

PLANNING & PREPAREDNESS ARTICLES

PROPOSED CONSIDERATIONS FOR ANTIVIRAL DRUG STOCKPILING BY EMPLOYERS IN PREPARATION FOR AN INFLUENZA PANDEMIC

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

“The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recently released a draft of guidelines for antiviral stockpiling by employers. The purpose of this guidance is to provide information to employers (both public and private sector) so that informed planning and implementation decisions on antiviral drug stockpiling for pandemic influenza can be made and, if drugs are stockpiled, to assure that they are maintained and used optimally. This guidance does not establish the requirement or expectation that employers stockpile antiviral drugs. The Federal Government encourages employers to consider stockpiling antivirals for use during an influenza pandemic if stockpile plans are consistent with their overall pandemic preparedness plan and they have carefully considered the legal, ethical, regulatory, logistical, and economic implications of stockpiling antiviral medications.”

http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/globalhealth/avianfludocs/102907guidance_employerantiviral%20.pdf

PROPOSED GUIDANCE ON WORKPLACE STOCKPILING OF RESPIRATORS AND FACEMASKS FOR PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

Department of Labor (DOL)

“To further preparedness efforts, the Departments of Labor (DOL) and Health and Human Services (HHS) are publishing this information on use of respirators and facemasks in occupational settings. This proposed guidance is designed to inform private sector and government employers purchasing and stockpiling decisions, thereby allowing employers to better protect their employees as well as lessen the impact of a pandemic on their business, society, and the economy. As is explained in more detail in this guidance, employers should consider stockpiling facemasks and respirators. More specifically, it is recommended that employees at very high risk and high risk of exposure to pandemic influenza use respirators, while workers at medium risk of exposure use facemasks. Neither facemasks nor respirators are recommended for employees at lower risk of exposure to pandemic influenza.”

http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/globalhealth/avianfludocs/110707_oshaguidancerespiratory.pdf

COMMENTARY: PREPARING FOR PANDEMIC FLU

Federal Times – Senator Daniel Akaka, D-Hawaii

“As an employer of more than 1.8 million civil servants worldwide, the federal government must be well prepared for an outbreak of a pandemic influenza strain.”

<http://federaltimes.com/index.php?S=3178478>

PANDEMIC MONITOR: TOP NEWS STORIES

BI-WEEKLY SUMMARY: November 12th – November 23rd

FLU PANDEMIC POSES GREAT THREAT TO POLICE

American Police Beat

“The 1918 influenza pandemic had dire consequences for the NYPD and many other law enforcement agencies around the country.”

<http://www.apbweb.com/news/featured-articles/flu-pandemic-poses-great-threat-to-police.html>

COLLABORATIONS ENSURE LOCAL NEEDS MET IN CITY'S PANDEMIC PLANNING PROCESS

CIDRAP News

“Two strategies—communicating effectively with the living and managing the bodies of the dead—emerged as focal points as Alexandria, Va., developed its highly collaborative pandemic plan.”

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/nov1907alexandriapp.html>

OUR ENEMY HANDS

New York Times

“Scientists actually connect the rising rates of asthma and allergies in the West to our overzealous cleanliness. And yet, in a compulsively sanitized culture, cleaning one part of the body — the hands — seems to be more honored in the breach than the observance. Studies show that hospital doctors resist washing their hands, and gimlet-eyed researchers report that only about 15 percent of people in public restrooms wash their hands properly.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/27/opinion/27ashenburg.html?ref=opinion>

CLINICAL ARTICLES

H5N1 HITS SECOND FARM IN UK

CIDRAP News

“A second turkey farm in the Suffolk-Norfolk area of England has been hit by the H5N1 avian influenza virus, though the flock there appeared healthy, British authorities announced today.”

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/avianflu/news/nov1907uk.html>

INDONESIAN MAN DIES OF BIRD FLU -HEALTH OFFICIAL

Reuters

“An Indonesian man from Riau province on Sumatra island has died of bird flu, taking the country's death toll from the disease to 91. It was not clear if the 31-year-old man who died on Tuesday had been in contact with sick fowl, the most common way of contracting the disease, health ministry spokeswoman. Three siblings and an aunt of a family that lived near the 31-year-old, as well as a neighbor, are hospitalized with symptoms of avian influenza. World Health Organization officials will begin an investigation.”

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/SP160737.htm>

Bi-Weekly News Stories: November 12th – November 23rd

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PLEASE NOTE: This summary is not intended to be a comprehensive review of all pandemic influenza-related literature. Rather, it is a selection of recent publications related to pandemic influenza.

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STUDY SAYS WILD BIRDS UNLIKELY TO BRING H5N1 TO AMERICAS

CIDRAP News

“An analysis of influenza viruses collected from North American migratory birds over a 6-year period suggests that wild birds rarely carry avian flu viruses between Eurasia and North America, implying that the risk of the deadly H5N1 virus reaching the Americas by that route is probably low.”

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/avianflu/news/nov1607birds.html>

SHARING OF INFLUENZA VIRUSES, ACCESS TO VACCINES AND OTHER BENEFITS

World Health Organization

“Director General of the World Health Organization, Margaret Chan, spoke of global vulnerability and responsibility at the fifth international meeting this year on influenza virus-sharing and access to vaccines. She challenged participants to devise mechanisms for sharing viruses and vaccines as quickly as possible.”

http://www.who.int/dg/speeches/2007/20071120_pip/en/

THE PANDEMIC VACCINE PUZZLE

CIDRAP News

“This is a seven-part series investigating the prospects for development of vaccines to head off the threat of an influenza pandemic posed by the H5N1 avian influenza virus. The series puts promising advances in vaccine technology in perspective by illuminating the formidable barriers to producing large amounts of an effective and widely usable vaccine in a short time frame.”

Part 1: Flu research: a legacy of neglect:

“It has been 10 years since the H5N1 strain of avian influenza first grabbed international attention by causing the death of a Hong Kong 3-year-old, the novel virus's first known human casualty. In the decade since, the virus has torn across the globe, causing 332 known human illnesses and 204 deaths in 12 countries, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as the deaths or preventive slaughter of hundreds of millions of birds.”

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/oct2507panvax1.html>

Part 2: Vaccine production capacity falls far short

“The difficult reality is that, even if influenza science were perfect and research funding were abundant, achieving a widely deployable pandemic vaccine is currently out of reach. Chief among the reasons: The world lacks the manufacturing capacity to make enough vaccine to matter.”

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/oct2607panvax2.html>

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Part 3: H5N1 poses major immunologic challenges

“Many of the difficulties facing achievement of a pandemic influenza vaccine could not have been anticipated before the pandemic threat arose: They are intrinsic to the H5N1 virus itself.”

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/oct2907panvax3.html>

Part 4: The promise and problems of adjuvants

“Adjuvanted vaccines appear to hold the greatest promise for solving the grave supply-demand imbalance in pandemic influenza vaccine development. They come with obstacles—immunologic, regulatory, and commercial—but they also have generated more excitement than any other type of vaccine thus far.”

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/oct3007panvax4.html>

Part 5: What role for prepandemic vaccination?

“Experiments with vaccine adjuvants have raised some hope of removing one of the great stumbling blocks to pandemic influenza preparedness: the impossibility of making a vaccine that protects against a pandemic virus before that virus actually emerges.”

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/oct3107panvax5.html>

Part 6: Looking to novel vaccine technologies

“Frustration with the slow pace of pandemic-vaccine achievement has spurred second looks at both old and new technologies, such as using whole influenza viruses instead of fragments or growing flu viruses in cultures of mammalian cells instead of in eggs.”

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/nov0107panvax6.html>

Part 7: Time for a vaccine 'Manhattan Project'?

“Although money for pandemic influenza vaccine research has begun to flow and results have picked up speed, there is widespread frustration that it all took so long.”

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/nov0207panvax7.html>

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