

## **Risk of Flu Pandemic**

Being prepared for pandemic flu could be vital to the survival of our business in the event of an outbreak,

Whilst dealing with a pandemic is considered to be primarily a public health matter and a government responsibility, the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) says employers have an important part to play.

The big problem with a pandemic is how rapidly it can spread it is important that we take a positive approach and have a contingency plan at the ready. The plan will be reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to cover the impending threat.

The Anchor Emergency Response Team will meet when it is clear the threat of pandemic flu is imminent. They will discuss the impact on resources, availability of medical advice and the availability of vaccine that becomes available. A member of the team will be made responsible for sourcing and providing the latest information on the emergency. A schedule will be prepared for regular meetings until the situation is resolved.

Employees with existing chronic medical conditions like asthma, who are more likely to be severely affected will be identified. All employees will be issued with a daily health check card containing a number of questions that will provide an early warning of any problems the checklist is to be used for both employees and other members of their household. If they answer yes to any of the questions the employee will be asked to contact a member of the Emergency Response Team (ERT) by telephone for a discussion. The outcome will be:

1. OK to continue work.
2. Stood down as a precaution
3. Stood down seek medical advice
4. Stood down seek urgent medical treatment

The ERT team will monitor all staff that call and maintain a record of circumstances.

Staff will be given information on best practices to avoid infection. This will include staying at home where possible, avoid contact with other people, try not to use public transport and avoid events where others may gather. Follow all emergency restrictions advised by government, local authority, public health, and Anchor. Select foods and snacks that are more likely to be safe e.g. canned or frozen foods ensure that food is prepared properly in a hygienic environment and cooked properly. Avoid fresh foods that are likely to have been multi handled.

The use of phone Fax or E mail should be considered as an alternative to face to face contact. The ERT will consider cancelling conferences or meetings and try to hold video conferences or online meetings instead. Staff will be issued with anti bacterial wipes to be used to disinfect phones and other areas before use. Try to allocate one phone per person.

Encourage employees to take personal responsibility to protect themselves – encourage hand washing, wearing gloves on public transport, disposing of tissues so that cleaners don't come into contact with them and covering nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. The company will consider the issue of any personal protective equipment that offers additional protection (face masks, protective overalls, hair covers, shoe covers anti bacterial wipes)

Identify what tasks are essential to your core business and key staff – think about how you can cover these jobs safely during the pandemic. Training for some staff may be necessary. Encourage flexible working practices – this might mean encouraging people to work from home or flexible hours to enable employees to look after ill dependents, look after children if schools are closed and to reduce the time spent on public transport, where there is more chance of infection from the virus.

Identify the core business and the site that will not be down manned consider down manning or the temporary closure of non-essential sites. Some sites may be closed by the authorities communicate with all staff to ensure they are advised of any changes. Try to avoid moving officers from site to site during the emergency. It may also be worth considering extending working hours as this can allow more days off and a reduction in travel to and from work.

Operations managers are to maintain regular telephone contact with our clients and keep them fully informed but avoid face-to-face meetings. They could be based at home and used for emergency situations. If they are used for lift and shift all vehicles must be kept clean and disinfected after each journey.

The cleaning contract will be reviewed to maintain a high level of hygiene in the workplace. Consider disinfecting door handles and telephones and providing anti-bacterial hand gel for staff and visitors to use.

The plan will be flexible and continuously reviewed during the emergency as more information and advice is received this will be communicated to all members of staff.

Emergency Response Team (ERT); the next in command would follow the sequence below

(See Organisation Chart):

Chief Executive  
Managing Director  
Financial Director  
Business Director  
IT Manager  
Quality Health & Safe Manager

All the above are familiar with the content of this procedure