

PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS PLAN OF ACTION

The objective of this plan is to identify how Help Me Grow staff will respond to a possible outbreak of influenza of any kind. Because staff go into family homes on a regular basis it is imperative that staff be protected and have the ability to share preparedness information with families. If flu vaccine is available all staff will be encouraged to receive the vaccine.

INFLUENZA CASE DEFINITION

1. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines an influenza-like illness as having the following symptoms:

a. Fever of 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit or higher AND ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- I. Cough
- II. Sore Throat
- III. Headache
- IV. Muscle aches
- V. Chills and fatigue
- VI. there have been some reports of diarrhea

2. A person or child with these flu-like symptoms should be isolated from other staff or children.

LEVELS OF RESPONSE

The five levels of response include: Level 1 (Mitigation/Prevention/Precautions), Level 2 (Surveillance and Heightened Awareness), Level 3 (Prepare for Possible Facility Closure), Level 4 (Facility Closure), and Level 5 (Recovery).

LEVELS AND ACTION STEPS

1. LEVEL 1 (MITIGATION/Prevention/Precautions):

- a. Send or give information to families regarding symptoms.
- b. Standard Surveillance Procedures.
 - i. No flu activity reported in the community.
 - ii. Monitor number of families which cannot be seen due to flu like symptoms.
 - iii. Only report number of families who are ill if over 10% of total HMG population.
- c. Educate staff regarding entire plan.
- d. Update plan as directed by Clinton Co Health Dept. (CCHD)
- e. Keep all families and staff contact information current.
- f. Follow standard precautionary measures.
 - Avoid close contact with people who are ill.

-Stay home from work if you exhibit the flu symptoms.

-Cover mouth when coughing or sneezing & wash hands frequently.

2. LEVEL 2 (SURVEILLANCE AND HEIGHTENED AWARENESS – CASE(S) OF PANDEMIC INFLUENZA WITHIN UNITED STATES):

- a. Maintain contact with CCHD.
- b. Review Plan with all staff.
- c. Ensure that all families and staff contact information is up to date.
- d. Limit or temporarily eliminate staff travel for trainings.
- e. Follow Heightened Surveillance Procedures regarding staff absences and family illness.
 - i. Be aware of flu activity in the community. (less than 10% family and staff illness not reportable)
 - ii. log absences due to flu-like illness.

3. LEVEL 3 (PREPARE FOR POSSIBLE OFFICE CLOSURE – CASE (S) OF PANDEMIC INFLUENZA IN OHIO):

- a. Maintain contact with CCHD.
- b. Make preparations for possible office/program closure letter to all families.
- c. Prepare staff and family contact list in case of office/program closure.
- d. Follow Intensive Surveillance Procedures regarding families and staff absences.
 - i. High number of flu illness reported in the community. (10% or greater absenteeism due to flu-like illness site wide)
 - ii. Monitor daily family missed appoints due to illness.
 - iii. Report appointment cancellations to CCHD.
 - iv. Begin preparation for potential facility closure.

4. LEVEL 4 (FACILITY CLOSURE –(S) OF PANDEMIC INFLUENZA IN SURROUNDING AREA):

- a. Maintain contact with CCHD and determine need to close office.
- b. Implement office closure procedures which include HMG Program Director will notify staff and media.
- c. Send letter four to all families.
- d. Post notices of closure at entry points.

5. LEVEL 5 (RECOVERY):

- a. Maintain contact with CCHD and determine appropriateness of re-opening office.
- b. Send letter five to all families.
- c. Notify staff and public via call chains and news media that the program is open.
- d. Disinfect all equipment and work surfaces and public areas prior to re-opening office.
- e. Prepare for second wave of influenza and re-implement this plan at Level 1.
- f. Inform families that service coordinators need to know when setting home visit appointments whether there is anyone sick in the home.

Letter 1 (Prevention)

Dear Families:

We have some helpful hints as to how to protect your family from getting the flu this year.

First you could talk to your Doctor about getting the annual flu shot. Be sure to wash your hands and your children's hands often. Wash your hands while singing "Happy Birthday". That is about the recommended 20 seconds. Teach your family to do the same.

Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow and teach your family the same technique. Stay away from people you know are sick or three feet away from people you know are sick. If any of your family is sick please notify your Help Me Grow home visitor/service coordinator.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions at (937) 382-5899.

Sincerely,

Help Me Grow Staff

Letter 2 (Case(s) of pandemic influenza within the United States):

Dear Families,

Our Health Department has confirmed that the U.S. has had (X) cases of influenza that is caused by a flu that is causing widespread illness in other parts of the world. This flu is spread from person-to-person. This could cause many people in the US to get sick.

In order to protect you and your family we would like to remind you of the ways you can help prevent this illness from affecting your family.

First you could talk to your Doctor about getting the annual flu shot. Be sure to wash your hands and your children's hands often. Wash your hands while singing "Happy Birthday". That is about the recommended 20 seconds. Teach your family to do the same.

Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow and teach your family the same technique. Stay away from people you know are sick or three feet away from people you know are sick. If any of your family is sick please notify your Help Me Grow home visitor/service coordinator.

We will be documenting illnesses that are flu-like in nature so if any of your family have these symptoms please call the office with this information.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions at (937) 382-5899.

Sincerely,

Help Me Grow Staff

Letter 3 (Pandemic Flu Outbreak/Agency Open):

Dear Families:

Every year, some people get sick with flu during the fall and winter months. This year, there is a new flu virus that is making many people in Ohio ill. Because there are so many people sick in Ohio and the US, the health officials call it a “pandemic flu”.

It seems that some staff and many Help Me Grow families are sick with the flu. We hope they all get better soon. In the meantime the Health Department tells us that those staff who are not ill can safely come to work. We will remain open. We will keep you updated with any important information.

To keep this flu from spreading we ask that you let us know if anyone in your home is ill before we schedule a home visit. Here are some ways to protect your family. First you could talk to your doctor about getting the annual flu shot. Be sure to wash your hands and your children’s hands often. Wash your hands while singing “Happy Birthday”. That is about the recommended 20 seconds. Teach your family to do the same.

Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow and teach your family the same technique. Stay away from people you know are sick or three feet away from people you know are sick. People who are sick should stay home from work and avoid large groups of people.

Please contact us with questions (937)382-5899.

Sincerely,

Help Me Grow Staff

Letter 4 (Program Closure):

Dear Families,

The Clinton County Health officials have ordered our facility to close. This order is because of the pandemic flu situation in the surrounding area. We are closed until further notice and all families should stay home.

We know that many children and parents are very sick. Because the flu is easily spread from person to person, we encourage you not to gather in large groups. Stay away from shopping malls, movie theaters, or community centers.

We will do everything we can to keep you updated. You can refer to our web site at www.clintoncap.org and go to "News and Events". We will have information on the web site regarding the closing or opening of the program.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions at (937) 382-5899.

Sincerely,

HMG Program Staff

Letter 5 (Agency Re-opens):

Dear Families:

The Clinton County Health Officials have declared the pandemic flue is under control. Our program will be open on _____.

At this time families can come to the office or call if there is a need. There are still some people who are sick and the health department says that the pandemic flu outbreaks sometimes happen in waves. This means more people could become sick soon again. If more people get sick, we may need to close again.

Because the flu can still be spread from person to person, keep those who are sick at home. We are looking forward to seeing you again. Again, if there is illness still in your home please call and cancel any service coordination home visit.

If you have any questions please feel free to call at 382-5899.

Sincerely,

HMG Program Staff