

PANDEMIC PLANNING

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

PANDEMIC PLANNING PRESENTATIONS TO COMMUNITY WELL RECEIVED

Over the past year MidCentral District Health Board has been conducting pandemic planning education sessions to community groups but is keen to talk to other groups interested in hearing how to prepare.

Community groups already presented to have included Neighbourhood Watch groups, school principals, Lions' Clubs and healthcare providers. One of the most recent presentations was to Ngati Kauwhata Iwi at Aorangi Marae in July.

Malinda Nash, Manager Emergency and Contingency Planning says that it is not a matter of if, but when a pandemic occurs.

Earlier this year, MidCentral District Health Board was involved in two Ministry of Health-led pandemic exercises, which tested the country's 21 DHBs' readiness and response in a pandemic.

Ms. Nash says that the exercises are just one step in the pandemic planning process and that community education is also part of that process.

"The two pandemic exercises, Exercise Cruickshank and Exercise Makgill were an invaluable experience for the DHB in testing how to manage a pandemic, now we want to further provide education to the community about being pandemic-ready.

"Many households have been proactive and have pandemic kits including food, water and medical supplies ready. However, there is still more the community would benefit from knowing, which is why we are keen to conduct presentations for community groups district-wide," she says.

The presentations will explain what a pandemic is, what planning is being done in New Zealand and at DHB level and how people and families should prepare for a pandemic.

Community groups interested in receiving a presentation from MidCentral District Health Board's pandemic planning centre should contact Ms Nash on (06) 350 8532 or email pandemic@midcentral.co.nz

PERSONAL PLANNING

If you have not planned ahead for yourself and your family how will you be able to respond to a pandemic or other emergency event?

During a pandemic the entire health sector will be stretched, which is why it is vital all individuals plan for themselves and their families, especially those with roles to play in a Pandemic (GPs, hospital staff, Support Services etc).

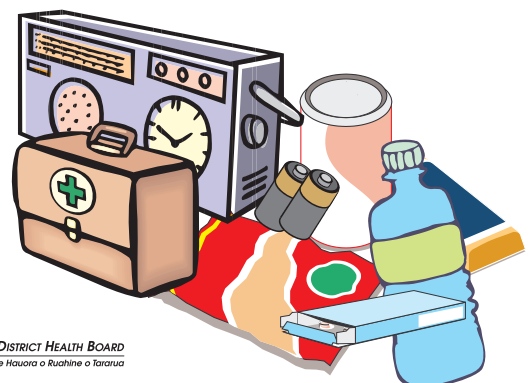
As for any emergency, it is vital to have an emergency supplies kit put together and easily accessible.

This should include:

- Food and water for at least seven days
- First Aid Kit
- Prescription medicines
- Paracetamol or Ibuprofen to help relieve aches pains and high temperatures
- Tissues and plastic bags for disposal of tissues
- Radio and spare Batteries
- Can opener
- A gas cooker or BBQ
- Warm clothes.

For more information on what to include in your survival kit: <http://www.getthru.govt.nz/Emergency-Survival-Kit.57.0.html>

Next issue, look out for information on food and water to include in your supply kit. If you have specific topics you would like to see discussed in this column please contact: pandemic@midcentral.co.nz



INFLUENZA PANDEMIC HISTORY – THE SPANISH FLU

1918 SPANISH FLU

The 1918 Spanish Flu is what all pandemics since have been compared to. It was named the Spanish Flu as it was the first country to report large amounts of the infection. It is estimated that up to 40% of the world population became ill. Unlike seasonal influenza the Spanish Flu had a high mortality rate in young adults as well as the normal high risk groups of the elderly and the young. The Spanish Flu killed over 8,500 people in New Zealand and over 40 Million worldwide.

October 1918 saw the first cases of the Spanish Flu in New Zealand and it is thought that troops returning from war brought the epidemic with them. During November, at the height of the pandemic in New Zealand everything virtually stopped – schools, offices and shops were closed. The impact on New Zealand was great, however the Maori population was particularly hard hit by fatalities with a death rate seven times that of the rest of the population.

For more information on the 1918 Spanish Flu in New Zealand, see Black November: The 1918 influenza pandemic in New Zealand, by Geoffrey W. Rice.

PANDEMIC STATUS

As of 31 August 2007, the World Health Organisation reports 327 laboratory confirmed cases of H5N1 Avian Influenza in humans, with 199 fatalities. The most recent human case was that of a 28 year old female poultry farmer in Indonesia.

Due to the introduction of a World Health Organisation External Quality Assessment Project for National Reference Laboratories, Vietnam's Ministry of Health has confirmed five additional cases since 30 May, four of which were fatal.

Human H5N1 infection is still occurring through exposure to infected poultry. However, a concern is that pigs, which can be infected by human and avian influenzas, are being infected by H5N1. Co-infection with both a human and avian influenza could result in the shift needed to create a Pandemic.

New Zealand remains in Code White, which is the information advisory and planning stage of Pandemic Preparedness.

Further information on NZ alert codes can be found at: <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/pandemicinfluenza-alertstatus>

PANDEMIC PLANNING

COMMUNITY HEALTH PROVIDER PANDEMIC PLANNING UPDATE

*MidCentral District Health Board
invites community health providers*

- **Pandemic Planning Update**

Malinda Nash – MDHB Manager Emergency/
Contingency Planning

- **Community Based Assessment Centres**

Anna Beaven – MDHB Project Officer, Pandemic Planning

- **So You Think You Have a Patient With BIRD FLU?**

Dr. Jill McKenzie – MDHB Medical Officer of Health

**6:30pm Refreshments
7.00pm Presentations**

**WEDNESDAY 3 OCTOBER 2007
CONVENTION CENTRE, PALMERSTON NORTH**

*RSVP by 26 September
Email - pandemic@midcentral.co.nz
Phone - (06) 350 8978*