

fast FACTS...

about Sedgwick County Government



Pandemic Influenza (Flu) Update

August 27, 2007

Sedgwick County
Health Department

1900 E. 9th Street

Wichita, Kansas

67214

316-660-7300

www.sedgwickcounty.org

PIWG Sub-committee Updates:

The Pandemic Influenza Work Group (PIWG) Steering Committee met on August 21st. The group discussed topic ideas for the September PIWG quarterly meeting with the entire workgroup. It was determined the two main subjects will be the movement of the seasonal flu and an international situation update on pandemic.

It was also reported that the state has not distributed the pan flu grant contract. The contract is being amended for the preparedness grants to cover salaries and basic operating costs through the end of November. Unfortunately, additional needs requiring funds cannot be met until December 1st.

During the meeting, the Chairs of each subcommittee reported out on the progress they have made since the last meeting:

- **Mass Care:** Will have their plan completed by September.
- **Behavioral Health:** Updating the "Common Reactions to Stress" brochure. The committee has reviewed print items distributed during the Greensburg aftermath including a card that had signs and symptoms of stress. The group will make a decision on whether or not to create a similar card for a local disaster or to modify existing pieces from Greensburg. The American Red Cross has been added to the subcommittee. In addition, a just-in-time training video on behavioral health is being evaluated as a possible training tool.
- **Special Populations (schools):** Developing case definitions for surveillance activities that should begin in January.
- **Mass Pharmaceutical Distribution:** The state is working on antiviral distribution. Sedgwick County will follow the procedures outlined in the Strategic

National Stockpile (SNS) plan until further notice is given.

- **Faith-based:** Sent out 500 surveys with a 22 percent response rate. Nearly 80 percent of organizations reported that they have not prepared for any type of an emergency and 75 percent of individuals are not prepared at home. There were 11 organizations in attendance at the last subcommittee meeting; however, there were not any pastors present. Future plans include providing health messages for the faith-based bulletins and assisting with preparedness messages.
- **Surveillance, Monitoring, and Investigation:** In the final stages of evaluating the Syndrome Reporting Information System (SYRIS) and First Watch. The plan is to recommend moving away from First Watch and not using the Real-Time Outbreak Disease Surveillance System (RODS). The Wichita Clinic is looking favorably at becoming a sentinel site with two of their locations. This will bring the total number of sites to four for Sedgwick County.
- **Communications:** Working with the Wichita Public Schools (USD 259) to purchase large bottles of hand sanitizer for classrooms. The bottles will include a hangtag with information similar to that of the "cover your cough" poster. A request letter has been developed for Walgreens asking for a donation of additional hand sanitizer. The subcommittee extended an offer to assist other subcommittees in their efforts.

Upcoming meetings:

- The next PIWG all member meeting is September 18, 2007 at Roberts Amphitheater, KUMC-W.
- The next PIWG Steering Committee meeting is October 16, 2007 at the Southeast Health Department Site, 1530 S. Oliver.



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National Update:

The August 8 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) includes a study based on public records from the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic. Research shows that community strategies that delay or reduce the impact of a pandemic may help reduce the spread of the disease until a vaccine is available. During the 1918 pandemic, communities that used a variety of measures were the most successful. New York City's early and sustained response, which included isolation and quarantine and staggered business hours, resulted in the lowest excess death rate for any city on the East Coast during the time period reviewed. Pittsburgh conversely was into its outbreak before implementing interventions and thus experienced the highest excess death rate of any of the 43 cities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers guidelines for how American communities can confront the next influenza pandemic. Strategies include voluntary isolation and quarantine, dismissal of students from school classrooms, and social distancing in the workplace and community.

A new flu vaccine plant is set to begin operations as soon as next year. The \$150 million plant was built by Sanofi Pasteur on its 500-acre campus in Pennsylvania. Sanofi's existing plant will close for renovations when the new plant begins production. The new plant will produce 100 million doses of vaccine for the annual flu seasons. Total output will jump to 150 million doses once the old plant is reopened, which is expected to take place by the end of 2010. If a pandemic occurs, the plants can change from seasonal to pandemic vaccine manufacturing in as little as one day, as long as they have the necessary virus.

The director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), along with others from the Vaccine Research Center (VRC), has developed a strategy to generate vaccines and therapeutic antibodies that could target predicted H5N1 mutants before the viruses evolve naturally. They have come up with a way to anticipate how the jump from birds to humans might occur and ways to respond to it. NIAID Director Anthony S. Fauci, M.D. says that "Now we can begin, preemptively, to consider the design of potential new vaccines and therapeutic antibodies to treat people who may someday be infected with future emerging avian influenza virus mutants."

International News:

As of August 16, 2007 there have been 321 confirmed human cases and 194 confirmed deaths due to H5N1 avian influenza reported for this year. None of these have occurred in the United States.

Acambis, a British biotechnology company, recently announced the launch of a phase 1 clinical trial of an influenza vaccine designed to provide a stable shield against seasonal and pandemic flu strains. The trial will be conducted in the United States, with investigators assessing the vaccine's safety, tolerability, and ability to generate an immune response in up to 80 healthy volunteers between the ages of 18 and 40. The vaccine being tested is designed to treat all influenza A strains. The development of an effective universal vaccine will eliminate reengineering each time the virus mutates. This type of vaccine could be manufactured continuously and individuals could be immunized any time of year.



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