

# **Pandemic Plan, Action and Preparedness Recommendations for Hilltown Township Residents**

## **Recommended Preparedness & Response Action for Citizens/Residents**

### **Before A Pandemic Influenza Outbreak**

- Go to your doctor to get yearly influenza vaccine. It is possible that the yearly vaccine may provide some level of protection during a pandemic influenza outbreak. It also protects you each year from the normal influenza that develops.
- Prepare a “flu kit” for everyone in the family to include over the counter flu relief medications(2-weeks dosing per family member), 90-day supply of any prescribed medications (rotate usage to keep current), extra consumables like canned goods and water, disinfectant, soap, particle masks and rubber or latex gloves.
- Maintain a good supply of non-perishable or limited perishable food. There is no reason to stockpile or hoard, but a good supply of canned and dry goods is always good to have on hand for any emergency. Energy bars can be a good source of nutrition and can be stored for an extended period of time.
- Start a garden. There is nothing like having a home-grown supply of fresh fruits or vegetables. You can also trade and share with neighbors and it will save you money.
- Keep at couple of cases of water or a gallon of water in the refrigerator.
- Maintain a high fuel level in your vehicles. Fuel supplies may be limited during an outbreak due to decreases in transportation and delivery.
- Exercise. The healthier you are usually means, you have a high level of resistance.
- Maintain good hygiene. Wash your hands frequently and properly. Disinfect as necessary to keep surfaces germ free.
- Ask your employer how they have planned for continuing to operate should an outbreak occur.
- Join Hilltown Townships Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). Use the township’s secure website to apply and offer your skills and services to this important effort. You may never be needed but being part of this team will also help you be more prepared should any type of major emergency develop in Hilltown Township.

### **During A Pandemic Influenza Outbreak**

- **DON’T PANIC.** There are many who have spent countless hours preparing for this situation including Hilltown Township. Emergency services such as police, fire and EMS will continue to operate. The municipal government will continue to operate. The healthcare system will continue to operate. There may be delays, but the 911 system will remain operational as well as most non-emergency numbers.

- Anticipate that many public gatherings will be cancelled or severely limited and restricted. Schools will probably close and many employers will decrease staff hours or allow many to work from home. Portions of the township or individuals may also be quarantined to prevent or limit the spread of the influenza outbreak, so you should be prepared to adhere to and honor any restrictions implemented by Hilltown Township.
- Monitor the news and the township website for updates on vaccination sites, pandemic progress, and any emergency procedures being initiated in Hilltown Township.
- Understand that once a pandemic influenza outbreak happens, there are many scientists and researchers that are immediately working on a vaccine, but it will take time to produce enough of the vaccine for the general public. Availability of the vaccine will be orderly and equal. There may be initial vaccination of emergency and healthcare workers including other “essential” governmental employees to enhance the capabilities of these sectors of society to be able to more rapidly vaccinate the general public. The faster they are protected, the faster they can take care of everyone else.

## **Prevention**

- Avoid public gatherings. The transmission of influenza is generally through the air when someone coughs or through close contact. The easiest way to prevent any influenza is to limit the opportunities for transmission.
- Shop at off hours to avoid public interaction as much as possible. Be aware that certain commodities may be limited due to delivery issues. Report any price gouging or black-market activities immediately to the emergency operations center. The number will be readily available through the news media and the township website.
- Realize the fuel, food or other essential commodities may be rationed initially. This is to ensure continued emergency services and to protect from abuse or hoarding. You should report any concerns you have during this time to the emergency operations center for Hilltown Township. Contact information will be provided on the website and through the news media.
- Avoid close contact with people that are sick.
- Wash your hands frequently and properly. Use antibacterial soap and scrub under lukewarm water for at least one minute.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Disinfect. Clean surfaces such as computer keyboards, telephones, door handles, etc. that are touched by everyone continuously.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth as much as possible.
- If you have to treat and care for someone that catches a pandemic influenza, use proper protective equipment like a mask and gloves. They should be seen as quickly as possible by a physician and there may be reporting requirements you may be asked to follow. Be patient because the healthcare system may be quickly overwhelmed by patients.

Alternative treatment sites may be developed so continue to follow the news media or the township website for updates and guidance. Be sure to tell everyone before they come in contact with the infected person of their status so that they too can protect themselves. Containment is the primary method of combating a pandemic influenza outbreak.

### **Actions for Those That Contract the Flu**

- If you suspect you have contracted the pandemic influenza, follow the suggestions above. Continue to nourish and hydrate yourself and take any flu medications you may have from your flu kit.
- You should self-quarantine for a minimum of 14 days and exercise extreme care not to infect anyone in your immediate family or the general public. Stay home unless you need to seek medical attention and care and notify the healthcare facility in advance.
- Clean your hands often.
- Pick a room in your home separate from healthy family members including a separate bathroom if possible.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and dispose of in a separate trash container.
- Wear a facemask to prevent the transmission of airborne particles into the air. Personal use of facemasks while you are fighting and recovering from the flu is important to not only protect those around you, but any caregivers or healthcare workers assisting in your recovery.
- Clean frequently touched items and locations with disinfectant cleaners.
- Avoid sharing household items such as blankets, utensils, dishes, towels etc.
- Should you need immediate medical assistance, call 911 and report your emergency. Be sure to state to the dispatcher that you have been infected or think you may have the flu so that the most efficient testing and treatment can be initiated promptly and those treating you can protect themselves.

### **Closing**

- Pandemic influenza outbreaks happen in waves. Some communities may not be impacted at all while others have wave after wave of infections.
- Use of facemasks or other protective equipment is not recommended for the uninfected public with the exception of emergency response, healthcare workers or people taking care of someone with the flu in a close setting.
- You are the primary determining factor on how well the United States makes it through this pandemic influenza outbreak. If you remain calm, take all the recommended precautions, and patiently follow all the instructions being offered by the experts in healthcare and your local government, we can minimize the impact of this pandemic.