

More Practice Management Resources to Help You Get Your Community Illness Plan in Place

☒ Now is the time to follow-up on those good intentions of yours to make sure your swine flu/pandemic illness policy is all that it should be. Things are calming down a bit (although US numbers are rising, cases are mild) and as we might have a bit of calm before the next storm, it is the ideal time to give yourself a policy and training check-up while the topic is fresh.

1. Do you have a policy for dealing with a community illness that is more than your typical flu season?
2. Does your policy include detailed information that most anyone in your organization could follow if you were not able to give directions?
3. Do you know what the local hospitals' plans and policies are?
4. Have you clarified roles for each of your clinical and administrative staff and provided them with detailed information on their responsibilities during a community illness?
5. Do you understand what your practice is required to do to report information to local, state and national authorities?
6. Have you located resources for or designed patient education materials appropriate for your population?
7. Have you integrated community illness information into your new employee orientation and your annual staff training materials?

If you answered "no" or "maybe" to any of the questions above,

here are some resource links to help you finalize your plan and get it firmly in place before it's needed. Also check my previous article on preparedness [here](#).

News Coverage of the Swine Flu – alltop.com is a feed aggregator and this page on alltop gives you the latest news coverage on swine flu from all the major networks in the world. Alltop is a fascinating site to investigate; I have a feed from alltop.com on the sidebar of my site that gives you fresh topics on leadership.

This article on the Spare Change blog by Nedra Weinreich is one of the VERY best articles discussing communicating about the flu.

Medscape's H1N1 Influenza A (Swine Flu) Alert Center is updated frequently to provide the latest news, clinical guidance, commentary, and resources on influenza A (H1N1). Medscape Today is by WebMD.

How EHRs can be used to track and suppress an infectious disease outbreak such as the Swine Flu by EHR Scope blog.

What's On the Horizon for a Swine Flu Vaccine by Steve Simmons, MD with Q & A, from the Better Health website.

Facts About Pork Safety and the Flu Outbreak by the National Pork Board

Telephone Triage of Patients With Influenza by Jonathan L. Temte, MD, PhD on the American Academy of Family Physicians website (Excellent triage template!)

Let's Hold Hands: Why Viruses Love Humans by Meredith F. Small, LiveScience's Human Nature Columnist

Viral Goes Viral Online, the Pew Research Center reports that Americans tracked news about the fast-moving swine flu virus more closely than any other story last week, with most turning to television for details on its spread. Still, when people

were asked to name which information source was most useful, the largest share chose the internet. (How are you providing your patients with fresh information electronically?)

Schools Consider Distance Learning Alternatives to Prepare for Swine Flu Pandemic By Jamie Littlefield, About.com Guide to Distance Learning since 2004 (What about distance medicine (telemedicine, virtual visits) as an alternative to office visits for non-flu patients?)

“Flu Safety Kit” for travelers by minimus.biz. 3 travel-sized products and advice on staying healthy are contained inside of the clear, vinyl bag with a snap closure. Includes: Clorox Disinfecting Wipes To Go Pack – Fresh Scent, Kleenex® Tissues Pocket Pack and Purell® Hand Sanitizer, 1 oz (\$5.77) – (I’m surprised it doesn’t have a mask.) Tuck in a refrigerator magnet with your practice name and you’ve got a great patient giveaway.