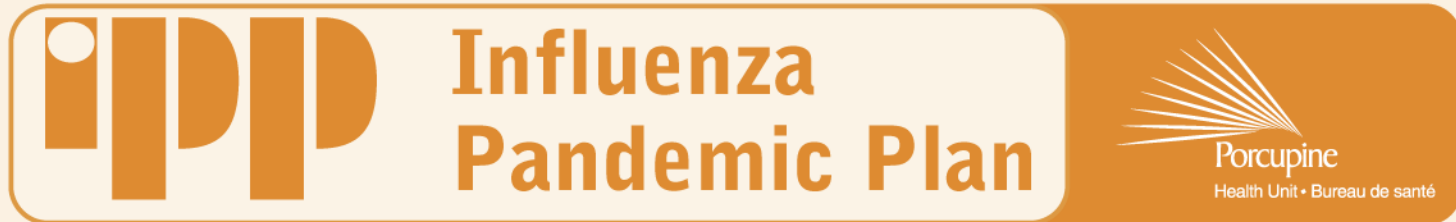


THIS YEAR IT'S A DIFFERENT FLU SEASON

UPDATED 2009-10-20



Michelle Haavaldsrud, RN, BScN, MPH

Presentation Outline

- Seasonal and H1N1 Influenza
- Pandemic Planning and Business Continuity
 - how & where to start
 - what can we do now?
- Personal Preparedness
- Resources

Why is this flu season different?

- There are 2 types of circulating viruses.
- New H1N1 (predominant strain)
- Seasonal flu viruses

What do we know about H1N1 flu right now?

- Looks similar to seasonal flu.
- Affects people between 5 and 24 years of age.
- Transmission persisted through the summer, which traditionally is not part of our flu season.

How does H1N1 flu spread?

- Same as seasonal flu.
- Person to person through coughing and sneezing.
- Surfaces can become contaminated.

H1N1 Symptoms

- Similar symptoms as seasonal flu
- Range from mild to severe, may include
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Sore throat
 - Muscle aches
- Children may experience vomiting and diarrhea

How long are people contagious with H1N1 flu?

- Same as seasonal flu.
- One day before symptoms develop and until they resolve.
- Children can be contagious for longer.

How sick do people become with H1N1 flu?

- So far, symptoms are similar to seasonal influenza: fever, cough and sore throat.
- Can lead to complication like pneumonia, hospitalization and even death (same as seasonal influenza).

Who is most at risk from complications from H1N1 virus?

- People 65 years of age and older.
- People with underlying medical conditions.
- Pregnant women.
- Young children.

H1N1 flu in Ontario

- First case in Ontario April 28th, 2009.
- 4,221 confirmed cases as of October 10th, 2009.
- 25 deaths as of October 14th, 2009.

H1N1 flu in the Porcupine Health Unit

- First case confirmed June 30th, 2009.

As of October 20th, 2009

- 16 laboratory confirmed cases.
- 1 death.

**How can you help
prevent the spread
of germs?**

Clean your hands



Cough and sneeze into your sleeve



Keep commonly touched surfaces clean



Stay home if you are sick



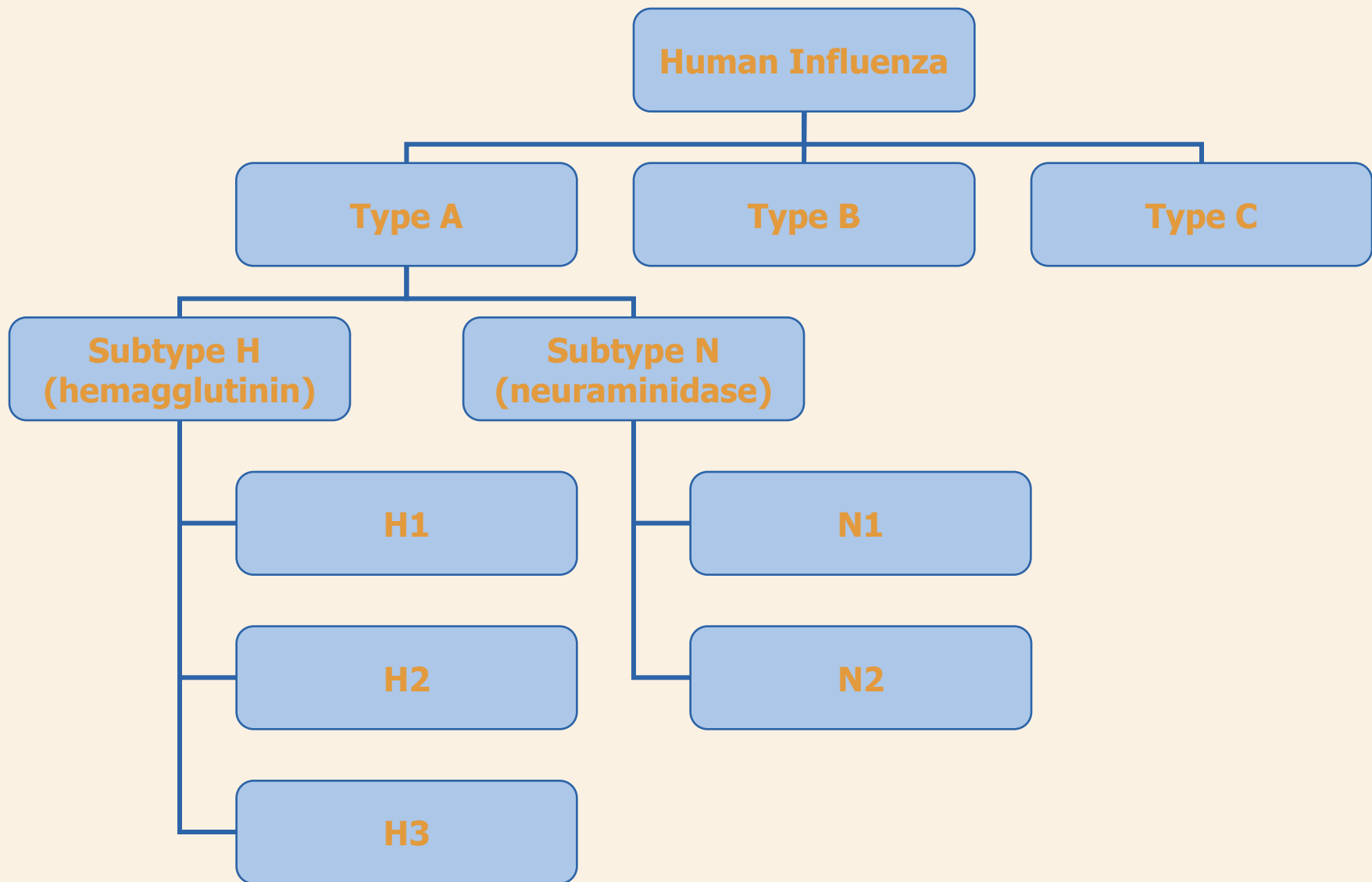
Get Immunized



As the two friends wandered through the snow on their way home, Piglet ginned to himself, thinking how lucky he was to have a best friend like Pooh.



Pooh thought to himself:
"If the pig sneezes,
he's dead."



What is an influenza pandemic?

- Pandemic influenza is a global outbreak of disease from a new influenza A virus that is unlike any past influenza viruses.
- Most people will not have any natural immunity (protection) to a new pandemic virus.

Influenza Pandemic Criteria

- Requirements:
 - ✓ Introduction of novel (new) influenza virus
 - ✓ Highly contagious: human to human transmission happens easily
 - ✓ New virus causes serious illness and/death
 - ✓ Population has little to no immunity

Influenza Pandemic

- Occurs roughly three times a century and international impact.
- Usually starts in southeast Asia.
- Animal influenza outbreaks may result in mutations that can affect humans

Assumptions

- Little lead time before first wave of 8 weeks hits, followed within 3-9 months by second wave (this cycle can last up to 2 years)
- Attack rate of “25-30% of the general workforce for a time period of 1-3 weeks” (Cdn Manufacturers & Exporters Assoc.) & “up to 50% for 2 weeks periods at the height of a severe wave (and lower for the 2 weeks before & after)” (Mnstry of Health, New Zealand)
- Vaccine NOT available in first wave, in short supply and high demand when available
- Antivirals in short supply for prevention and treatment

Role of the PHU

- To **detect** the pandemic strain in the Cochrane District early as possible
- To **monitor** influenza-like-illness (ILI) activity
- To **track** the occurrence, severity, and progression of the pandemic, based on the WHO pandemic phases
- To **share surveillance information** with responders to help identify disease, guide prevention, control, and research, and evaluate treatment, prophylaxis and education
- To **communicate** with the public

Your Role as an employer

- Develop a taskforce to develop a business continuity plan with influenza pandemic as a component
- Communicate the plan to all employees
- Develop Policies & Procedures on Infection Control
- Educate staff on Infection Control Practices
- Do table top exercise to “test” your plan

Business Continuity & Pandemic Planning

Traditional Business Continuity Plan	Infectious Disease Plan
Focus on damages to buildings, products or services	Focus is on employees, no damage to buildings
Assume that staff is minimally affected, return to work is almost immediately after the event	Assume that staff is highly affected (minimal staff), return to work may take months
Recovery process is almost immediate (start fixing the building, damages). Staff can help.	Recovery process is slow. You need to ensure that your core business activities can be maintained for several weeks even months with limited staff.

Objectives

- To **control** the impact of a pandemic within your workforce
- To **plan** how your business will adapt during a pandemic



Impact on a business

- Reduced labour supply
- Change in demands
- Reduction or restrictions on public gatherings
- Interruption in getting supplies or materials
- Restrictions on travel
- Possible disruptions in telecommunications, financial/banking, water, power, gasoline/fuels, or food supplies (in more extreme cases)

How do we start?

1. Be informed and aware of possible impact on your business
2. Identify critical processes, operations, and functions (risk assessment)
3. Identify key internal and external “dependencies” – those things, people or other business you rely on
4. Identify what else can affect your business

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety

Possible solutions to some areas of concern:

- Can some work be done at home? (flexible work options)
- Plan meetings by telephone or videoconference instead of face to face
- Create a barrier between the public and employee (ie. Window)
- Create small working units
- Adjust shift change, lunch hours

Possible solutions (con't)

- Clean workspace between shift change
- Reduce the number of people per shift
- More telecommunications to conduct your business?
- Provide training to the employees (cross training, training in personal preparedness)
- Provide hand sanitizer

Possible solutions (con't)

- Maintain up-to-date contact list of your staff, clients & suppliers
- Update sick leaves and family medical leaves
- Identify employees who might have to stay at home during a pandemic (young children, married to essential service worker)
- Identify employees who will be willing to stay at work during a pandemic
- Document guidelines for business making decisions

Possible solutions (con't)

- Be prepared to make decision for when to stay open and when to close the business completely
- Get employee feedback on pandemic plan & make sure that everyone is aware of their roles
- Identify possible alternate suppliers
- Ensure access to equipment
- Ensure continued payroll, finances

Things to think of now

- Maintain a healthy work environment:
 - Respiratory etiquette
 - Hand hygiene
 - Stay home if ill
 - Self care if ill
 - Annual influenza immunization

Personal Preparedness

- Educate yourself & stay informed
- Get your flu shot every year
- Wash your hands thoroughly and often
- Keep alcohol-based sanitizer handy
- Cover your cough
- Stay home when you are sick
- Avoid large crowds of people
- Reduce non-essential travel
- Follow instructions given by Public Health Unit
- Plan for child care/family care

Most importantly...Communicate

Effective internal and external communications provide the backbone for a coordinated response to an influenza pandemic.



Resources

- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety
(www.ccohs.ca)
- Ontario Ministry of Health & Long Term Care
(www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/program/pubhealth/flu/panflu/panflu_mn.html)
- Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (guide- Influenza Pandemic: Continuity Planning Guide for Canadian Business; March 2006)
- Get Prepared.ca – Is your family prepared?
http://getprepared.ca/index_e.asp
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Porcupine Health Unit

Thank you