

The following are excerpts from our Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Training Course “P.A.N.D.E.M.I.C.™” offered as a courtesy to members of the Coordinating Committee. These measures are suggested steps for public health and emergency management to incorporate and implement as additional elements of consideration to their internal planning and preparations.

Key areas of **P.A.N.D.E.M.I.C.™** planning:

- P**ublic Awareness
- A**ntiviral / Vaccine Acquisition, Storage, and Distribution
- N**ational Standards, Compliance, and Coordination
- D**istancing Education
- E**conomic Stability Measures
- M**edical Community and Facility Readiness
- I**nfrastructure Support
- C**ommunity Involvement

1. **Public Awareness**

Maintain information avenues and standardized messaging to keep the general public aware but not alarmed regarding developing flu situations.

- Provide current news feeds on public health, government, and emergency management websites.
- Standardized messages developed in cooperation with public health for distribution to media.
- Involve media representatives in all tabletop exercises to educate them regarding message protocols.
- Pre-record even tempered video messages now for release during an actual emergency.

2. **Antiviral / Vaccine Acquisition, Storage, and Distribution**

Prepare for safety and security regarding your own pharmaceutical stockpiles, as well as pave the way for Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) activation.

- Utilize the election polling station system as the PODs or Points of Dispensing.
- Augment POD security with unarmed private sector uniformed security company volunteers.
- Approach private-sector armored car companies to assist in SNS distribution.
- Banks with climate-controlled vaults may provide drug storage space in larger safe deposit boxes.

3. **National Standards, Compliance, and Coordination**

Though the goal of solid pandemic influenza preparedness planning is to far exceed “standards,” it is prudent to regularly review these standards and educate stakeholders as to what is to be exceeded. Hold regular training and review sessions in conjunction with Public Health and key community stakeholders on:

- NIMS – National Incident Management System protocols.
- NFPA 1600
- B2S5999
- The 11 CDC Supplementals
- The 15 ESF – Emergency Support Functions
- Coordinate with other EMA groups to discuss hierarchy of response during staff reduction.

4. **Distancing Education**

The only way to truly break the chain of contagion during a pandemic scenario is if an appreciable percentage of the general public is able to successfully practice social distancing. Key points to consider:

- Encourage faith-based, business, and other civic organizations to teach family preparedness.
- See “The Secrets of Teaching Disaster Preparedness” at www.disasterprep101.com/news.htm.

- Base training on the innocuous and comprehensive notion of family financial planning.
- Encourage civilians to discard the notion of “72-hour kits” in favor of 30 days worth of food & supplies.

5. Economic Stability Measures

Even in the smallest “Category 1” pandemic scenarios, the economic impact is considerable due to employee call-outs from illness, a lack of customers, and supply problems due to flu in outside areas.

- Part of economic stability involves the family financial planning mentioned above.
- Lobby your legislature to create an “economic time-out” during state or federally declared disasters.
- Work with the BENS (Business Executives for National Security) for business continuity concerns.
- Include the Department of Education in all tabletop exercises to discuss school measures and closures.

6. Medical Community and Facility Readiness

Some of the most crucial pandemic planning measures center on keeping all medical facilities operational during a pandemic. These measures apply to both internal and external considerations:

- Incorporate surge capacity issues into all tabletop exercises.
- Review all hospital security plans in anticipation of civil unrest during pandemic scenarios.
- Encourage local hotels / motels to pledge rooms for use as hospital staff dorms, or off-site clinics.
- Encourage area restaurants to pledge a certain amount of food or kitchen space for hospital use.
- Include the families of all medical personnel in civilian family preparedness training sessions.
- Plan for increased domestic violence and fire that will result from mass social distancing.
- Include licensed midwives in all medical planning as mass social distancing will create a “baby boom.”

7. Infrastructure Support

The concept of infrastructure support is a double-entendre. This refers to not only the actions supporting critical infrastructure and its personnel, but to also enlist the aid of certain types of infrastructure to take special measures to support the social distancing efforts of civilian families.

- The term “Critical Infrastructure includes First Responders in addition to utilities and other services.
- Critical infrastructure personnel and their families should be included in all preparedness training.
- Critical infrastructure personnel and their families should be included in early vaccination programs.
- Security at infrastructure sites should be reviewed in light of civil unrest and possible terrorism.
- During a declared pandemic, no citizens’ utilities should be cut off for non-payment.
- Encourage restaurants and grocery stores to develop delivery programs.

8. Community Involvement

As you’ll notice, the beginning, middle, and end elements of this list involves the general public. Without their cooperation and education, no pandemic plan will serve its true purpose. The only people who should be excluded from pandemic flu planning are those who have a natural immunity to the disease. In other words, no one. “Community” includes both civilian and government “communities” and their interaction.

- Identify all pertinent stakeholders in each defined area such as city, county, state.
- Hold regular tabletop exercises, at least twice a year, that include all pertinent stakeholders.
- Incorporate the BENS business continuity models in the various First Responder communities.
- Encourage civilian community entities, such as faith-based groups, to be able to act autonomously.
- Train Neighborhood Watch and similar groups how to monitor their neighbors for emergency needs.

Naturally, all the components of our P.A.N.D.E.M.I.C.™ program would occupy volumes. This short presentation is meant to act as a small brainstorm primer to help you in the expansion of your current plan. For more information on preparedness training, contact Paul Purcell.