

Contact North | Contact Nord H1N1 Pandemic Preparedness Plan

Effective Date

September 30, 2009

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to outline the key steps to be taken by Contact North | Contact Nord and all staff to prepare for and reduce the risk associated with the H1N1 flu virus.

The overriding goal of this plan is to ensure a safe environment for all Contact North | Contact Nord employees and all who access our centres.

Scope

This plan applies to all Contact North | Contact Nord employees.

H1N1 Background

The pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza virus has rapidly spread across the world. Evidence suggests that the (H1N1) 2009 influenza virus community spread will continue.

To date, infection with the pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza virus has resulted in influenza-like-illness (ILI) similar to seasonal influenza.

ILI is defined as *the acute onset of respiratory symptoms with fever and cough and one or more of the following symptoms: sore throat, muscle aches, joint pain, or weakness. Gastrointestinal symptoms may also be present and fever may not be prominent.*

The pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza virus is spread when someone with the flu coughs or sneezes and droplets come in contact with another person's nose, mouth or eyes. When people with the flu cough or sneeze into their hands and contaminate the things they touch, other people can become infected if they touch the same object and then touch their face.

Like seasonal influenza, the pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza infection in humans can vary in severity from mild to severe. Most illness from the pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza virus has to date been relatively mild with most cases recovering quickly.

The incubation period for pandemic (H1N1) influenza virus is understood to be up to 4 days and the period of communicability up to 7 days from onset of symptoms. This may be longer (up to 10 days) in individuals with severe illness. Consistent with seasonal flu, transmission of the pandemic (H1N1) influenza virus is most likely during the initial days of infection when the individual is symptomatic and has a high viral load.

Contact North | *Contact Nord*'s Responsibilities

Contact North | *Contact Nord* recognizes that the employees are our most valuable asset, and the most important contributors to our continued growth and success. It is fully committed to the safety of our employees and will do everything possible to limit the effects of the H1N1 influenza virus. Contact North | *Contact Nord* is committed to providing a safe working environment for all employees. Contact North | *Contact Nord* is taking the following steps to protect staff and users:

1. Post the H1N1 Pandemic Preparedness Plan on the Contact North | *Contact Nord* website and All Staff intranet.
2. Continue to monitor H1N1 developments and post updates/and or revisions to the H1N1 Pandemic Preparedness Plan on the Contact North | *Contact Nord* website and All Staff intranet.
3. Provide information, both electronically and by way of hard copy, to post at all our centres i.e. H1N1 Preparedness Plan, hand washing techniques poster, frequently asked questions (FAQ) document.
4. Provide staff/centres with cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer.
5. Whenever possible, allow staff the opportunity to perform work from an alternate isolated location (i.e. home) if feasible.

Staff Responsibilities

Contact North | *Contact Nord* staff is required to adhere to the following directives:

1. Read the Contact North | *Contact Nord* H1N1 Pandemic Preparedness Plan.
2. Post a hard copy of the H1N1 Pandemic Preparedness Plan at your centre.
3. Post a hard copy of the hand washing techniques poster (link on page 4) and frequently asked questions (FAQ) document (here is the link) http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/alert-alerte/h1n1/faq_rg_h1n1-eng.php at your centre.
4. Check the Contact North | *Contact Nord* website and All Staff intranet on a regular basis (at least twice weekly) for future H1N1 updates and postings.
5. Follow hand washing hygiene. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 15 seconds. Be sure to clean your hands after sneezing or coughing and after touching surfaces others may have touched. In cases where soap and water are not available, hand sanitizer rubs should be used. See hand washing link in "Sources of Information" section on page 4 of this document.

6. Follow respiratory etiquette. Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or a tissue, not in your hand. Dispose of tissues immediately.
7. Monitor and maintain cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer at your centre. When possible, cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer can be purchased locally using petty cash funds. Alternatively, contact your direct supervisor in order to arrange for supplies to be sent to your centre.
8. Notify your direct supervisor immediately if you are unable to work due to illness. Supervisors are to provide an update to Human Resources regarding any staff member absent due to illness. The phone numbers of the 4 main contacts within Contact North | *Contact Nord* are as follows:
 - Shane Altenstad – Director of Recruitment (eLearnnetwork.ca locations) – (416) 733-1402
 - Chantal Lajoie – Manager, Client Services & Assistant to the Board of Directors (Sudbury Regional Coordinating Centre) – (705) 560-2710
 - Joanna Moore – Manager, Client Services & Statistics (Thunder Bay Regional Coordinating Centre) – (807) 344-1616
 - Debby Sefton – Vice-President, Regional Services & Recruitment (Access and Participating Centres) – (807) 344-1616
9. Provide a copy of the host/institution H1N1 plan, if one is available, to your direct supervisor and Human Resources.
10. Notify your supervisor immediately if your centre is shut down by the host/institution due to an outbreak.
11. Clean high touch surfaces such as doorknobs, faucet handles, computer keyboards/mice, conveners, mics, videoconference unit remote controls, telephones etc between users. In addition to in between users, all high touch items must be cleaned at the end of the day when the centre is operational.
12. Sign, date and return the “Contact North | *Contact Nord* Staff Sign off Form” (located on final page of this document) and forward to Jill Salini, Human Resources Officer, by way of either hard copy, fax (807) 346-8355 or electronically to HR@contactnorth.ca

Sources of Information

The following links are an excellent source of information, some of which are updated daily:

The World Health Organization: <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html>

Public Health Agency of Canada: www.publichealth.gc.ca

Frequently Asked Questions: http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/alert-alerte/h1n1/faq_rg_h1n1-eng.php

Staff members are required to review the “frequently asked questions” link above and post a hard copy at their centre

Hand Washing Techniques:

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/emu/pan_flu/employ/handwash_tech.pdf

Staff members are required to post the hand washing poster, from the link above, at their centre.

Contact North | *Contact Nord* Staff Sign off Form

I agree to abide by the “Staff Responsibilities” section of the Contact North | *Contact Nord* H1N1 Pandemic Preparedness Plan.

Staff Name:

Signature:

Location:

Date:

This form must be completed and returned to Jill Salini, Human Resources Officer, either by hard copy to:

Jill Salini
Contact North | *Contact Nord*
1139 Alloy Drive, Suite 104
Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 6M8

or by fax to:

(807) 346-8355

or electronically to:

HR@contactnorth.ca