community.
- Staff absenteeism monitoring activities.
- Reporting requirements to decision makers.
- Decision-making process during an influenza pandemic.
- Resource needs, including a listing of contact information for staff (for notification and communication purposes) and private sector partners (for purchasing equipment, obtaining additional staffing resources, etc.).

Appendix E:
Action Plan Template for Maintaining Essential Service/Function

Business Group			
Essential Service (identify and provide brief description)			
Individual/Postiion Responsible for implementing specific action plan	(Name)	(Phone numbers)	(Email address)
Activation Procedure (describe)			
Corporate and Community Impact Issues (list any)			
Action Plan (include notifications plans, communications strategy, staffing reallocations plans, use of other sector services, any change in scope of service delivery, monitoring and reporting needs, etc.)			
Resource Needs (list needs and contact information for resource needs – staffing, equipment, contracting out services, etc.)	(Name)	(Phone numbers)	(Email address)
Training Needs (outline training plan as required)			

Appendix F:
Preparedness Checklist for our Agency/Business

Taken from information provided by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Roles and Responsibilities for an Influenza Pandemic Business Continuity Plan	Check whether the action is addressed in the Plan	Document who is responsible for each action/decision-making process
Business Continuity Plan		
Who has responsibility for activating the Business Continuity Plan for your organization and who is that person's backup?		
Has your organization identified a process through which the decision will be made to activate and terminate the Plan?		
Do you have a communication strategy for reaching employees and business partners as a result of having to implement any section of the Business Continuity Plan?		
Planning		
Who do you need input from internally and externally to prepare and review a Business Continuity Plan for your agency/business?		
• Elected officials.		
• Legal counsel.		
• Community partners.		
• Labour unions and bargaining agents.		
Who is in charge in the event of a pandemic episode, and are the roles of the various stakeholders clearly defined? Who makes which decisions? Who notifies the various stakeholders?		
Is the Influenza Pandemic Business Continuity Plan integrated with your emergency preparedness plan(s)?		
Who has responsibility for procurement matters, e.g., ordering resources and/or equipment during an emergency episode?		
Who needs to approve the Business Continuity Plan?		

Roles and Responsibilities for an Influenza Pandemic Business Continuity Plan	Check whether the action is addressed in the Plan	Document who is responsible for each action/decision-making process
Testing of the Plan		
How will you test and/or evaluate your Business Continuity Plan?		
How will you test your communication systems?		
Decision-making and Reporting		
Who will be in charge and make decisions within your agency/business concerning services during a pandemic/emergency episode?		
What will be the mechanism for regular reporting to your management staff, board, government or council (whichever are appropriate for your organization)?		
Is there a contact list of all internal and external clients, partner agencies and stakeholders?		
Is there a contact list of all senior staff within your agency/business?		
If public transportation became a problem, can employees arrange alternate forms of transportation to work?		
If necessary, could staff live at the work location or an alternative work location for some period of time?		
Have you prepared site-specific notification for office closures and contacts for the public/clients?		
Surveillance/Attendance		
Who in your organization has responsibility for collecting/managing information about staff absenteeism? Who is that person's backup?		
Do you have data on the average number of staff absences due to illness and vacation at different times of the year (monthly rates)?		

Roles and Responsibilities for an Influenza Pandemic Business Continuity Plan	Check whether the action is addressed in the Plan	Document who is responsible for each action/decision-making process
Is there a mechanism within your agency/business to monitor and report increasing staff absenteeism due to illness to health authorities (e.g., Health and Safety Coordinator, Health Unit? An increase in staff absenteeism due to illness might be attributed to the spread of infections among co-workers, suggesting an outbreak of disease.).		
Delivery of Essential Services to the Community		
Does your agency/business have a responsibility for the provision of services to the community during an emergency? • Provision of food. • Mass housing. • Care for special needs people. • Home care and child care.		
Have these services been planned for should there be a staff reduction due to absence?		
Who has signing authority for expenditures during an emergency and who is that person's backup?		
Are there clearly stated policies and procedures that cover signing authority and acquisitions?		
What is the staff capacity of your agency/business and are there provisions to bring in additional staff and/or volunteers?		
Have alternative service providers been identified to assist with maintaining your essential services? What duties will they have and what additional training will they require? Have insurance coverage and union issues been addressed?		
What is the surge capacity of services delivered by your agency/business?		
Has an inventory been prepared for specialized equipment/facilities that may be needed during a pandemic episode?		

Roles and Responsibilities for an Influenza Pandemic Business Continuity Plan	Check whether the action is addressed in the Plan	Document who is responsible for each action/decision-making process
Is there a mechanism that will ensure that additional equipment (e.g., pagers, cell phones, refrigerators, etc.) can be obtained with minimum delay?		
Who has authority for ordering repair/replacement equipment and who is that person's backup?		
Materials and Supplies		
Are you currently stocked with all necessary supplies for regular day-to-day functions?		
Does your agency/business have contact lists for all your suppliers and alternate suppliers?		
Does your agency/business have access to inventory (including serial numbers) of all computer equipment, printers, fax machines and photo-copiers in case repairs are needed?		
Does your agency/business have contact lists for all equipment repair persons?		
Who authorizes repairs and supply/equipment orders? Are there other employees who can take over this responsibility in the event of an emergency?		
Training/Orientation		
What are the training needs pertaining to emergency and flu pandemic contingency plans for internal and external business partners/agencies? What additional training will be required?		
What orientation/education should be arranged for your employees to raise awareness about an influenza pandemic emergency?		
Have staff been made aware of basic infection control guidelines to prevent the transmission of influenza (e.g., hand-washing procedures, etc.)?		

Roles and Responsibilities for an Influenza Pandemic Business Continuity Plan	Check whether the action is addressed in the Plan	Document who is responsible for each action/decision-making process
Delivery of Services		
Have services in your agency/business been prioritized to take into account minor to major staff absences due to illness?		
What is the role of your agency/business with respect to assisting with service demands in health care facilities (e.g., hospitals, Long-Term Care Homes, Homes for the Aged and Homes for Special Care) and has this plan been communicated to these facilities?		
Who will make decisions about reducing levels of service and/or cancelling services temporarily?		
Is there a pre-approval process in place for purchasing additional supplies? If not, how long does it take for approval to be granted?		
How will reduction/temporary cancellation of regular services be communicated to local stakeholders, the public and business partners?		
Does your plan identify the need to consult with the Medical Officer of Health prior to any major communication strategy about reducing service delivery due to staff absences relating to influenza?		
Could any of the agency's/business's services be provided from another work location?		
Have sites providing vulnerable services (such as nursing homes, homes for the aged, homes for special care) been identified and has the inventory of such services been shared with appropriate service providers?		
• Patient transportation.		
• Patient assessment services.		
• Food services.		
• Equipment supply services (i.e. oxygen equipment).		
Has your agency developed a list of skills and professional competencies of staff that are transferable to other business units, agency functions or for support to health-care institutions in the community?		
Have support services been planned for workers, such as transportation, child care, meals and grief counselling?		
Do you have a plan to replenish depleted supplies?		

Roles and Responsibilities for an Influenza Pandemic Business Continuity Plan	Check whether the action is addressed in the Plan	Document who is responsible for each action/decision-making process
Human Resources		
Has your agency prepared an inventory of skills in the event that people from your agency/business are required to perform duties/functions in other business units/agencies to maintain essential services?		
Have liability issues been addressed for volunteers and re-assigned staff members?		
Do you have a current list of staff complete with telephone numbers? Has someone been assigned responsibility to ensure that it remains current?		
Do you have a current list of recently retired staff (complete with telephone numbers) who may be contacted in the event of extreme staff shortages?		
Do relevant employees have access to a list of all employees and relevant stakeholders?		
Is there a copy of the health and dafety manual on site in your agency/business?		
Who will be in charge of communicating with employees in your agency? Do you have a backup person(s) to take on this responsibility?		
Who will represent your agency/business on community emergency response team(s), if requested to participate, and are there backups for those persons?		
Who will be responsible for payment issues related to overtime and/or additional salary issues? Are there staff designated as backups for these positions?		
In the event of a staff shortage, what roles/responsibilities could external contract workers and volunteers fill? What roles/responsibilities could co-workers fill?		
Who has the authority to hire contract/temporary workers and take on volunteers? Is there a backup person for this job?		

Roles and Responsibilities for an Influenza Pandemic Business Continuity Plan	Check whether the action is addressed in the Plan	Document who is responsible for each action/decision-making process
Does your agency/business have a system staff use to report absence due to illness and other reasons? Is this information accessible on a daily basis?		
Records and Record Keeping		
Has your agency/business developed appropriate records keeping procedures for items such as: • Staff absences. • Vacation. • Complaints and issues.		
Do you have a plan to record significant decisions that were made during a flu pandemic/emergency?		
Is regular reporting to boards/government required?		
Communication		
In your organization, who has primary responsibility for communicating with the public, business partners and staff?		
Who is that person's backup in the event that person is sick with influenza?		
Are there people in your organization who have sole access to incoming information (e.g., business information, incidence reports, complaints, etc.)? If so, have you arranged for designates to receive this information?		
Does your organization maintain a central inventory of passwords to office equipment and electronic files? Is there a designate for the person who has responsibility for the inventory?		
If your information technology person is ill, whom can you turn to if you experience computer problems?		

Roles and Responsibilities for an Influenza Pandemic Business Continuity Plan	Check whether the action is addressed in the Plan	Document who is responsible for each action/decision-making process
How does your staff communicate with each other during office hours and after-office hours? Is there an alternate form of communication they can rely on (e.g., cell phones, pagers, etc.)?		
Who are your security contacts should there be a problem with physical access to your work location and are there backups to your security contacts?		
If mail service is interrupted, are there critical items you need to receive or deliver that you will need to make alternative arrangements for?		
Does your organization send out time-sensitive letters or documents and is there a backup system for these?		
How are courier packages generally received and sent out?		
How will you send out public service announcements and news releases? Do you have a process for consulting with the Health Unit prior to any releases?		
Will employees and the public be able to access a website or telephone number to get updates on service delivery news?		
Recovery		
What are the immediate lessons learned?		
Who will have the authority to notify the various employees, clients and stakeholders regarding reinstating services and finally returning to full service?		
Who will be responsible for evaluating your local response?		
Which factors should be examined as part of the evaluation?		
Have any counselling needs for staff been provided for?		

Resources

- Public Health Agency of Canada, Pandemic Influenza Plan
  http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cpip-pclcpi/index.html

- Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Influenza Pandemic Plan
  http://www.heatlh.gov.on.ca

- World Health Organization, Pandemic Preparedness
  http://www/who.int

- Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit
  http://www.hnhu.org (click on 'Diseases' then 'Emergency Plan')

- Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Pandemic Planning Tool Kit
  www.occ.on.ca

- Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB)
  www.wsib.on.ca

- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety
  www.ccohs.ca/pandemic/

This document was adapted from material produced by Halton Region.

Dedicated to Improving
Our Communities' Health