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Committee **CDEM Group**
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Pandemic progress report

1. Purpose

To inform the CDEM Group of the results of a recent survey into Territorial Authorities planning for a potential Avian Influenza outbreak.

2. Background

World Health Organisation experts are sufficiently concerned at the potential for an influenza pandemic that they advised countries to prepare action plans. While there is no current suggestion that pandemic influenza is imminent, it is worth planning for on the basis that, by such an event, most, if not all, communities and workplaces would be affected. There would be a limited opportunity to bring in extra resources from outside the community.

The consequences of a pandemic would be largely health related – with predictions in a worse case scenario stating that 40% of the population may contract a novel influenza virus over an eight week period and 2% of those people could die¹.

In the Wellington Region, this translates to 179,000 people becoming ill, 89,750 people needing GP referrals, 10,830 people requiring admission to hospital and 3,610 people dying².

Social distancing, significant absenteeism and disruption to normal living activities may become commonplace.

District Health Boards, local government and CDEM Groups have a key role in preparing local communities for a pandemic, and in responding to such an event. It is a widely-held view that the battle will be won or lost in the local communities, and therefore community leadership and preparedness will be vital elements in the response and recovery to a pandemic.

¹ Planning scenario developed by the Ministry of Health in 2005 and adopted by the whole of government: Capital and Coast DHB Influenza Pandemic Plan

² The figures have been prepared by Dr Margot McLean, Medical Officer of Health, Regional Public Health Service: Capital & Coast DHB Influenza Pandemic Plan

3. Pandemic planning progress

A great deal of work on pandemic planning has occurred across the Health and CDEM sectors over the last 12 months, with extensive involvement from numerous other agencies.

The Ministry of Civil Defence Emergency Management surveyed Territorial Authorities in August 2006 (via CDEM Group Offices) to gauge pandemic planning progress.

The following tables give an overview of where each of the Wellington Region Territorial Authorities (including the CDEM Group Office) is at with their planning as at 31 July 2006.

These tables represent planning in four areas:

1. Risk reduction for Local Authorities and CDEM Groups
2. Readiness for Local Authorities and CDEM Groups
3. Risk reduction for Communities
4. Readiness for Communities

A pandemic preparedness update has been obtained from each of the Territorial Authorities. The information supplied does not reflect response and recovery actions at this time.

Greater Wellington Regional Council is represented in the first two tables relating to Local Authorities and CDEM Groups and is replaced by the Group Office in the third and fourth tables relating to Communities.

4. Summary

The majority of Territorial Authorities have completed or are in the process of completing risk reduction activities aimed specifically at the Council level (e.g. informing staff, identifying essential services, developing hygienic habits etc).

There is more work still to be done around identifying public buildings that may be closed, developing back-up suppliers and developing contingency funds.

All Territorial Authorities have been engaged with readiness activities such as updating their Business Continuity Plans and most are developing Human Resource policies and infection control procedures.

None of the Territorial Authorities have exercised their plans. However, this will be addressed through the Ministry of Health's exercise programme that will trial New Zealand's capability and capacity to respond to a pandemic.

This programme will include three significant exercises that are designed health sector participation, but will involve CDEM to varying degrees.

- Exercise Makgill – November 2006
- Exercise Russell – February 2007
- Exercise Cruickshank – May 2007

Risk reduction activities for communities, such as estimating impacts of populations, engaging in food supply continuity planning and advising communities, are in progress for most Territorial Authorities. However, a number of Territorial Authorities did not provide any information in this area.

Planning is currently underway in readiness for communities, where Territorial Authorities are identifying community facilities to support health, working with volunteer organisations, training emergency operations centre staff and communicating with the general public.

5. Survey findings

5.1 Key:

WEMO	Wellington City Council
HCC	Hutt City Council (emergency management function now combined with Upper Hutt City Council)
PCC	Porirua City Council
KCDC	Kapiti Coast District Council
MDC	Masterton District Council
CDC	Carterton District Council
SWDC	South Wairarapa District Council
GWRC	Greater Wellington Regional Council
GROUP	Wellington Region CDEM Group Office (administered by GWRC staff)

5.2 Risk reduction for Local Authorities and CDEM Groups

Task	Completed	In progress	Not started	No information supplied
1. Learn about pandemic influenza. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with local DHB staff Obtain local DHB health planning assumptions. Refer to material on the Ministry of Health website. 	WEMO HCC CDC KCDC GWRC	MDC SWDC PCC		
2. Hold awareness sessions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform elected members and staff of the nature and consequences of a pandemic, and their roles in readiness, response and recovery. 	WEMO HCC KCDC	PCC MDC SWDC GWRC		CDC
3. Identify essential services. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check that essential Local Government services are addressed by existing CDEM plans (e.g. water, waste water). Identify essential lifeline utilities delivered by others that your services depend on, such as tele-communications and electricity. 	WEMO HCC PCC KCDC GWRC	MDC CDC SWDC		
4. Identify ways to separate staff from public. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop alternative service delivery methods to limit staff contact with public. Prepare policies allowing tele-commuting and working from home for local authority staff. Develop “safe meeting” policies – social distancing, use of masks, screens, etc. See Department of Labour website for more information – http://www.dol.govt.nz 	WEMO	HCC PCC KCDC CDC GWRC	MDC SWDC	

Task	Completed	In progress	Not started	No information supplied
<p>5. Develop infection management plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an infection management plan for local authority facilities. See Ministry of Economic Development website for more information – http://www.med.govt.nz. 		HCC PCC KCDC CDC GWRC	WEMO MDC SWDC	
<p>6. Develop hygienic habits, vaccinate staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institute good hygiene practices among all employees to develop healthy habits. Facilitate routine, annual influenza vaccinations of staff. 	WEMO GWRC	HCC PCC KCDC MDC CDC SWDC		
<p>7. Duplicate personnel capabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all essential positions have at least one alternate, and establish a registry of backup personnel and their skill-sets. Resolve with employee unions any issues and/or HR policies related to temporarily filling positions vacated by illness or death among staff. 	WEMO HCC KCDC	PCC MDC CDC SWDC GWRC		
<p>8. Develop Support Plans for sick staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow Department of Labour guidelines on staff wellbeing issues. Advise staff of welfare policies and plans. Consider support for staff that has to go home sick. 	WEMO HCC	PCC KCDC CDC GWRC	MDC SWDC	
<p>9. Estimate impact on your employees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify total number of employees by department. Estimate number of employees expected to be unavailable due to illness, family commitments, over time by department. Identify high -risk facilities (e.g., locations of high public contact). Identify high risk and essential roles. 	WEMO PCC KCDC GWRC	HCC MDC CDC SWDC		

Task	Completed	In progress	Not started	No information supplied
<p>10. Identify public buildings that may be closed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a list of all public buildings/amenities/facilities/sports grounds etc under your control. Identify and prioritise public buildings that may be closed, either by directive from Medical Officer of Health to avoid public gatherings, etc, or to provide emergency welfare services. 	<p>WEMO PCC GWRC</p>	<p>HCC KCDC MDC CDC</p>	<p>SWDC</p>	
<p>11. Assess financial impact on local authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify primary sources of income. Anticipate increased costs associated with sick/special leave, re-staffing to replace chronically ill /lost staff. Assess potential economic impacts on local authority of pandemic influenza. Conduct workshops for senior staff on sources of emergency financial assistance. 		<p>WEMO HCC CDC</p>	<p>MDC SWDC GWRC</p>	<p>PCC KCDC</p>
<p>12. Develop backup suppliers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify current suppliers. Identify impacts if supplies are interrupted. Identify and develop alternate suppliers, where essential. 	<p>PCC KCDC</p>	<p>WEMO HCC GWRC</p>	<p>MDC CDC SWDC</p>	
<p>13. Develop contingency funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set aside a contingency fund or ensure access to credit to manage exceptional expenses amid revenue losses. 	<p>KCDC</p>	<p>WEMO HCC</p>	<p>MDC CDC SWDC GWRC</p>	<p>PCC</p>

5.3 Readiness for Local Authorities and CDEM Groups

Task	Completed	In progress	Not started	No information supplied
1. Develop infection control protocols. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidelines for surveillance, hygiene, cleaning, and facility closures. Identify secure facilities and procedures where essential staff can seek protection from exposure. 	WEMO HCC	PCC MDC CDC SWDC GWRC		KCDC
2. Develop Human Resource Policies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop policies for staff overtime, quarantine and leave during a pandemic. 	WEMO KCDC GWRC	HCC PCC MDC CDC	SWDC	
3. Validate plans, train and exercise. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare staff for possible pandemic. 		WEMO HCC	PCC MDC CDC SWDC GWRC	KCDC
4. Develop anti-viral and vaccination priorities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using Business Continuity Plans, identify priorities for employees to receive anti-virals and vaccinations should these become available only in limited numbers. Inform DHB planners of the number of essential personnel. 	WEMO	HCC CDC	PCC MDC SWDC GWRC	KCDC
5. Plan for business continuity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify essential services and consequential effects if they are disrupted. Develop methods for overcoming shortfalls in personnel, facilities, supplies, data, and utilities. Update contact lists for internal and external resources. 	WEMO HCC PCC KCDC	MDC CDC SWDC GWRC		

Task	Completed	In progress	Not started	No information supplied
6. Obtain essential supplies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stockpile cleaning solutions, facility maintenance equipment and other supplies that may be in short supply during a pandemic. 	WEMO HCC KCDC GWRC	MDC SWDC	PCC CDC	
7. Inform staff of welfare policies and plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with employees to initially hear concerns and explain risks, infection management measures and HR policies. Advise staff of welfare policies and support mechanisms available. Offer advice on home and family preparedness. Provide regular information updates to staff. 	WEMO HCC KCDC	CDC GWRC	PCC MDC SWDC	
8. Establish financial management systems for a pandemic event.	KCDC	HCC	PCC MDC CDC SWDC GWRC	WEMO

5.4 Reduction for Communities

Task	Completed	In progress	Not started	No information supplied
<p>1. Estimate impacts on populations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess impact with Health of influenza on community demographics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total population - Number expected to care for themselves at home - Number expected outpatients - Number seeking hospital care - Number of dead - Number requiring welfare support. 	CDC	PCC MDC GROUP		WEMO HCC KCDC SWDC
<p>2. Assess impacts on loss of essential services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the impacts of the inability to receive water, electricity, communications, food or use public transport etc. • Assess with lifeline utilities the risk of losing each due to pandemic influenza. • Identify community elements most likely to be affected by failure to deliver essential utilities. • Assess impacts of disruption to normal food supply systems. 	CDC	PCC MDC SWDC GROUP		WEMO HCC KCDC
<p>3. Identify community buildings/facilities that may be closed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse or survey community to identify facilities that may be closed, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Childcare centres & schools - Entertainment & sports venues - Conference centres, churches - Transport (ground, air, sea) 	CDC GROUP	PCC MDC SWDC		WEMO HCC KCDC

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify facility address and contact information for buildings that may be required to close. 				
Task	Completed	In progress	Not started	No information supplied
<p>4. Identify other potential consequences of Pandemic Influenza on people, facilities and services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and analyse consequences on the wider community of DHB planning scenarios. 	CDC	PCC MDC GROUP	SWDC	WEMO HCC KCDC
<p>5. Identify economic impacts to the community and on individuals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a joint business-government working group to estimate potential economic impacts. Use established emergency recovery networks and processes. 		PCC MDC SWDC GROUP	CDC	WEMO HCC KCDC
<p>6. Engage in food supply continuity planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish contact with local FMCG Sector over potential difficulties. Assess potential requirement for “non-normal” food distribution for those who may not be able to shop. 		PCC MDC CDC GROUP	SWDC	WEMO HCC KCDC
<p>7. Advise population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with health officials to provide public messages on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good hygiene and hand-washing Rationale for closures, isolation, quarantine, travel restrictions Immunisation, especially the time required to develop the vaccine Advise individuals and families on the need for home preparedness, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food, water, and medications 		PCC MDC CDC SWDC GROUP		WEMO HCC KCDC

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hygiene and how to care for sick family members • Inform community members on the important roles of volunteers during a pandemic response and how they can prepare ahead of time, such as taking first aid courses and assisting in the establishment of effective community welfare facilities. 				
Task	Completed	In progress	Not started	No information supplied
<p>8. Ensure advice is given to businesses / institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the risks of pandemic and likely impacts to the local economy. • On public health measures that may affect businesses, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The rationale for closures and quarantine - Travel restrictions • On methods to continue operations during a pandemic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify essential functions - Separate staff from public - Hold “safe meetings” - Maintain operations with loss of 25 to 50% of staff and supplies - Cross-training of staff - Alternate sources of suppliers - Set aside a contingency fund, or have access to credit - Check insurance provision • Plan staff welfare and support measures. 		PCC MDC CDC SWDC GROUP		WEMO HCC KCDC
<p>9. Inform stakeholders about community risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convey risk information to stakeholders and community leaders. 		PCC MDC CDC GROUP	SWDC	WEMO HCC KCDC

5.5 Readiness for Communities

Task	Completed	In progress	Not started	No information supplied
<p>1. Identify community facilities to support health efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and prioritise essential services Review and confirm availability of community facilities for health measures including, where deemed necessary, assessment or treatment centres, and welfare (accommodation and/or catering) centres for displaced people. 		PCC MDC CDC SWDC GROUP		WEMO HCC KCDC
<p>2. Work with volunteer organisations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet community volunteer organisation leaders to identify potential roles and resources. Train emergency welfare volunteers in roles likely to be required during pandemic response, such as monitoring homeward-bound residents, staffing welfare centres etc. Meet with DHB or local health providers to confirm arrangements for co-ordination of local health and community responses. 		PCC MDC CDC SWDC GROUP		WEMO HCC KCDC
<p>3. Recruit and train response personnel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine options for EOC configuration and operation for a pandemic. Train EOC/ECC staff for required response to Pandemic Influenza. Exercise EOC/ECC with partners, i.e. regional/local health providers, emergency services, welfare organisations. 		PCC MDC CDC SWDC GROUP		WEMO HCC KCDC

Task	Completed	In progress	Not started	No information supplied
<p>4. Communicate with general public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe what the local authority is doing to prepare for pandemic influenza. Communicate a likely scenario and the value of health interventions, such as infection control at work, closure of public facilities. Advise public to stockpile groceries, water and medications. Ensure health agency information strategy includes local authorities and CDEM Group EMOs. 		PCC MDC CDC SWDC GROUP		WEMO HCC KCDC
<p>5. Help businesses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with Chamber of Commerce and business leaders regarding the need for mutual support among businesses. Inform and support vulnerable private facilities. Meet with private sector providers of essential services, including grocery retail and wholesale, fuel and transport providers. 		PCC MDC CDC	SWDC GROUP	WEMO HCC KCDC
<p>6. Plans to Supplement FMCG Supplies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with FMCG sector, Welfare agencies, and volunteer organisations on grocery and fuel continuity plans. 		PCC MDC CDC GROUP	SWDC	WEMO HCC KCDC

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the CDEM Group:

- 1. Receive the report; and*
- 2. Note the contents.*

Report prepared by:

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