If you have been paying attention to the media, you most likely heard of pandemic flu & avian (bird) flu. This article’s purpose is to separate the propaganda from the factual information.

What is pandemic flu?
An influenza pandemic occurs when a new strain of influenza virus emerges, spreading around the world & infecting many people at once. A influenza virus capable of causing a Pandemic is one that people do not have natural immunity to, can easily spread from person to person, & is capable of causing severe disease. There were three influenza pandemics in the last century; they were caused by viruses containing a combination of genes from a human influenza virus & an avian influenza virus. Influenza is a viral infection of the lungs. There are two main types of influenza virus, A & B. Each type includes many different strains & new strains periodically emerge. Influenza outbreaks occur most often in late fall & winter. Pandemic influenza is a global outbreak of disease that occurs when a new influenza A virus appears in humans, causes serious illness & then spreads easily from person to person worldwide.

What’s the difference between a pandemic & a seasonal outbreak of flu?
A pandemic is caused by a new influenza A virus that most people have never been exposed to, so everyone is susceptible. Pandemic strains also often cause more serious disease. Because of this, past influenza pandemics have led to high levels of illness, death, social disruption & economic loss. Seasonal outbreaks of flu are caused by strains of influenza virus similar to those of past years.

How likely is influenza pandemic?
It is predicted an influenza pandemic will occur again. The H5N1 avian influenza virus could become a pandemic influenza virus, if this virus combines with a human influenza virus.

What can I expect if pandemic influenza occurs?
Allegan County Health Department is working with other agencies to respond to pandemic influenza & to maintain essential government--al services, if an outbreak occurs. A person infected with influenza virus can be contagious for 24 hours before the onset of symptoms & for seven days thereafter, making it extremely easy for the virus to spread rapidly to large number of people.

What else can be done to minimize the risk of pandemic influenza?
• Cover your nose & mouth with a tissue or sneezing, when coughing
• Wash hands thoroughly & often; and/or use liquid sanitizers (60% or > alcohol).
• Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth.
• Stay home when you are sick.
• Avoid contact with people known to have the flu or appear to have a respiratory illness.
Preventing the Spread of Influenza

Note of caution: this information is for seasonal influenza; information related to Pandemic Influenza could be subject to frequent & significant changes in guidelines & recommendations. The Allegan County Health Department will make announcements in relation to any new recommendations, if a pandemic influenza occurs.

Be Aware of Common Flu Symptoms!

Influenza is an infectious respiratory disease caused by an influenza virus. Seasonal influenza usually starts with sudden onset of fever, sore throat, cough & muscle aches, but people have some or all of these symptoms: *Fever (usually high >100.4 F) *Runny or stuffy nose * Headache *Tiredness (can be extreme) * Dry Cough * Sore throat * Body/muscle aches * Chill * Body aches, especially in the head, lower back & legs area.

People May Have Different Reactions to the Seasonal Flu!

The seasonal flu can cause mild to severe illness & at times can lead to death. Although most healthy people recover from seasonal flu without complications, some people, such as older people, young children, & people with certain health conditions, are at high risk for serious complications from the flu.

Know How the Seasonal Flu Spreads!

The flu usually spreads from person to person in respiratory droplets when infected people coughs, sneezes or talks. Airborne droplets can enter the body through eyes, nose or mouth. The virus, contained in droplets can travel up to 3 feet in the air. People occasionally may become infected by touching something with influenza virus on it & then touching their mouth, nose, or eyes. Seasonal influenza virus can survive on hard surfaces for 1 to 2 days; on fabrics or facial tissues for 8 to 12 hours; & on hands for 5 minutes. People may be able to infect others 1 day before getting symptoms & up to 7 days after getting sick. Therefore, it is possible to give someone the flu before you know you are sick as well as while you are sick.

Know Flu can Spread Illness in your Home!

Physically separate the sick family member from other household members are much as possible. Designate one person in the household as the main caregiver for the ill family member. Watch for influenza symptoms in other household members. Wear surgical masks when in close contact (within 3 feet) of the sick family member. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap & water or use an alcohol-based (> 60% alcohol) hand cleaner/sanitizer after each contact with the sick family member or with objects in the area where the sick family members is located. Do not touch your nose, or mouth without first washing your hands for 20 seconds. Wash hands before & after using the bathroom. Wash soiled dishes & eating utensils used by the sick family member in a dishwasher or by hand using utility gloves & warm soapy water/rinse thoroughly; another option is disposal dishes & utensils.

Soiled linens & laundry used by the sick family member can be washed in a standard washing machine set at warm temperature with a laundry detergent. Handle the soiled linens & laundry with care (do not shake) to prevent inhaling any contaminates present. Wash hands for 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based (> 60% alcohol) hand sanitizer after handling soiled linens & laundry. Please contaminated tissues in a bag & throw away with other household waste.
Preventing the Spread of Influenza continue

What is the difference between influenza, the "common cold" & the "stomach flu"?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms/Description</th>
<th>Influenza</th>
<th>&quot;Common Cold&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Stomach Flu&quot;</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fever</td>
<td>Usually high</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chill, arches, pain</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of appetite</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore throat</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sniffles or sneezes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involves whole body</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Stomach/bowel only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symptoms appear quickly</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>More gradual</td>
<td>Fairly quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme tiredness</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complications</td>
<td>Pneumonia; can be life threatening</td>
<td>Sinus infection; Ear infection</td>
<td>Dehydration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Watch for complications from seasonal influenza

- Chest pain or pressure;
- Coughing up dark colored or bloody sputum;
- High fever not responding to medications;
- Excessive coughing;
- Wheezing;
- Difficulty breathing;
- Convulsions;
- Worsen after feeling well;
- Confusion or extreme exhaustion.
During an emergency or crisis, the services that volunteers can provide are crucial. Being able to efficiently utilize the capabilities of volunteers in a time of emergency often present a major challenge. Immediately after the terrorists’ attack in New York City on September 11, 2001, thousands of people arrived at ground zero to volunteer their assistance. Many of those that arrived wanted to provide medical assistance to the victims of the attack. In most cases, one could not distinguish qualified volunteers from unqualified. There was not any mechanism for coordination; therefore, response effectiveness was reduced. Advanced registration of non-healthcare and healthcare volunteers will provide public health and emergency authorities’ immediate access to personnel that may be needed in an emergency.

The Allegan County Volunteers System will play an important role in emergency response, especially in the public health sector. The Allegan County Health Department is looking for individuals who enjoy working with others to make a difference in the health of our community. MI Volunteer Registry also seeks individuals with healthcare backgrounds and experience, interested in volunteering during an emergency. They are looking for all skill levels and experiences. Their initial focus will be doctors, nurses, behavioral health, emergency medical services personnel and ancillary support staff. In addition, they encourage other individuals to register. To become a volunteer, call Don Haneckow at Allegan County Health Department; his telephone number is 269-686-4580.

Why is local public health looking for volunteers? One role of local public health is to respond to emergencies that can pose a threat to their community health. In some cases, many volunteers will be needed to help the local public health professionals and staffs respond to public health emergencies. Public health emergencies include large outbreaks of a contagious disease, bioterrorism incidents, and natural disasters.

What type of diseases may require mass vaccination or prophylaxis?
- Pandemic Influenza
- Anthrax
- Smallpox
- Plague
- Chemical agents and nuclear fall-out
- Food borne Illness agents (Hepatitis A)

Does the Allegan County Health Department have a plan to respond to emergencies? Yes, the Allegan County Health Department has a Public Health Emergency Response Plan that provides guidelines to coordinate and administer the public health services resources to protect the public and treat the sick and injured in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. This includes communicable disease control, environmental sanitation, emergencies involving toxic or hazardous materials, and other chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological hazards. The Department has developed a detailed plan for rapid, voluntary vaccination or prophylaxis of the over 100,000 residents of Allegan County. In order to simultaneously vaccinate or dispense a prophylaxis agent to the greater population, many medical and non-medical volunteers are needed to assist the Health Department.

How will volunteers be contacted? Volunteers via email, text pager, telephone or fax after an emergency if the local responders are not sufficient to meet the need for the response and recovery efforts resulting from an incident.

What type of job duties will I be asked to perform? To respond to these needs the Allegan County Public Health Department and Michigan Volunteer Registry are recruiting volunteers. Depending on the emergency, volunteers will be needed to perform a variety of different jobs. Some job duties require little training, and others require an active healthcare professional license such as but not limited to a nurse, nurse practitioner, physician, physician’s assistant, pharmacist, sanitarian, dentist, dental hygienist, counselor, psychologist, social worker, veterinarian, & veterinary technician.
The healthcare professionals may be utilized in the areas of: surveillance and notification, diagnosis and monitoring, immunizations, medications, triage, referral, counseling, medical care augmentation, decontamination, and infection control.

List of Job Duties

Job duties for volunteers without a professional healthcare license:

- **Aide**: Monitor volunteer & staff rest areas
- **Clerk/Greeter**: Greet clients and assist them in completing forms
- **Educator**: Provide basic information (verbally or with a video presentation) about the situation, the disease, the medication and vaccine
- **Ordained or lay clergy**: Provide spiritual, and emotional support to clients, volunteers & staff
- **Supply Assistant**: Monitor supply inventory at work stations and deliver needed supplies
- **Flow Personnel**: Assist clients in moving through clinic process
- **Child Care**: Assist with child care
- **Food Canteen Worker**: Set up and manage canTeen area
- **Transportation Assistant**: Transport people to and from the site or event
- **Heavy Labor**: Set up tables, chairs, and other items
- **Handyperson**: Perform simple repair jobs, sand bagger, and haul debris
- **Data Entry**: Enter data and check information as needed
- **Interpreter (requires foreign language and/or sign language skills)**: Interpret verbal and written information between volunteers, staff and clients
- **Security**: Assist law enforcement with security

Job duties for volunteers with a Michigan professional healthcare license:

- **Registered Nurse, Licensed Emergency Medical Service Personnel, Licensed Practical Nurse**:
  - Screener (clinics only): Assess clients for contraindications & review risk/benefit information
  - Exit interviewer (clinics only): Provide follow-up instructions
  - Vaccinator (clinics only): Administer vaccination to pre-screened people.
  - Vaccinator Aide (clinics only): Assist vaccinator in administering vaccine
  - Antibiotic/Antimicrobial Agent Dispenser (clinics only): Dispense medications to pre-screened client
- **Physician, Physician’s Assistant, Nurse Practitioner**:
  - All RN duties indicated above
  - Medical Evaluator (clinics only): Provide in-depth assessment of contraindications and be available for consultations.
- **Dentist, Registered Dental Hygienist**:
  - Screener (clinics only): Assess clients for contraindications & review risk/benefit information
  - Vaccinator (clinics only): Administer vaccination to pre-screened people.
  - Antibiotic/Antimicrobial Agent Dispenser (clinics only): Dispense medications to pre-screened client
- **Registered Pharmacist (clinics only)**: Provide recommendations & consultations regarding drug interactions, contraindications & alternative medications or antimicrobials.
- **Registered Sanitarian**: Identify, screen, measure and monitor communicable diseases, environmental sanitation, emergencies involving toxic or hazardous materials, and other chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological hazards.
- **Licensed Mental Health Professional (which includes licensed professional counselors, psychiatrists, licensed psychologists, & certified or licensed social workers)**: Provide psychological and emotional support to clients, volunteers & staff.
- **Veterinarian, Licensed Veterinary Technician**: Provide guidance & consultations on exposed animals; Report veterinary medical disease to the surveillance operating system (VMD-SOS).
Michigan Disease Surveillance System (MDSS)...
Information for Healthcare Providers

What is MDSS?
- MDSS is a web-based communicable disease reporting system developed for the state of Michigan.
- Developed to national data standards.
- Facilitates coordination among local, State & federal Public Health Agencies.
- Provides for the secure transfer, maintenance & analysis of communicable disease surveillance information.
- Promotes participation from a variety of stakeholders including public health, health care providers, & medical laboratories.

Why should you use MDSS?
- Fulfills physician reporting requirements under the Michigan Communicable Disease Rules (PA 368, MCL 333.5111).
- Singles point-of-access for reporting ALL communicable diseases.
- Communicable disease reports are automatically routed to the correct local health department for follow-up.
- No need to know health department telephone or facsimile numbers.
- Physicians will have access to ALL case follow-up information for cases they report through MDSS.

Who should I contact for more information?
- MDSS & Communicable Disease Reporting (including HIPAA considerations):
  http://www.michigan.gov/mdss
- Email: MDCH_MDSS@michigan.gov

Or contact Cindy Stiles, RN at Allegan County Health Department 269-686-4524
YOU ARE INVITED

Healthy Lifestyles:

A FREE Workshop with a Holistic Approach...

PARTICIPANT MUST BE AT LEAST 18 YEARS OF AGE WITH A CHRONIC HEALTH ISSUE OR WITH SELF-REPORTED LIMITATION/DISABILITY

Join us for a FUN and educational workshop that provides you with the knowledge, skills and resources to create a healthy lifestyle.

The Healthy Lifestyle workshop takes a holistic approach to health:

- Explore what wellness means to you
- Set your own wellness goals
- Learn from peers and make new friends
- Benefit from on-going support for up to 6 months upon completing the workshop

Healthy lunches will be provided both workshop days & transportation is available if needed!

When: Monday & Tuesday
9:30 am–2:30 pm each day
November 27 & 28, 2006

Where: Allegan County Health & Human Services Bldg
3255 122nd Avenue
Allegan, Michigan

To register or for more information contact:
Kathy Yonkers-Wright, RDH, MS
269-686-4523
kwright@allegancounty.org

Space is limited pre-register is required!

Healthy Lifestyle Program for Allegan County is funded by a grant from NACCHO/CDC.
If your organization would like to sponsor this workshop to be held at your facility or area, please contact us at 269-686-4523.
Certain ZIP codes in Allegan County have been determined to present the highest risk for childhood lead poisoning due to one or more of the following:
1. Having a 12% (or greater) incidence of lead poisoning among children ages 12 to 36 months; or
2. Containing 27% (or greater) pre-1950 housing.
3. Having a high ranking for the combination of percentage of pre-1950 housing, and number of children under age six, and percentage of children under age six in poverty.

These ZIP codes are 49010, 49056, 49070, 49078, 49080, 49328, 49344, 49348, 49408, 49419, 49423, 49450, and 49453. If you live within these ZIP codes or have clients that do...Call Allegan County Health Department at 269-673-5411 for information NOW!

What is lead poisoning? Lead poisoning is too much lead in the body. It can cause:
- Headaches
- Behavior & learning problems
- Hearing problems
- Slowed growth
- Damage to the brain & nervous system.
The younger the child, the more damage lead poisoning does.

Where does lead come from?
- Paint dust, chipping paint, peeling paint
- Dust from walls or buildings that are being torn down
- The dirt around construction sites, older homes & buildings

What can I do?
- Get children especially in those ZIP codes tested for lead! The damage caused by lead poisoning can be prevented if caught in time.
- Pregnant women may also need testing. Lead in a mother's body is extremely dangerous to the unborn baby.
- Dust your house often with a damp cloth. Keep cribs & high chairs away from dusty places such as windowsills.

What is the criteria for testing a child for lead poisoning?
- **Medicaid:** All Medicaid-enrolled children (test at 12 months & 24 months of age or between 36 & 72 months if not previously tested) regardless of their location in Allegan County, MUST be tested. No exceptions or waivers exist.
- **Geography:** All non-Medicaid-enrolled children living within specific high risk ZIP codes should be tested.
- **Questionnaire (see below):** The parents or guardians of children not in one of the previous two categories should be asked exposure questions to determine each child's risk. If the answer is "Yes" or "Don't Know" to any of the exposure questions, that child should be tested.
  1. Does the child live in (or often visit) a house built before 1950?
  2. Does the child live in (or often visit) a house built before 1978 that has been remodeled within the last year?
  3. Does the child have a brother or sister (or playmate) with lead poisoning?
  4. Does the child live with an adult whose job or hobby involves lead?
  5. Does the child's family use any home remedies or cultural practices that may contain/use lead?
Protecting the residents of Allegan County is the Allegan County Health Department, Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Section’s key function!

Public Health Emergency Preparedness Section’s pandemic planning efforts involves:

• Educating the public about pandemic influenza through the mass media, Allegan County’s web-pages, distribution of educational materials, & public presentations.
• Providing emergency planning assistance & developing plan templates.
• Convening healthcare organizations & providers to coordinate plans & develop effective communication strategies.
• Engaging the leaders in the community with Pandemic Flu Summits & focus groups.
• Purchasing infection control supplies for the potential pandemic & developing plans for efficient uses of these supplies.
• Developing plans for well ordered distribution of any vaccine that may be developed.
• Conducting simulated public health emergency exercises & drills to evaluate Allegan County’s readiness.

Much works remains to be completed & it is important to ready volunteers to assist with a public health emergency such as a pandemic! Please become involved & join the MI Volunteer!

Register by going to http://www.allegancounty.org/publichealth/ and clicking on volunteer recruitment Or by calling Don Haneckow at 269-686-4580.

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**FREE HEARING & VISION CLINICS**

- Monday, November 6, 2006
- Monday, December 4, 2006
- Monday, January 8, 2007
- Monday, February 5, 2007
- Monday, March 5, 2007

All clinics are on a walk in basis from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the Allegan County Health Dept. 3255 - 122ND Avenue, Allegan. (269) 673-5411

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### Allegan County Disease Incidence Quarterly Report: July–September 2006

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Event Name</th>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Allegan County Disease Incidence Quarterly Report: July–September 2006

Page 9
Message from Richard Tooker, MD, MPH, Allegan County Health Department Medical Director:

How will your practice, facility or clinic manage with up to 30% of workers out sick? At the same time many healthcare providers will also experience a sharp rise in patient care demand. This is the reality of what pandemic influenza will bring to our local health care community.

The time to prepare is now and the task is two-fold. Step one is to develop a business continuation plan. This means deciding now how to operate essential services & business functions with high absenteeism, high demand for services & potential disruption of normal community functions & activities. Step two is to get connected with community-wide medical response & disaster planning. All healthcare providers are likely to have an expanded role in controlling the impact of a severe influenza pandemic. Start becoming involved now for an event most experts believe is overdue. It is important to join the MI Volunteer Registry by going to http://www.allegancounty.org/publichealth/ and clicking on volunteer recruitment.

For pandemic planning assistance, contact Allegan County Health Department at 269-673-5411 & also access ready references such as, http://www.allegancounty.org/publichealth, http://www.pandemicflu.gov , & http://www.apha.org/flu