

fast FACTS...

about Sedgwick County Government



Pandemic Influenza (Flu) Update

May 28, 2008

Sedgwick County
Health Department

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Local News:

Members of the Pandemic Influenza Work Group (PIWG) Steering Committee met on May 19th. There were not any sub-committee updates. Instead the group discussed the agenda for the next full PIWG meeting which will occur in October. Despite funding being cut by the federal government for pan flu preparedness, the requirements still exist and the community still needs to be prepared.

The steering committee decided to connect the October meeting with the seasonal flu. Ideas discussed included reinforcement of plan procedures and terminology, discussing workgroup current plans and creating an open forum for a Q&A discussion. Triggers, collaboration and challenges should be discussed. Plan progress compared to 3 yrs ago should also be highlighted. Besides County departments, it would be helpful to hear from partner agencies on their plans and how they plan on providing their services during a pan flu crisis. The meeting in October will be informational and prepare PIWG members for the exercise that is scheduled in March 2009. The meeting will last approximately three hours.

Next, the group discussed who should present. Each of the sub-committee chairs or organization representatives will be presenters of their part of the plan. Confirmation of presenters and the content to be presented will be determined in the next couple of weeks. The Health Department will give an introduction for the meeting that discusses the status of flu around the world. An agenda of the meeting will be sent out in advance.

National News:

The Federal Guidance to Assist States in Improving State-Level Pandemic Influenza Operating Plans has been released. It provides a strategic framework to help the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the five U.S. territories improve and maintain their operating plans for responding to and sustaining functionality during an influenza pandemic. The deadline for submission of operating plans is July 9, 2008.

International News:

As of April 30, 2008, there have been a total of 382 confirmed human cases and 241 confirmed deaths due to H5N1 avian influenza. The reported number of cases and deaths due to H5N1 avian influenza for 2008 is 31 and 24 respectively. None of these have occurred in the United States.

The drug company GlaxoSmithKline has received European approval for what is thought to be the most advanced vaccine to date against the H5N1 bird flu virus. The company says several governments have expressed interest in stockpiling the vaccine. GlaxoSmithKline Australia is submitting an application for the vaccine to be approved there. The Australian government already has a stockpile of 1.2 million doses of other pre-pandemic influenza vaccines.

New scientific findings suggest that ducks, people and rice paddies, rather than chickens, are the major factors behind outbreaks of H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza in Thailand and Viet Nam. In a study recently published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States (PNAS)*, researchers applied a modeling technique to establish how different factors contributed to the spread of the virus, including the number of ducks, geese and chickens, human population size, rice cultivation and local geography.

Upcoming meetings: The next full PIWG meeting will be Tuesday, October 14 at 9 a.m. Location to be determined.



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