

**PANDEMIC**

**INFLUENZA**

**PREPAREDNESS PLAN**



**September, 2006**

- I. Purpose:** To establish a coordinated interdepartmental response to an actual or potential pandemic influenza outbreak. This plan is consistent with relevant guidelines developed by the Tennessee Department of Health and it applies to ETSU faculty, staff, students, visiting scholars and family members in residence.
- II. Background.** Pandemics represent disease outbreaks on a global scale. Influenza pandemics can occur when a new influenza virus strain emerges for which the population has little or no immunity and for which there is no vaccine. The disease spreads easily from person to person, it causes serious illness and can sweep across the country and around the world in a relatively short period of time. Predicting the timing or severity of the next influenza pandemic is a difficult task but it must be appreciated that large numbers of individuals around the world will be at risk. As a pandemic event unfolds, countries might employ such measures as border closures and travel restrictions which might delay the arrival of the virus but would not likely prevent the eventual occurrence of disease in a particular geographic location. Pandemic influenza may evolve in waves, each of which can last for six to eight weeks and the overall pandemic period may extend over 18 to 24 months. An especially severe pandemic could lead to substantial levels of illness, death, social disruption and economic loss. Impacts can range from school and business closings to the interruption of basic services such as public transportation and food delivery. With large numbers of persons requiring medical care, healthcare facilities could be overwhelmed and various communities would be compelled to implement their surge capacity plans to cope with the increased demand for services.

With regard to the level of concern for the current time frame (2006-07), health professionals around the globe have directed attention toward the H<sub>5</sub>N<sub>1</sub> avian influenza virus which has caused major infection outbreaks among poultry in certain parts of the

world and limited disease among humans. The H<sub>5</sub>N<sub>1</sub> influenza virus strain thus appears quite worthy of emphasis since 1) it is especially virulent, 2) it is being spread to different parts of the globe by migratory birds, 3) it can be transmitted from birds to mammals and in limited circumstances, to humans and 4) like other influenza viruses, it continues to evolve.

Over the years, there have been a number of human H<sub>5</sub>N<sub>1</sub> cases, particularly in Asian countries and about 50% of infected persons have died. These cases are believed to have been caused by exposure to infected poultry. However, transmission from avian host to man is rare and unsustainable and person to person transmission is also rare. While the current threat to humans appears to be low, there is concern that the H<sub>5</sub>N<sub>1</sub> strain will evolve into a virus capable of more efficient transmission from person to person.

Strategies for mitigating an influenza pandemic include taking action in the following broad categories: ensuring the availability of appropriate antiviral medications, developing an effective vaccine and implementing nonpharmaceutical measures including 1) communicating risk to the public, 2) reducing an individual person's risk for infection (e.g. hand hygiene), 3) limiting international spread of the virus through travel screening and restrictions and 4) reducing spread within specific populations by isolating and treating ill persons, possibly quarantining exposed persons and employing social distancing measures (school closures, etc).

Among the pharmaceutical measures (antiviral agents and vaccine), it has been suggested that given enough antiviral drug (e.g. Tamiflu) for 50% of the population, household prophylaxis coupled with reactive school closure could reduce clinical attack rates by 40-50%. Even when antiviral stockpiles are small, a targeted antiviral prophylaxis strategy could be effective in slowing virus

spread until vaccination could be implemented. Interventions involving vaccination are limited by the uncertainty surrounding the identity of a future pandemic influenza strain making it impossible to stockpile a well matched vaccine. However, it has been estimated that even a poorly matched but partially efficacious vaccine could have a measurable impact on infection attack rates.

Although it is expected that a pandemic influenza event would place stresses on multiple layers of society, it is incumbent on various elements of that society (security, business, education, healthcare, etc.) to become as informed and prepared as possible to respond to and survive the crisis. In this context, ETSU has developed a comprehensive preparedness plan to address a range of challenges that would be associated with a pandemic event.

**III. The Preparedness Plan and Emergency Management Team.** The ETSU Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan is consistent with the state preparedness plan as developed by the Tennessee Department of Health and it is compatible with the overall ETSU Emergency Response Plan. A listing of Pandemic Influenza Emergency Management Team (EMT) personnel with phone/pager numbers and email addresses is provided in Attachment A and the Plan outline, arranged according to different operational levels of the university, is provided in Attachment B. An Emergency Command Center with appropriate communications capability is located at Lucille-Clement Hall. The Command structure has been clearly defined (Attachment C). The Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan and its related EMT are components of the overall ETSU Emergency Management Plan.

#### **IV. Responsibilities:**

**A. President.** The university president will:

- Maintain close liaison with Vice President for Health Affairs, who will serve as the Incident Commander in case of a pandemic influenza outbreak.
- Meet with university key administrators and determine operating levels for the university in the event of an outbreak.
- Consults with the Incident Commander and key administrators prior to activating the Emergency Command Center.

**B. Provost.** The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will:

- In conjunction with the President determine level for continuing classes in the event of a pandemic.
- Initiate relocation or cancellation of classes and examinations.
- Advise the Emergency Command Center on academic implications of pandemic.

**C. Vice President for Health Affairs.** During the Pandemic, the Vice President for Health Affairs will be the primary point of contact for the Pandemic Influenza Emergency Management Team. When the Team is activated, the Vice President will:

- Function as Director of the Pandemic Influenza Emergency Management Team.

- Monitor all activities.
- Ensure that relevant data are appropriately collected and interpreted.
- Ensure all key personnel are notified.
- Ensure that all necessary city, Regional Health, TBR, state and federal officials have been appropriately notified.
- Monitor and direct ongoing necessary operations.
- Maintain constant communications with the President and the Emergency Command Center.

**D. Dean, James H. Quillen College of Medicine.** The Dean, College of Medicine is a member of the Pandemic Influenza Emergency Management Team and assumes a major role in coordinating clinical efforts both on and off campus. Functions include:

- Serving as Director of the Pandemic Influenza Emergency Management Team in the absence of the Vice President for Health Affairs.
- Coordinates an overall response to healthcare needs on campus during a pandemic event in collaboration with the Director, Student Health Services, the Associate Vice President for Student Services and the Chief, Division of Infectious Diseases,.
- Monitors and realigns as necessary, the healthcare related capabilities of MEAC staff and ETSU Physicians & Associates staff during a pandemic event.
- Offers recommendations and advice regarding involvement of College of Medicine physicians and healthcare staff in the overall community response to pandemic influenza.

**E. Vice Presidents for Administration and Business and Finance.** The Vice

President for Administration in conjunction with the Vice President for Business and Finance will ensure that adequate personnel and finances are available to support the university during a pandemic influenza event. At the time of a crisis of this nature, human and financial resources at the university could be strained and continuity of business at ETSU will need to adapt to different operational levels as determined by the geographic location of the pandemic and whether the campus is open, partially functioning or closed. The VP for Administration and the VP for Business and Finance are designated members of the Pandemic Influenza EMT and will:

- Develop a proposal for varying degrees of business continuity according to scenarios that acknowledge pandemic influenza a) somewhere in the world, b) in the continental US and c) in Tennessee. Plans must also apply to the ETSU campus as open, partially functioning and closed.
- Identify critical functions on campus where staffing and work effort are needed even in the setting of a pandemic event (i.e., safety and security, communications, others). List critical personnel with back-ups to provide these essential functions.
- Identify less critical functions that could possibly be suspended or significantly curtailed in the setting of a partially functioning or closed campus.
- Develop a plan to notify university departments and staff members regarding their functional designation according to the operational status of the university.

- Communicate with the Tennessee Board of Regents, University Counsel and with faculty/staff regarding plans for furloughs and salary continuance during a pandemic influenza crisis.

**F. Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs.** The Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs is a member of the Pandemic Influenza Emergency Management Team and is charged with developing plans to maintain ETSU's educational mission during a pandemic event. The individual in this position will:

- Convene a working group of faculty members to address and propose course management options for education continuity to be implemented when minimal personnel are present on campus during a pandemic;
- Include deans and vice presidents for academic and health affairs reviews of course continuity plans;
- Establish suggestions for course continuity for traditional courses, traditional courses with experiential components; experiential courses (i.e., clinical, field placements, practica, etc.)
- Prepare a list of general preparations that academic departments need to consider in planning;
- Develop pre-pandemic preparations that academic departments must organize to support education continuity or alternate traditional or non-traditional learning to include:
  - Identifying courses that can be conducted through electronic means: Blackboard or through the Internet;

- Identifying courses not suitable for online instruction and developing management strategies for those courses;
- Identifying opportunities for faculty to develop skills to conduct courses via Blackboard using either online or web-enhanced techniques;
- Developing alternative teaching and learning plans for students who do not have computers or Internet access;
- Identifying faculty teams for appropriate courses for instruction continuity in the event the faculty member of record becomes ill;
- Identifying hardware and software needs for home-bound instruction including authorization to take office computers home;
- Developing a communication plan for faculty-student interactions; and
- Developing a communication plan to monitor the health status of department members.

**G. Student Health Services.** The Director, Student Health Services will:

- Serve as a member of the Pandemic Influenza Emergency Management Team.
- Construct a computerized database to monitor categories of illness and number of healthcare encounters recorded at Student Health Service (SHS). Information of this nature will allow SHS to document our baseline experience regarding visits related to respiratory illnesses and will enable SHS to engage in a form of syndromic surveillance.

- Immediately alert the Vice President for Health Affairs and the Chief, Division of Infectious Diseases about the clustering of cases presenting with significant respiratory illness or the presence of a person with respiratory illness and who recently returned from a region where an epidemic influenza strain might be problematic.
- Participate in the planning for and provision of student health services for students remaining on campus during a pandemic event.
- Facilitate the distribution of educational materials concerning influenza prevention and infection control to students utilizing SHS.

**H. College of Medicine Division of Infectious Diseases.** The Chief,

Division of Infectious Diseases will:

- Serve as a member of the Pandemic Influenza Emergency Management Team.
- Serve as a liaison between ETSU and the Regional Health Department and the State Health Department.
- Assist in designing, updating and implementing the ETSU Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan.
- Serve in an advisory capacity to the ETSU Student Health Service and ETSU Physicians and Associates on pandemic influenza issues including syndromic surveillance, infection prevention and control and healthcare provider services during an outbreak.
- Participate in the design and implementation of on-campus healthcare services in the setting of pandemic influenza.

**I. International Programs & Services.** It is anticipated that domestic students at ETSU will likely return to their families in an emergency such as pandemic influenza. In contrast, international students at the university are expected to remain on campus, at least for a period of time, and would require a spectrum of support (housing, meals, healthcare, etc.) as described in the preparedness plan until it is safe and they are able to return to their homes.

Support for an international population (international students, scholars and study abroad students) regarding a potential emergency event may be required even before the event (i.e., pandemic influenza) reaches the US. If an epidemic is declared anywhere in the world, there is a reasonable chance that the ETSU campus will include students from the affected country and it is possible that ETSU students will be abroad studying in affected areas.

In anticipation of such events, the Director, International Programs will:

- Serve as a member of the Pandemic Influenza EMT.
- Include information about pandemic influenza planning in all orientation programs (new international student's orientation, study abroad pre-departure orientation, workshops, etc.).
- Identify international student leaders who will assist in implementing the preparedness plan to serve the needs of international students.
- Develop a database of translators to accommodate the need to contact relatives of a sick student .

- Develop a database of consulate and embassy contacts for assistance relating to medical evacuation and repatriation.
- Develop an “emergency folder” with information/guidelines for support staff working from home, if necessary. Folder must be available in both electronic and hard copy format.
- Develop a database of religious contacts in the area that may be helpful in guiding/supporting students in an emergency.

With regard to Study Abroad Students, it is recognized that ETSU is a member of ISEP, the International Student Exchange Program which currently is developing their own emergency preparedness protocol. Since most of our students studying abroad do so under the ISEP sponsorship, the ETSU International Programs Office will remain current with ISEP protocols and integrate them to the ETSU plan as appropriate.

The ETSU International Programs Office will continue to use State Department Guidelines when advising students who plan to study abroad in countries where there have been episodes of bird to human transmission of influenza.

**J. Information Technology.** The Assistant Vice President for Information and

Technology will:

- Serve as a member of the Pandemic Influenza EMT.

- Ensure that the Emergency Command Center includes full computer, telephone, radio and television capabilities and that components of these communications methodologies are compatible with those utilized by local police, fire, health department and emergency management agencies.
- Assist the ETSU Public Affairs Office in developing, maintaining and updating an Emergency Preparedness web page.
- Develop an emergency hotline capability including 800 number access to provide information to students, parents and others during a crisis period.
- Assess damage and carry out prompt repairs to ETSU telecommunications and computer systems.

**K. Facilities.** The Associate Vice President for Facilities will:

- Serve as a member of the Pandemic Influenza EMT.
- Collaborate openly and frequently with the Emergency Management Team to provide necessary services and security for various campus facilities. During a pandemic event, it is likely that certain facilities would be closed, the function of other facilities might be modified and it may be necessary to provide care to ill students in facilities on campus.
- Ensure that necessary logistical support elements (facilities, utilities, vehicles, etc.) are adequate to support the university's role during the time frame of the pandemic.
- Ensure that the Emergency Command Center at Lucille Clement Hall has adequate batteries and generators to provide electrical power.
- In the event of closure of portions of the campus, ensure that unused buildings are secured.

- Provide qualified personnel to maintain sanitation needs of the occupants who remain in the open campus buildings.

**L. Public Safety.** The Public Safety Director is a member of the Pandemic

Influenza Emergency Management Team and is fully acquainted with all aspects of the preparedness plan. The Director will:

- Oversee safety and security matters on campus during an emergency and will advise the Emergency Management Team regarding equipment and personnel needs that are required to address the changing demands during a pandemic event.
- Emphasize the maintenance of law and order on campus and ensure that access and egress routes remain clear for emergency equipment.
- Communicate openly and actively with local law enforcement to coordinate safety and security efforts that might impact on the community at large.
- Offer training to Public Safety Office personnel on methods used to prevent infection transmission (hand hygiene, mask, gloves) and encourage staff to receive influenza vaccine should vaccine become widely available.

**M. Associate Vice President for Student Affairs.** The Senior Associate Vice

President /Chief Student Affairs Officer and the Director of Housing and

Residence Life are members of the Pandemic Influenza Emergency

Management Team and are responsible for:

- Advising the EMT on all matters pertaining to the provision of housing, food, and other basic needs for students, visiting scholars and other university staff remaining on campus during a pandemic event.
- Identifying specific campus facilities to be used for well individuals, those who might require quarantine and those who are ill.
- Coordinating efforts with Public Safety, Campus Dining Services, Facilities and Student Health Services in preparation for a pandemic event and the implementation of plan if activated..
- Participating in an educational effort to inform students about infection prevention methods (hand hygiene, cover cough, etc.) and critical components of the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan as well as social distancing measures.
- Providing information to housing students and maintaining an occupancy count of on-campus residents.
- Coordinating the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) to provide counseling and liaison services for students and parents.
- Providing registration and inquiry services to reunite families and to collect and answer queries concerning the safety and whereabouts of students living in university owned housing.

**N. Associate Vice President Human Resources.** The Associate Vice President

is a member of the Pandemic Influenza Emergency Management Team and

will:

- Advise the Emergency Command Center leadership on all matters pertaining to Human Resources issues.

- Communicate actively with the Vice President of Business and Finance to remain current on such matters as employee furloughs, modified employee leave policies, etc.
- Closely monitor employee staffing and absenteeism during an emergency event and offer recommendations regarding employee reassignments to maintain essential functions.
- In conjunction with Pandemic Influenza EMT leadership, review staffing status of the ECC. During a pandemic event, staff absences due to illness and other obligations are to be expected and HR will offer recommendations regarding alternative staffing options.
- Coordinate the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and other counseling services for staff and faculty as required.
- Establish and maintain a liaison and inquiry service between families and those staff and personnel who may be quarantined or isolated at the university.

**O. ARAMARK - Campus Dining Services.** The ETSU Campus Dining Services

Management will be familiar with relevant aspects of the Pandemic

Influenza Preparedness Plan and will:

- Provide meals to students and staff who remain on campus during a pandemic event. Coordination with Public Safety and Student Affairs may be needed as some individuals may be quarantined or isolated in specific housing units.
- Identify suppliers and alternates for meals.
- Define essential personnel requirements and personal protective equipment needs and stock necessary items.

- Participate in efforts to limit infection transmission by placing liquid/gel hand hygiene agents in various eating areas.

**P. University Relations.** The Executive Director of the Office of University Relations or his/her designee will be a member of the Pandemic Influenza Emergency Management Team and will:

- Assist in developing and updating an ETSU Emergency Management web page which includes information about avian influenza, pandemic influenza, infection prevention methodologies and components of the ETSU Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan.
- Collaborate with Infectious Diseases staff and others to develop and facilitate the distribution of an informational brochure concerning ETSU's response to the threat of pandemic influenza. The brochure should be made available to students, faculty and staff.
- Prepare and release all public announcements relating to ETSU's response to the threat of or an actual pandemic influenza event. These announcements require the prior approval of the Vice President for Health Affairs and should be reviewed by Regional Health Department personnel before release. All inquiries by the news media during an emergency situation will be referred to the Office of University Relations.

**Q. Director of Health and Safety.** The Director of Health & Safety is a member of the Pandemic Influenza Emergency Management Team and is responsible for:

- Developing and updating a comprehensive Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan that broadly addresses ETSU's response to the threat of pandemic influenza. Provides preparedness planning advice and assistance to those responsible for critical components of the plan.
- Ensuring that all emergency equipment and supplies for operating the Emergency Command Center are available and operational.
- Scheduling, coordinating and initiating emergency preparedness drills and exercises.
- Maintaining a close and supportive working relationship with local public safety, local and regional emergency response officials and the Regional Health Department in order to ensure a coordinated and coherent emergency response effort.

**R. University Counsel.** The University Counsel in the Office of the President is

a member of the Pandemic Influenza Emergency Management Team and will:

- Provide advice and counsel to Emergency Command Center staff on matters pertaining to cancellation of mass gatherings (sporting events, concerts, etc.) faculty furloughs, cancellation of classes on campus and school closure.
- Maintain an active dialogue with counterparts at the Tennessee Board of Regents and Tennessee Department of Health so as to allow University Counsel to offer consensus legal advice regarding various aspects of the ETSU Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan.

**S. Director, Division of Laboratory Animal Resources.** The Director, Division of Laboratory Animal Resources in collaboration with the Director, Office of

Research and Sponsored Programs is responsible for assessing the potential impact of pandemic influenza on research activities on campus and developing plans to mitigate the effects of such a crisis on research animal populations and other research functions. In this regard, the Directors will:

- Define the care of animals housed in the central animal facilities during scenarios where the campus is open, partially functioning and closed.
- Vice Provost, Research and Sponsored Programs in collaboration with Biosafety staff will identify ETSU research laboratories with reagents or stocks (living tissue, microbiological agents, etc.) that could be threatened or perhaps become dangerous in the case of an electrical outage or lack of security. Develop contingency plans for these laboratories according to the various campus scenarios.
- Communicate plans for research laboratory safety, security and animal care to all investigators on campus.

**V. Travel Recommendations/Restrictions.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has not recommended that the general public avoid travel to any of the countries affected by avian influenza strain H<sub>5</sub>N<sub>1</sub>. Persons visiting areas with reported outbreaks of influenza A H<sub>5</sub>N<sub>1</sub> among poultry or the presence of human H<sub>5</sub>N<sub>1</sub> cases can reduce their risk of infection by observing the following measures:

Before any international travel to an area affected by avian influenza strain H<sub>5</sub>N<sub>1</sub>, ETSU personnel should:

- Visit the CDC's Travelers' Health website at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel> to educate themselves and any others who may be traveling with them about any disease risks as well as CDC health recommendations for international travel in areas they plan to visit.
- Be current with all routine vaccinations and visit with their personal physician or healthcare provider preferably four to six weeks prior to traveling in order to receive any additional immunizations, medications or information that might be needed.
- Assemble a travel health kit containing basic first aid and medical supplies. Be sure to include a thermometer and alcohol-based hand gel for hand hygiene. See the [Travelers Health Kit](#) page in *Health Information for International Travel* for other suggested items.
- Try to avoid visiting open markets where live birds (chickens, ducks) and humans congregate in substantial numbers.

**VI. On-Campus Health Care.** On-campus health care needs will be determined by the specific characteristics and scope of the pandemic event. It is anticipated that these needs will be met through a coordinated effort involving College of Medicine clinical faculty, the Medical Education Assistance Corporation, the College of Nursing and Student Health Service.

**VII. Recovery.** It is expected that a major pandemic influenza event would seriously challenge the ETSU campus in many ways and would require considerable effort at multiple levels to plan and achieve a successful recovery.

Anticipated losses among faculty, staff and students as well as lost revenue and perhaps lost property will impact on all university functions. In this regard, a Recovery Planning Team, headed by the Vice President for Health Affairs and including the Vice President for Administration, the Vice President for Business and Finance, the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Associate Vice President for Facilities, the Associate Vice President for Human Resources, the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and the Director, Health and Safety will convene and will address the following:

- Document temporary and permanent personnel losses among faculty, staff and students. Develop proposals for dealing with these losses.
- Document revenue, property and equipment losses. Develop proposals for dealing with these losses.
- Assess the safety and functional capacity of various structural facilities on campus to accommodate faculty and staff who are able to return to work.
- Assess the capacity of the campus as a whole to accommodate returning personnel (traffic control, safety, water supply, etc.).
- Obtain a functional status report from each school and department at ETSU. These reports should include assessments of faculty/staff availability, equipment and supply needs and a determination of the feasibility of resuming pre-pandemic work functions.

- Identify the conditions allowing for partial and complete resumption of various work functions on campus and develop a timetable to reach these goals.
- Develop a mechanism to notify faculty, staff and students about recovery plans and the eventual resumption of services on campus.

