

**University of Prince Edward Island**

**PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

**October 7, 2009**

**University of Prince Edward Island**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

The UPEI Pandemic Preparedness Plan should be read in context of the University's broader Emergency Management Plan and Infectious Disease Policy. An influenza pandemic is one in a possible range of emergencies the University could face and for which it must be prepared. UPEI is guided in its pandemic preparedness and response by the provincial health authority (the Office of the Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health), the Public Health Agency of Canada, and the World Health Organization.

UPEI's Emergency Management Plan and Pandemic Preparedness Plan are issued under the authority of the University's Vice President, Finance & Facilities. The plans are to be reviewed on an annual basis.

This document identifies issues of primary concern for the University in the event of a pandemic, authority for decision making, and continuity planning. It has been created in order to ensure the institution is ready to respond quickly and appropriately to the threat and/or occurrence of an influenza pandemic.

The Pandemic Preparedness Plan is designed for education and awareness of the threat of a pandemic and describes an appropriate array of pandemic response roles in order to ensure the efficient mobilization and coordination of University resources. The plan endeavors to maximize efforts to provide life safety, protection of property, preservation of financial stability, and the protection of research initiatives and animal care.

The plan deals with a pandemic response at a broad level, summarizing general responsibilities of University departments and functions.

### **1.1 Objective**

The objective of this plan is to direct the members of the UPEI community to prepare and respond effectively in the event of a pandemic. The main goal is to protect the health and safety of the UPEI community during a pandemic and limit the impact on the University's continuity of service.

### **1.2 Definition of a Pandemic**

Pandemic influenza can occur when a new strain of influenza appears to which people have little or no immunity and there is no immediate vaccine. To be considered influenza pandemic, the new strain must be easily transmitted from human to human and causes serious clinical disease or death.

In contrast to the normal pattern of common infectious diseases, the appearance of a pandemic may be abrupt and spread rapidly, and may strike in waves and reappear after apparent dissipation.

### 1.3 Phases of a Pandemic

Phase	Public Health Goals	UPEI Goals
<p><b>Inter-pandemic Period</b></p> <p><b>Phase 1:</b> No new influenza virus subtypes detected in humans. An influenza virus subtype that has caused human infection may be present in animals, risk of human infection or disease is considered to be low.</p> <p><b>Phase 2:</b> No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. However, a circulating animal influenza virus subtype poses a substantial risk of human disease.</p>	<p>Strengthen influenza pandemic preparedness at the global, regional, national and if present in animal, the sub-national levels.</p> <p>Minimize the risk of transmission to humans; detect and report such transmission rapidly if it occurs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Normal operations.</li> <li>▪ Prepare individual unit plans.</li> <li>▪ Update overall University plan.</li> <li>▪ Campus-wide public education initiatives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pandemic Alert Period</b></p> <p><b>Phase 3:</b> Human infection(s) with a new subtype, but no human-to-human spread, or at most rare instances of spread to a close contact.</p> <p><b>Phase 4:</b> Small cluster(s) with limited human-to-human transmission but spread is highly localized, suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans.</p> <p><b>Phase 5:</b> Large cluster(s) but human-to-human spread still localized, suggesting that the virus is becoming increasingly better adapted to humans, but may not yet be fully transmissible (substantial pandemic risk)</p>	<p>Ensure rapid characterization of the new virus subtype and early detection, notification and response to additional cases.</p> <p>Contain the new virus within limited foci or delay spread to gain time to implement preparedness measures, including vaccine development.</p> <p>Maximize efforts to contain or delay spread, to possibly avert a pandemic, and to gain time to implement pandemic response measures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Testing of the University Pandemic Preparedness Plan.</li> <li>▪ Continuity Plans reviewed and communicated to staff.</li> <li>▪ Review and testing of UPEI Emergency Management Plan.</li> <li>▪ Implementation of Pandemic Communications Plan and University-wide educational messages re: infection control measures.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pandemic Period</b></p> <p><b>Phase 6:</b> Increased and sustained transmission in general population.</p>	<p>Minimize the impact of the pandemic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implementation of UPEI Emergency Management Plan and Pandemic Preparedness Plan.</li> <li>▪ Actions as directed by provincial, federal and international health agencies (possible closure, cancellation of public gathering activities)</li> </ul>

During the post pandemic phase, UPEI will return to normal operations, evaluate and update Pandemic Preparedness Plan as required.

Related Links

<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/pandemic/en/>

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/health/index.php3?number=1021139>

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/tmp-pmv/2009/hsf-mexico-090427-eng.php#thn>

#### **1.4 Role of Public Health During a Pandemic**

Public health authorities (provincial, federal and international) will direct UPEI actions during a pandemic.

Public health authority functions include:

- Disease surveillance and reporting
- Case investigation and management
- Identification and follow-up of close contacts
- Health risk assessments and communications
- Liaison with hospitals and other agencies
- Community-based disease control strategies
- Vaccine and antiviral medication administration and distribution

#### **1.5 UPEI Pandemic Preparedness and Response**

During a pandemic, many complex decisions must be coordinated and carefully managed. If the situation moves to Phase 5, UPEI will assemble its Pandemic Preparedness and Response Coordination Team to implement the Pandemic Communications Plan and campus-wide information and public education awareness regarding infectious disease control.

The Pandemic Preparedness and Response Team will be the advisory committee to both the Vice President, Finance and Facilities and the Vice President of Academic Development. This team will consist of the:

- Director, Human Resources
- Director, Student Services
- Health and Safety Advisor
- Director, Integrated Communications
- Director, Ancillary Services
- Student Union President
- Associate Dean, Academic Affairs (AVC)
- Assistant Dean, Admin & Finance (AVC)
- Other invited guests , as determined by the Vice-Presidents

The Pandemic Preparedness and Response Team is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Pandemic Preparedness Plan on the campus and provides support to the Vice President, Finance and Facilities and the Vice President, Academic Development in making decisions

If the situation moves to Phase 6, the University will be guided by its Emergency Management Plan. The University should not assume that assistance will be provided during a pandemic, given the wide-scale demands and limitation of resources.

As Chair of the University's Emergency Management Team, the Vice President, Finance and Facilities (supported by the Vice President, Academic Development) will oversee the political and policy aspects of the University's pandemic response. During a pandemic, these include:

- Approval of overall priorities and strategies
- Approval of information reports and instructions to the University public and community
- Communicating with UPEI's President, Board of Governors and Senior Management Group
- Maintaining liaison with governments and external organizations

During the inter-pandemic phase (or normal operations), the Vice President, Finance and Facilities and the Vice President, Academic Development will have the responsibility of:

- ensuring a Pandemic Preparedness and Response Team has been formed
- the University's Pandemic Preparedness Plan is developed, approved and updated annually

## **2.0 Communications**

The University spokesperson throughout a pandemic will be the Chair of the University Emergency Operations Team (Vice President, Finance and Facilities). The back-up spokesperson will be the Vice President, Academic Development. Messaging will be strongly coordinated to ensure it is factual, timely and clear. The Pandemic Communications Plan will be implemented under the direction of the Pandemic Preparedness and Response Team as outlined in section 1.5. (Appendix: Pandemic Communications Plan).

All communications to the University at large and to the public regarding the University's response to a pandemic must be approved by the Vice President, Finance and Facilities.

## **3.0 University Priorities**

The priorities for UPEI in an event of a pandemic are to maintain, insofar as possible, the following:

- Health, safety and security of students, faculty, staff, contractors, tenants and visitors on University premises
- Timely communications of critical messages
- Continuity of essential services (including: learning/teaching and related student services, research programs and activities, essential administrative services such as regulatory compliance, pay, benefits, student financial aid, and student records, supply management, and security and preservation of University facilities and equipment)
- Effective partnerships and support with key external agencies
- Containment and infection control
- The University is responsible for the care of a number of teaching, research and client-owned animals. Strict regulations govern animal care provided by the University and the care and safety of animals is a prime concern. Where animal care concerns exist, units must either ensure day-to-day care during a pandemic in a manner that meets regulatory and veterinary practice guidelines, or develop procedures to reduce the number of animals to a manageable level.

## **4.0 Continuity Planning**

The first priority of the University's Pandemic Preparedness Plan is the health and safety of the campus community. The second priority is to minimize the impact of disruptions on UPEI operations and ensure continuity of services wherever possible.

Continuity of operations plans will be developed for the following functions:

- Health and Safety (including pre-pandemic training and education)
- Academics (including any and all issues related to UPEI students both on and off site)
- Student Services (including the Health Centre, counseling services and International Students)
- Finance and Administration (including supplies management, suppliers listings, rapid procurement and payment for supplies, equipment and services)
- Human Resources (including essential functions/workers lists, attendance management, work-from-home guidelines, payroll and benefits, collective agreement issues)
- Computer Services (including network system access, support of business functions)
- Facilities Management (including building maintenance, contractors, security services, and communications to affiliated organizations on campus – CARI, NRC-INH, Food Technology Centre, Campus Kids, UPEI Student Union)
- Ancillary Services (including residences, food and conference services)
- Integrated Communications (including communications and messaging management via website and media)
- Research Development (including identification of critical and non-critical research, security of laboratories, specimen storage, graduate students)
- Atlantic Veterinary College (including all client service based programs and animal care)

Business continuity plans will contain:

- primary contact information for the department
- office location and contact information for the primary contact (on and off site)
- the essential services that need to be provided including any additional initiatives that need to be implemented due to a pandemic
- a list of staff positions that are required to provide the essential services noted above
- a list of services required from other University departments to provide the essential services noted above
- a description of the how the essential services will be provided, including, if necessary, a plan for cross training staff for altered roles
- the services that will be suspended
- a description of the impact of suspending specific services
- additional resources and/or funding required

Continuity plans will be reviewed annually in June by function unit heads to identify opportunities for improvement and to ensure they meet any new demands of the University or any newly emerging risks.

#### **4.1 Campus Planning and Implementation Responsibilities**

The development and implementation of a plan for campus-wide health and safety education and training initiatives related to a pandemic will be the joint responsibilities of the Director, Student Services and the Health and Safety Advisor.

Planning, education and training related to continuity of service will be the responsibility of faculty Deans and departmental unit heads.

The Vice President, Academic will be responsible for the development and implementation of appropriate responses for academic units, alterations to teaching and examination schedules.

The Vice President, Finance and Facilities will be responsible for developing a plan for the financial health and stability of the University in the event of a pandemic. This plan will include arrangements that will need to be made in the event that the University is closed for one academic period.

The Vice President, Research Development will be responsible for developing a plan to minimizing risk to University research programs and facilities, and address graduate student issues related to funding.

The Director, Health Services will work closely with the Vice President Academic Affairs in managing the University's medical response to the pandemic and advising the Vice President, Finance and Facilities on campus health issues.

Faculty Deans and Departmental Unit Heads will serve as the primary departmental contact in the event of a pandemic.

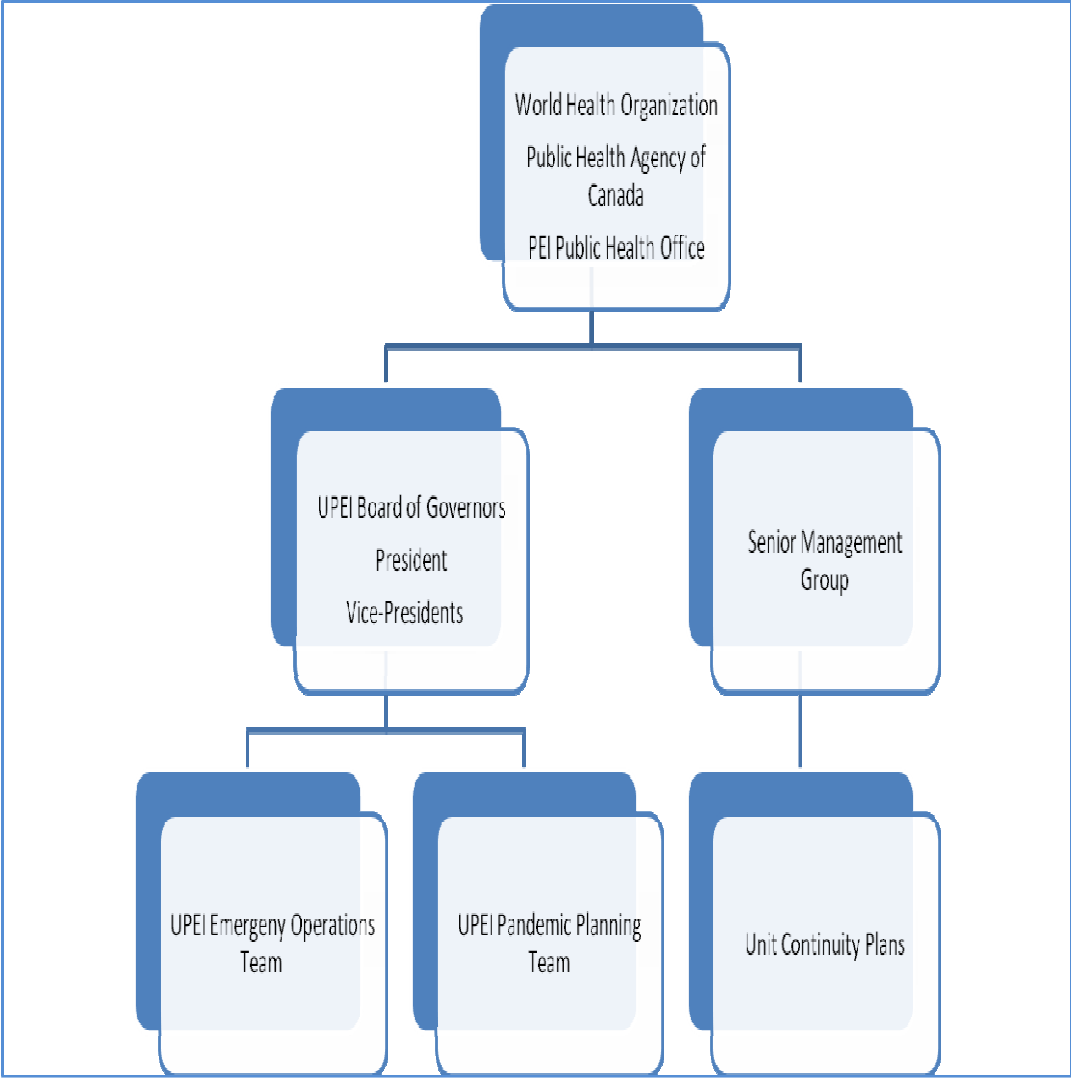
## **5.0 Conclusion**

This document will serve as a guide for the University of Prince Edward Island in the event of Pandemic Influenza. It is designed to be modified and evolved as circumstance warrant for any individual pandemic situation.



Appendix A

PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE FLOW CHART



**Communications Plan**

**DRAFT May 16, 2007**

**Updated: May 1, 2009**

**Purpose**

This communications plan supports the successful implementation and execution of UPEI's emergency operations plan in relation to a pandemic. This plan focuses on communicating with the University community in a responsible, timely, and transparent manner **before** and **during** a pandemic.

**Communications goals**

- To educate the UPEI community on the potential impacts and actions related to a pandemic **prior** to a pandemic occurring.
- To communicate with the UPEI community and media in a responsible, timely, and clear manner during a pandemic.
- To provide support in safeguarding public health, community safety, and continuity of University operations throughout and following a pandemic.

**Key messages**

- UPEI is taking a precautionary approach to pandemic preparedness in an effort to minimize any risks associated with [name of infectious disease] in an effort to minimize risks and safeguard the health and safety of the UPEI community.
- The University takes its guidance and direction on pandemic preparedness for the provincial health authority and the Public Health Agency of Canada based on World Health Organization intelligence and best practices.
- UPEI is committed to communicating with the campus community in a timely manner to ensure our people are aware of the situation and understand how to avoid potentially contracting and/or spreading [name of infectious disease].

**Communications activities**

**Prior to a pandemic**

Once finalized, UPEI's pandemic preparedness plan will be communicated to the UPEI community through a series of presentations.

This pro-active effort will include:

- presentations to employees on pandemic planning (including basic key messages around preventive measures, employee and student responsibilities, how information will be provided during a pandemic, what to expect during a pandemic, etc.)
- similar presentations to UPEI student executive and key student groups such as student executives for faculties and the UPEI Grad Student Society
- an information page on pandemic planning, student responsibilities, and "what to expect" in student handbooks
- development of a pandemic planning section for the UPEI website as an information resource

To assist in the immediate and effective implementation of emergency planning, a number of materials and processes will be developed in anticipation of a pandemic.

These include:

- pandemic notification posters (with space available to insert handwritten information)
- website and campus monitor messages
- draft media release
- draft security and employee memos, key messages, Q&A's (including: How will a pandemic affect me? How will I know what to do? How will UPEI communicate with employees and students?)
- draft telephone script for the UPEI Hotline
- prepared email distribution lists for employees, students, board of governors, media, and related groups (such as police, government, and suppliers)
- identify designated spokesperson and backups
- determine human and information resources for accessing UPEI website, UPEI Hotline, and media lists

Media relations will play a crucial role in the events – and outcomes – of a pandemic. Executive commitment is required prior to a pandemic (or any other emergency) to enable immediate communication with media, the continuance of timely updates and reports, and ensure the ongoing priority of information release via interviews and written/email updates.

Emergency spokespersons must receive media training. In addition, spokespersons and communications professionals for associated third party organizations (such as the Provincial health

authority) should be established, planning measures communicated, and emergency contact information shared.

The above noted public education materials, media components, and messages will be developed in consultation with the UPEI Emergency Management Coordinator and Integrated Communications.

### During a pandemic

In the event of a pandemic, the chain of command outlined in UPEI's Emergency Management Plan relating to communicating with UPEI's internal and external publics will be employed. Communications will play a key role in ensuring factual information is gathered and provided to key publics in a timely, factual, and responsible manner.

The UPEI website will be the primary communications resource during a pandemic. This will be complemented by timely media updates. UPEI's telephone hotline will be employed and posters placed throughout campus will be used to ensure employees, students, and key parties (such as parents) know what to do during a pandemic and how to continue to access information.

### **Desired outcomes**

Effective pandemic communications should result in:

- timely, accurate communications with UPEI community and media that support the health and safety of students, employees, and community members
- a well coordinated and managed communications infrastructure resulting in effective information gathering, release, and response
- effectively managed media needs
- positive employee and public perception of University actions and response to pandemic
- continuity of University operations

### **Critical path**

- to be determined based on pandemic planning time lines