



## **Pandemic Flu Planning: Oregon is preparing...are you?**

Oregon's state and local officials are taking steps to protect the health and safety of our citizens in the event of a pandemic influenza:

### The Oregon Pandemic Influenza Plan:

Oregon's plan covers assumptions and likely scenarios and clearly explains the state's role in communication, surveillance, laboratory testing, vaccine and antivirals, travel advisories, community control measures and workforce support. In addition, the state is providing technical support to local public health officials as they create their own disease preparedness plans which ultimately will be integrated into the state plan.

### Testing the Plan:

State officials, together with local governments, have conducted several exercises to test their response and preparedness plans. Most recently, in November 2005, Oregon participated in a full-scale, statewide exercise of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). The SNS exercise involved hundreds of participants, including federal agencies and private hospitals. The exercise tested the ability of state and county officials to work together under an Incident Command System to quickly move vaccines, medications and medical supplies out to communities, where clinics were set up to dispense vaccines to hundreds of volunteer "patients" participating in the exercise.

The schedule for 2006 includes several pandemic influenza tabletops and functional exercises, all leading up to a full-scale exercise of the pandemic influenza plan to be held November 2006.

### Communication with Local Health Departments, Hospitals and Health Care Workers:

Oregon has developed a secure Health Alert Network website to expedite critical health communications to hospitals and public health partners in emergency and non-emergency situations. The site uses a secondary system, AlertOregon, to "push" important emergency information out via fax, phone, pager and email. The two sites combined have more than 1,700 active users and host a virtual Joint Information Center.

### Disease Surveillance:

Oregon State Public Health and its many partners in health care and local health departments monitor the occurrence of new diseases or increases in current diseases in communities throughout Oregon. Oregon has a number of systems for early detection of new or reemerging diseases, including influenza. Physicians, hospitals and laboratories submit required disease reports, including unusual cases of respiratory disease.

The Oregon State Public Health Laboratory and partner labs in the private sector report detection of influenza virus and are capable of testing for new strains.

A series of “sentinel” health care providers around the state report the number of patients seen each week with both fever and respiratory symptoms typical of influenza.

### Hospitals and Healthcare Partners:

Hospitals have come together in seven regions and are developing plans to address an increased demand for services during an influenza pandemic, including the creation of alternate care points to receive patients. In addition, Oregon is developing a Volunteer Healthcare Registry to allow licensed healthcare workers to pre-register to help provide medical care during public health emergencies.

Oregon’s Hospital Capacity Website tracks emergency room, bed and other resources (specific supplies, equipment and pharmaceuticals) in each of the 60 hospitals throughout the state. This website allows hospitals and state public health to have real time information about resource capacity so they can be efficiently managed.

### Funding:

Oregon has disbursed more than \$28 million of federal grants in the last four years to hospitals, local health departments and others to improve their capabilities to respond to public health emergencies. Examples of what is being funded include:

- Emergency plans development
- Exercises of emergency plans
- Communicable disease nurses and public health emergency managers
- Training
- Lab equipment
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Decontamination equipment
- Redundant voice and high-speed data communications equipment.

For steps you can take today to prepare yourself, your family, your business, your school or your non-profit organization for a pandemic flu outbreak, go to:

[www.governor.oregon.gov](http://www.governor.oregon.gov)