



PANDEMIC FLU

An influenza (flu) pandemic is a worldwide event in which many people are infected with a flu virus in a short time.

The World Health Organisation considers an outbreak to be a pandemic when:

- the infectious agent hasn't been seen before and there is no natural immunity to it
- the agent infects humans
- it spreads easily and survives in humans.

Unlike a normal flu virus, which has a 'season' (October to May in the UK), a flu pandemic can occur at any time.

Based on what has happened during previous pandemics, a pandemic is likely to occur in one or more waves, possibly weeks or months apart. Each wave may last around 15 weeks and up to half the population could be directly affected.

HISTORY

The most notable influenza pandemic of the last century occurred in 1918 and is often referred to as 'Spanish flu'. It caused serious illness, with an estimated 20 to 40 million deaths worldwide (with the largest rates of death in people between 20 and 45 years old) and major disruption. In the UK alone there were an estimated 228,000 additional deaths.

IN SUSSEX

As a result of rapid spread from person to person, pandemics have significant consequences on communities and economies, as well as on human health.



RISK IMPACTS

Based on historical information, scientific evidence and modeling, the following impacts are predicted for future pandemics:

- Many millions of people around the world will become infected causing global disruption and a potential humanitarian crisis
- Up to half the UK population may become infected and between 50,000 and 750,000 additional deaths may have occurred by the end of a pandemic
- Health care and local authority social care systems become overloaded
- Normal life is likely to face wide disruption, particularly due to staff shortages affecting the provision of essential services, including production and transport of goods

CONSEQUENCES

The consequences could include:

- Vulnerable people exposed to lower levels of care
- Longer and more frequent disruptions to essential utilities
- Reduced levels of emergency services cover
- Disruptions to businesses and organizations through staff shortages and supply chain interruptions
- Impacts on the national and local economy.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

- Keep healthy – a healthy lifestyle will be a great defence against flu and other illnesses.
- Identify a flu friend – somebody who would collect your medication, food and other supplies allowing you to be isolated from the public.
- Keep personal stocks of “over the counter” cold and flu medication to help relieve your symptoms.
- Know the arrangements for your child’s school.
- Look out for and observe advice and guidance from the NHS.

WHAT ARE WE DOING IN SUSSEX?

We work together to plan for:

- Management of the demand on the NHS and social care
- Distribution of anti viral medication to the public
- Vaccinations
- Public awareness and media management
- managing excessive numbers of death.

Individual SRF organisations have their own business continuity plans in place to cope in times of staff shortage.

CATCH IT

Germs spread easily. Always carry tissues and use them to catch your cough or sneeze.



BIN IT

Germs can live for several hours on tissues. Dispose of your tissue as soon as possible.



KILL IT

Hands can transfer germs to every surface you touch. Clean your hands as soon as you can.



NHS

SWINE FLU INFORMATION
0800 1 513 513
www.nhs.uk
www.direct.gov.uk/swineflu

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT SWINE FLU

This leaflet contains important information to help you and your family – **KEEP IT SAFE**