

PANDEMIC MONITOR: TOP NEWS STORIES

BI-WEEKLY SUMMARY: October 1st – October 12th

PLANNING & PREPAREDNESS ARTICLES

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA: AN ANALYSIS OF STATE PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PLANS

Congressional Research Service

“Since different threats are expected to affect states differently, many believe that states should have flexibility in emergency planning. This complicates federal oversight of homeland security grants to states. The following report describes an approach to the analysis of state pandemic plans, and presents the findings of that analysis. The analysis does not grade or rank individual state pandemic plans or capabilities. Rather, its findings indicate that a number of challenges remain in assuring pandemic preparedness, and suggest areas that may merit added emphasis in future planning efforts.”

http://www.opencrs.com/rpts/RL34190_20070924.pdf

HOW DO YOU PLAN FOR A NIGHTMARE?

Buffalo News

“The article explores how different businesses plan to operate in case of bird flu pandemic. Specifically, businesses are taking precautions, especially if they operate globally. For example, the article discusses what HSBC Bank USA is planning. The article also looks at how organizations are coping with the loss of a major portion of staff, how to contain the disease, how to keep operations running, and how to serve customers.”

<http://www.buffalonews.com/145/story/178966.html>

THE MICROBIOLOGICAL THREAT TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY: ADVANCED PANDEMIC PLANNING FOR EXECUTIVES

Emergency Management and Safety Solutions

“The whitepaper was derived from executive roundtable discussions of financial service industry executives. They addressed three questions that most organizations struggle with: (1) “How do we protect our employees?”; (2) How do we sustain our critical operations during a prolonged crisis?” ; (3) “How do we protect our organizational reputation?.” The white paper answers these three questions, provides guidance on corporate policy setting and provides benchmarks for other organizational planners.”

http://www.ems-solutionsinc.com/pdfs/ExecutiveFinancial_WhitePaper_092107.pdf

FIGHT FOR FLU FUNDS BACK THIS SESSION

Boston Globe

“Public-health officials and a leading legislator are resuming their effort to buy thousands of additional hospital beds, breathing machines, and doses of medication to prepare for an influenza epidemic.”

http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2007/10/11/fight_for_flu_funds_back_this_session/

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THE MICROBIOLOGICAL THREAT TO THE NATIONAL POWER GRID: ADVANCED PANDEMIC PLANNING FOR UTILITIES EXECUTIVES

Emergency Management and Safety Solutions

“The whitepaper was generated from executive roundtable discussions from utilities industry executives. They addressed three questions that most organizations struggle with: (1) “How do we protect our employees?”; (2) How do we sustain our critical operations during a prolonged crisis?”; (3) “How do we protect our organizational reputation?”. The white paper answers these three questions, provides guidance on corporate policy setting and provides benchmarks for other organizational planners.”

<http://www.ems-solutionsinc.com/pdfs/EnergyRoundtableWhitePaper.pdf>

FLU PLANNER: PANDEMIC MODELING SOFTWARE AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD

Continuity Central

“Crisis Solutions has made an Excel-based pandemic impact planning tool available for free download from the Continuity Central website. Modeling the potential impact of a ‘flu pandemic on your business is now an essential aspect of business continuity planning. FluPlanner is a simple to use spreadsheet tool designed to do this. The software allows you to enter various ‘what if’ scenarios and to view the potential impact on your business and its employees. FluPlanner consists of a data input page and two output worksheets which show weekly impacts for various scenarios over a 15 week period and the likely progressive impact of pandemic influenza on staffing levels.”

<http://www.continuitycentral.com/feature0321.htm>

HOW MUCH WOULD CLOSING SCHOOLS REDUCE TRANSMISSION DURING INFLUENZA PANDEMIC?

Epidemiology

“The authors use mathematical models to explore the likely effects of school closures in Australia during a pandemic. They found that school closures would be effective in reducing transmission of pandemic influenza among children, but would have only a moderate effect on disease transmission in the wider population. To have maximum benefit, schools would need to be closed by the time that 2 percent of the children were infected. Delays beyond that time significantly reduced effectiveness of the measure. Schools could reopen when the prevalence of pandemic influenza dropped to 1 percent in the school-age population. The authors did not address the sustainability of school closures and admit that in this scenario; about 14 percent of the workforce would be unavailable due to child-caring responsibilities.”

<http://tinyurl.com/2jt492>

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.*

CLINICAL ARTICLES

H5N1 MUTATION THAT COULD HELP SPARK PANDEMIC IDENTIFIED

CIDRAP News

“An international research team led by the University of Wisconsin at Madison (UW-Madison) has identified a key mutation that would arm the H5N1 avian influenza virus with one of the tools it needs to more easily infect and spread among humans.”

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/avianflu/news/oct0507avian.html>

INDONESIA HAS ANOTHER AVIAN FLU CASE

CIDRAP News

“Indonesian officials have reported an H5N1 avian influenza case in a 12-year-old boy in the Jakarta area, raising the country's human case count to 109, according to news services.”

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/avianflu/news/oct1107avian.html>

AVIAN FLU -- 1918 AND TODAY -- PROTEIN ENHANCES LETHALITY OF VIRUS

Science Daily

“Often called the most devastating epidemic in the recorded history of the world, the 1918 influenza virus pandemic was responsible for more than 40 million deaths across the globe. The incredible lethality of the 1918 flu strain is not well understood, despite having been under intense scrutiny for many years. Now, a new study published by Cell Press in the October issue of the journal Cell Host & Microbe unravels some of the mystery surrounding the devastating 1918 pandemic and provides key information that will help prepare for future pandemics.”

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/10/071010120543.htm>

THE LINK BETWEEN SEASONAL AND PANDEMIC INFLUENZA VACCINE PRODUCTION

International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA)

“This background paper published by the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) describes how the production of seasonal and pandemic influenza vaccines is interrelated. Public authorities estimate that by 2010, the total seasonal vaccine production capacity could be 1 billion doses. The association points out, however, that good manufacturing practices can only be maintained if highly trained staff is available and the facilities are used regularly. They say, “It is neither practical nor realistic to have idle manufacturing capacity which could be ‘switched on’ during a pandemic.”

http://www.ifpma.org/Influenza/content/pdfs/2007_09_26_IFPMA_IVS_BG_paper_on_Link.pdf