

# University of Iowa Critical Incident Management Plan Annex: Public Health Emergency – Pandemic Influenza Response Plan

## Executive Summary

Purpose of the plan: The plan provides an organized, comprehensive statement of the University's intended response to a possible influenza pandemic. The plan identifies the steps that will be taken at different stages leading up to and following an influenza pandemic, and the stakeholders involved in those steps. Ultimate objectives of the response efforts are to minimize transmission, morbidity, and mortality resulting from a public health emergency, and to maintain public health, health care, and other essential community services during periods of high absenteeism due to illness.

Scope of the plan: The plan is written from the perspective of The University of Iowa and focuses primarily on the expected actions of University and locally-based entities. The protection of the health and welfare of the University community will be managed by the University. The plan takes into account, however, the need to coordinate with many other organizations involved with or affected by University operations, and the need to partner with community officials, community health care providers, and various state and federal government agencies.

Roles and responsibilities: The plan identifies individuals and agencies at the University, local, and state levels who have key responsibilities for responding to pandemic influenza, and outlines those responsibilities under various phases of the World Health Organization disease emergence threat model.

Public health response – surveillance, epidemiology, and disease control: The University has established practices related to public health events, which will continue in the event of pandemic influenza. The plan lays out those practices as well as specific actions to be taken at various threat levels.

The public health response will include surveillance and gathering of epidemiology information (disease tracking and contact tracing); notification of appropriate individuals and agencies, including participants in the Iowa Health Alert Network and community psycho-social health service providers; review of vaccine and antiviral drug distribution plans, and identification of high risk clinical staff for inclusion in potential implementation of those plans; and implementing disease control measures, such as alerting providers to the need for personal protective equipment, aiding in planning for potential social distancing measures (quarantine or isolation), and discouraging travel to areas with influenza activity. In the event of an active pandemic, public health officials will also provide information to University communications contacts for distribution to medical outlets, inform the public of risks and how to respond if symptoms occur, and provide daily and weekly reports of influenza cases.

Health care services: The plan is structured to ensure that the University will be able to effectively screen, triage, quarantine, and refer ill and worried students, staff, and faculty to definitive care sites during an influenza pandemic. The plan identifies four phases of implementation: pre-pandemic, initial response, limited services, and full scale services. Each phase will be implemented on the directive of the University President.

In the *pre-pandemic* phase the plan calls for active planning, information gathering, and assigning responsibilities.

The *initial response* phase will be implemented when, for example, there is confirmation of human-to-human transmission of a potential pandemic strain of influenza in the U.S., but not yet in Iowa. It will include patient screening, triage, and referral of ill or worried students, staff, faculty, and members of the community for follow up tests or care; confirming the availability of supplies and pharmaceuticals that

may be needed if additional cases are detected; and setting up phone numbers and web sites to help community members determine if they need to seek professional assistance. Student Health Services (SHS) and the University Employee Health Clinic (UEHC) will provide the University President or a designee with daily reports on persons screened.

The *limited services* phase will be implemented when, for example, a case of a pandemic flu strain has been detected among the UI population or within the greater Iowa City community. Screening, triage, and referral will continue as in the initial response phase. Predetermined sites for mass screening and triage at the Iowa Memorial Union (IMU) and the Recreation Building/Indoor Practice Facility will be readied for use, as will predetermined sites for quarantining exposed and/or ill students. A week's worth of consumable supplies, equipment, and pharmaceuticals will be delivered to the triage and quarantine sites. The directors of SHS, UEHC, and University Housing (UH) will submit daily reports to the President or a designee.

The *full scale services* phase will be implemented when daily requirements for screening/triage exceed the capacity of SHS, UEHC, and other clinics, and/or the capacity to care for patients exceeds operating bed capacities at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, Mercy Hospital, and the Veterans Administration Medical Center. The triage and quarantine sites that have been prepared will be activated. University Purchasing will begin the process for acquisition of needed supplies and pharmaceuticals. The directors of SHS, UEHC, and UH will submit daily reports to the President or a designee, and hospitals will provide information on admissions and status of University students, staff, or faculty on a daily basis. Reports on hospitalized victims will be provided to designated family members.

Continuity of operations: The plan identifies activities that may be suspended in the event of a pandemic (classes, arts events, large public gatherings) and those that must continue, including some core functions of the Department of Public Safety, Human Resources (HR), Facilities Management, Information Technology Services (ITS), and Student Health Services (SHS). Public Safety, HR, SHS, and the Office of the Provost have begun planning for continuity of operations by outlining issues related to their units and establishing lines of succession. The plan recommends that other units, including University Housing, Facilities Management, ITS, and Athletics do the same.

Communications and consultation: This plan aligns with the UI's Critical Incident Management Plan. All public information will be coordinated and disseminated by University Relations staff with assistance from other departments and personnel. Relevant audiences include faculty, staff, and students; parents; local media; the Iowa City and Johnson County communities; the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, and other state officials; ISU, UNI, and other higher education institutions in Iowa; and the general public.

The plan recommends establishing a web site on which to post the response plan and related resources, such as prevention and public health information; planning and confirming communications technologies to aid in communications efforts in the event of a reduced staff; creating contact lists for individuals in key communications roles; and making sure plans are in place for communicating with various external organizations.

Review of the plan: this plan, as well as lists of contact information and inventories of critical equipment and supplies, will be reviewed and updated as necessary, not less than annually.