

# Nashua's Pandemic Response Plan for The Avian Flu

The City of Nashua has a history of all-hazards public safety planning that spans more than 20 years, including its response to the asbestos emergency in the 1980's, the events of 9/11, and the smallpox preparation of 2002. The planning groups, chaired by Nashua Fire and Police, include the Department of Public Health and Community Services (DPHCS), city hospitals, local physicians, emergency personnel, local social service agencies, and volunteer groups like the Red Cross and The Salvation Army. This planning has been extended to deal with the challenges of pandemic flu.

## A. Preparing for the Avian Flu

<p><b>1. Surveillance is already happening to track influenza viruses.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A state network of 25 volunteer NH health care facilities and several local medical practices report weekly to the state on the number of patient visits for Influenza-Like Illnesses (ILI).</li> <li>• Fifteen hospital Emergency Departments, including both Nashua hospitals, report daily to the state on the number of patients with fever, rash, respiratory and gastrointestinal complaints.</li> <li>• One Nashua pharmacy is reporting antiviral (flu medication) sales data to the City.</li> <li>• School absenteeism information is collected weekly by the City.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. DPHCS has planned additional staff resources.</b></p>	<p>During an influenza pandemic, the DPHCS will work with local colleges and other volunteer groups for help with case investigations, staffing hotlines, clinic operations, data entry, and other tasks as needed.</p>
<p><b>3. Communication</b></p>	<p>Communication channels are being developed to keep information and messages consistent and clear. All information will be issued from the City of Nashua and will be posted on the following web sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City of Nashua (<a href="http://www.gonashua.com">www.gonashua.com</a>)</li> <li>• Southern New Hampshire Medical Center (<a href="http://www.snhmc.org">www.snhmc.org</a>)</li> <li>• St. Joseph Hospital (<a href="http://www.stjosephhospital.com">www.stjosephhospital.com</a>)</li> <li>• Dartmouth-Hitchcock Nashua (<a href="http://www.dartmouth-hitchcock.org">www.dartmouth-hitchcock.org</a>)</li> <li>• United Way of Greater Nashua (<a href="http://www.unitedwaynashua.org">www.unitedwaynashua.org</a>)</li> <li>• Home Health &amp; Hospice Care (<a href="http://www.hhhc.org">www.hhhc.org</a>)</li> <li>• And in the media (newspapers, TV, radio, etc.)</li> </ul> <p>Communication will also be directed to the blind, the hard of hearing, the homebound, the homeless and to those who do not speak English, and other groups that may need special efforts to ensure they remain healthy.</p>

**This information is provided by:**



Division of  
Public Health and  
Community Services



## B. The Response to a Pandemic Avian Flu:

<b>1. Communication:</b>	Public education and information will be coordinated with state, city, and the local health care facilities, issued by the City of Nashua Public Information Department and posted on the web sites listed above.
<b>2. Surveillance activities will be maintained.</b>	See above.
<b>3. Confirmation of Pandemic Avian Flu:</b>	If a human-to-human avian flu virus is confirmed as a threat to NH residents, the State will send out a Health Alert Notification to medical providers requesting that they report each suspected case. Flu symptoms will include fever over 100 degrees, cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea, or other systemic conditions.
<b>4. If you suspect you have the avian flu, what should you do?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those who have a doctor and suspect they have the flu will need to call their doctor for advice.</li> <li>• Those with no doctor who suspect they have the flu need to call the DPHCS at 1-866-752-0535 for advice on managing the illness.</li> <li>• <b>Do not go to the hospital unless your physician recommends it. Hospitals will quickly be overwhelmed.</b></li> <li>• Once a suspected flu case is confirmed, those who have been in contact with the patient will be asked to stay away from others for a week, if possible, until it is determined they are not infected.</li> <li>• Household members of contacts may go to work or school unrestricted unless they develop flu symptoms.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Community Containment:</b>	The decision to put community-based control measures in place may be made to reduce the risk of flu transmission by limiting social interaction. This could include closing schools, canceling public events, allocating masks, and monitoring fever in public places.
<b>6. Mass Vaccination:</b>	Once a vaccine is developed for this strain of the flu virus, the City of Nashua's Emergency Department will coordinate regional distribution. All information about mass vaccination will be issued through the City of Nashua's Department of Public Health and Community Services.

## How is “Your organization” Planning for Avian Flu?

Home Health & Hospice Care is on the front lines of the All Biohazard Emergency Preparedness planning for the greater Nashua community. In the event of a community challenge, the internal emergency preparedness policy would take effect, and you would be notified of your role on behalf of HHHC to address community needs. It is anticipated that in an avian pandemic, home quarantine would be an initial response followed by hospital isolation.