

PLANNING & PREPAREDNESS ARTICLES

DATABASE LISTS CHOICE PANDEMIC-PLANNING RESOURCES

CIDRAP News

“A pandemic portal was just launched this week: www.PandemicPractices.org. The portal was developed by the University of Minnesota Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP) and the Pew Charitable Trusts. It is intended to be a compilation of resources to save communities and states time and resources and enables public health professionals to learn from each other and to build on their own pandemic plans. The portal provides a brief description of each resource along with comments from the reviewers and links to the resource. The reviews were done by a group of 27 experts, including CIDRAP staff members, national reviewers from various disciplines, and an advisory committee. The database can be searched by state or topic and by area of special interest, such as materials translated into multiple languages, materials for vulnerable populations, and tool kits for schools.”

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/sep2407practices.htm>

INFLUENZA PANDEMIC: OPPORTUNITIES EXIST TO CLARIFY FEDERAL LEADERSHIP ROLES AND IMPROVE PANDEMIC PLANNING

Government Accountability Office (GAO)

“The September 26th testimony addresses (1) federal leadership roles and responsibilities for preparing for and responding to a pandemic, (2) an assessment of the Strategy and Plan, and (3) opportunities to increase clarity of federal leadership roles and responsibilities and improve pandemic planning.”

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d071257t.pdf>

REPORT: PANDEMIC OVERDUE, NATIONS NOT PREPARED

Insurance Journal

“A new report issued by Marsh and The Albright Group, two risk experts, warns that the catastrophic impacts of a long-lasting pandemic are not only likely to happen, but overdue. The study also states the impact of a pandemic is likely to exceed what most corporate and governmental leaders have imagined, or are prepared for. This comes on the heels of U.S. government reports issued earlier this month that come to similar conclusions.”

<http://www.insurancejournal.com/news/national/2007/09/27/83796.htm>

BANKS TESTING PERFORMANCE LEVELS IN CASE OF FLU OUTBREAK

Salt Lake Tribune

“Hundreds of banks and other financial institutions nationwide are participating in the largest test of its kind ever conducted to ensure the nation's financial system can keep functioning in case of an outbreak of pandemic flu. The test is scheduled to run for three weeks and includes more than 2,700 financial institutions.”

http://www.sltrib.com/ci_7010095?source=rss

PANDEMIC MONITOR: TOP NEWS STORIES

BI-WEEKLY SUMMARY: September 17th – September 28th

BIRD FLU OUTBREAK EXERCISE HELD

Hong Kong News

“A full-scale drill has been conducted to test response capabilities to an avian flu outbreak in Hong Kong involving human infections. The exercise scenario involved a woman staff member of a Fanling children's home who came down with avian flu symptoms after visiting a country where avian flu cases were reported. She was taken to Princess Margaret Hospital for isolation and treatment, and was later confirmed to have been infected. A Serious Response Level Steering Committee meeting was held and it was decided that the children's home would be isolated and disinfected. Residents with symptoms were taken to the Hospital Authority Infectious Diseases Centre at Princess Margaret Hospital for isolation and treatment while those with no symptoms were transferred to Lady MacLehose Holiday Village for quarantine and medical surveillance.”

<http://www.news.gov.hk/en/category/healthandcommunity/070921/html/070921en05006.htm>

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PREPAREDNESS: A SURVEY OF BUSINESSES

American Journal of Infection Control

“Several Omaha businesses were surveyed on pandemic influenza preparedness and general disaster preparedness. Most businesses had started pandemic influenza planning, but few had exercised the plan or used it to educate employees. Responses provided insight into the status of business planning. The survey uncovered a need for providing assistance to businesses in pandemic preparedness as well as training in infection control in the workplace, which should be a niche for infection control professionals.”

<http://www.ajicjournal.org/article/PIIS0196655307000958/abstract>

CLINICAL ARTICLES

BIRD FLU VIRUS CAN PASS MOTHER TO CHILD – STUDY

Reuters

“The H5N1 bird flu virus can pass through a pregnant woman's placenta to infect the fetus, researchers reported. They also found evidence of what doctors had long suspected -- that the virus not only affects the lungs, but passes throughout the body into the gastrointestinal tract, the brain, liver and blood cells.”

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N27422356.htm>

TRIAL OF INJECTABLE FLU DRUG YIELDS DISAPPOINTING RESULTS

CIDRAP News

“BioCryst Pharmaceuticals, Inc, announced disappointing early results in a phase 2 study of its antiviral drug peramivir, which is seen as a potential new weapon against influenza. Peramivir is a neuraminidase inhibitor that is given by intravenous (IV) or intramuscular (IM) injection. The phase 2 double-blind, placebo-controlled trial was designed to see if high doses of IM peramivir could reduce the duration of symptoms in patients with seasonal flu”.

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/sep2007peramivir.html>

Bi-Weekly News Stories: September 17th – September 28th

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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.

SCIENTISTS IN SINGAPORE INVENT COMPACT DEVICE TO DETECT BIRD FLU

Associated Press

“Scientists in Singapore have invented a palm-sized device that can be used to detect the deadly H5N1 strain of avian flu in less than 30 minutes. The so-called “lab-on-a-chip” invention by scientists at the Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology, the Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology, and the Genome Institute of Singapore has been published in *Nature Medicine* journal. The device, about the size of an apple, is as sensitive as and around 10 times faster than available tests and potentially up to 100 times cheaper. It will allow medical and humanitarian aid workers in the field to detect bird flu faster and so avert a potential epidemic, especially in Asia where scores have died from bird flu.”

http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=D8RRLID00&show_article=1&cat=0

FLU VACCINES MAY NOT SAVE ELDERLY LIVES

Reuters

“Getting an annual flu vaccine may not save the lives of seniors, and health officials may want to look at other ways to protect the elderly. No studies have conclusively proven that influenza shots prevent flu-related deaths in people over the age of 65, and some of the arguments that have been used to support this idea are based on faulty data, the researchers argue in the *Lancet* medical journal.”

<http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUSN2431593620070924?feedType=RSS&feedName=healthNews>

CATCHING BIRD FLU IN A DROPLET

Natural Medicine

“It is assumed that a timely mass administration of antiviral drugs, backed by quarantines and social distancing, could contain a nascent influenza epidemic at its source, provided that the first clusters of cases were localized within a short time. However, effective routine surveillance may be impossible in countries lacking basic public health resources. For a global containment strategy to be successful, low-cost, easy-to-use handheld units that permit decentralized testing would be vital.”

<http://www.nature.com/nm/journal/vaop/ncurrent/pdf/nm1634.pdf>