

# Some Practical Issues in Pandemic Planning

## Pandemic Summit

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“Although the visibility of avian influenza and pandemic preparedness has waned in the media, the threat ... has not”

*National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan*  
US Government, Homeland Security Council, July 2007

As at 18/3/08: 373 confirmed cases worldwide so far - 236 deaths (WHO)

Practical issues can be grouped under, eg.:

1. **Governance** (eg when & how to activate Crisis Management Team, implement crisis services / contingency plans?)
2. **Staff health and safety** (eg. when & how to introduce upgraded hygiene standards, special cleaning?)
3. **Work arrangements** (eg. when & how to introduce split shifts, distributed offices, work-from-home, social distancing?)
4. **Communication** (eg. when & how to issue instructions to staff, Pandemic information, communicate with stakeholders?)
5. **Crisis monitoring and response** (eg. how to gather, analyse & report crisis information?)

Are you prepared in practice? Is your ....

1. **staff awareness / training ready?** (when & how? - live training, CBT, intranet, handouts, sample bags, handling/use info?);
2. **roll-out / escalation plan ready?**
3. **Medical Coordinator engaged?** (eg. anti-virals are prescription drugs)
4. **staff vaccination for seasonal flu / health monitoring arrangements in place?**
5. **staff personal health information ready to roll-out?**
6. **Pandemic Planning Team meeting regularly to coordinate / implement / track required actions by business units? (who's on it?)**
7. **liaison with building owners/3<sup>rd</sup> party suppliers in place?** (their plans?)
8. **PPE procured, securely stored and management system in place?**

Personal Protective Equipment

All of the above are significant and complex issues.

Let's focus, for example, on PPE.

What are your:

- underlying usage assumptions?
- type and volume requirements?
- selection criteria?
- constraints? (eg. budget?)
- values? (eg. equity & fairness / image & practicality?)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Key obligation – maintain a safe and healthy workplace

Key strategy – prevent infection

Assumed usage scenario? – shoulder period? full Pandemic?

Can the workplace be closed? – if so, when? if not ... ?

Entry screening? – if so, who & how? centralised / distributed? control?

Usage consistent with workplace design – minimise / allow for “touchpoints”

When to get PPE? – before or after the Pandemic starts?

## PPE decisions

1. what PPE items to get? (categories? type? brand?)
2. how much? (depends on the following:)
3. for whom? (all staff? families? Head Office? all sites?)
4. to cover what period? (1 wave? multiple waves?)
5. what usage scenarios? (business days / all days / intra-day use?)

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## PPE brand / supplier selection criteria

Focus on quality, appropriateness, cost & overall value for money, including:

- performance (eg. effectiveness, comfort, durability, compliance)
- unit price & total cost
- storage & handling (incl. space requirements & packaging)
- shelf life
- supplier service / reputation / viability
- supply availability / delivery lag

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## PPE logistical issues

- Quantities are large (do the sums! staff x usages per day x days = ???)
- Where to store it?
- Cost – who will approve / fund it?
- Some PPE types are specially classified (eg. alcohol hand gel classified as Dangerous Good; alcohol surface wipes classified as Hazardous Material)
- Special requirements – storage / handling / transport

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## PPE: dangerous goods special requirements - storage, handling and transport

1. legislation / regulations / codes of practice – state and territory variation
2. risk assessment required / implement hierarchy of control principle
3. consultation and training for those using, storing and handling
4. separation and segregation from people / boundaries
5. ventilation and spill control
6. fire prevention and suppression
7. placarding and notification quantities
8. insurance implications
9. building owner rules & limitations
10. transport restrictions

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## PPE stockpile management & distribution

1. who manages the stock? (shelf life / expiry; use up ageing stock; disposal?)
2. who handles / transports it? (volumes are surprisingly large, need a forklift?)
3. who procures it? (on who's budget?) replenishment?
4. where is the storage facility? (how far? is it accessible 24/7?)
5. who manages the lease / contract? (BCP Coordinator? Facilities Manager?)
6. what awareness and training is needed? (stockpile handlers? distributors?)
7. what documentation needed at storage facility and at usage site? (eg. MSDS)
8. who distributes it? Who maintains records? Who trains the users? Who maintains security and control?

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## Pandemic Planning - some lessons learnt

- There is a wide range of practical issues in Pandemic Planning
- Decisions and issues re procurement, management and distribution of PPE are surprisingly complex
- These decisions must be made and endorsed before procurement
- PPE logistics, like its cost, should not be underestimated
- A cooperative cross-organisation approach is required

Any questions?

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