



CHAIRMAN'S MEMORANDUM

NO. 10-2006 December 12, 2006

TO: SHERIFFS, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS, COMMISSIONERS OF CORRECTION, JAIL MEDICAL DIRECTORS

RE: ADVISORY FOR PANDEMIC FLU PREPAREDNESS PLANNING

Influenza pandemics are caused by the emergency of a virus that is novel or radically different from previous flu viruses. Since the population has little or no immunity or natural resistance to the new virus and there is no readily available vaccine (clinical trials are currently underway), influenza pandemics generally result in significant illness and mortality. **It is therefore imperative for jails to work aggressively, in conjunction with their county counterparts, to develop a comprehensive plan to prepare for and respond to a possible pandemic influenza.**

The NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) is currently facilitating the development of local health department and health care facility plans. The department is also developing a Pandemic Flu Annex as part of the State's Comprehensive Emergency Plan, which involves all state agencies. This task is being undertaken with the State's Disaster Preparedness Commission (DPC), the State Office of Homeland Security (OHS), and the State Emergency Management Office (SEMO).

It is important to ensure that the local correctional facilities' operational plan for pandemic influenza response is an integral element of the local response plan and ultimately the overall state plan established under Federal Emergency Support Function 8 (ESF8): Health and Medical Service. Plans should also be compliant with the National Incident Management System.

The Commission recently conducted an informal survey regarding local jurisdictions' involvement in their respective county's pandemic flue preparedness planning. It was determined that there was wide variability in jail administration participation in county planning. Some jails are not presently included or involved in the county planning.

It is imperative that the Sheriff in each local jurisdiction be involved as a stakeholder in local planning. Sheriffs, jail administrators and jail health care providers need to be involved for an effective operational plan.

The Commission of Correction, in conjunction with the New York State Sheriffs' Association has established a working committee to develop guidelines that will be applicable to local jurisdictions.

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Daniel L. Stewart, Chairman

**Frederick C. Lamy, Commissioner
Frances T. Sullivan, Commissioner**

Please contact our Forensic Medical Unit at (518) 485-2475 if you have any questions or suggestions for the development of Pandemic Flue Preparedness Guidelines for county jails.

Daniel L. Stewart, Chairman

Links:

NYS Department of Health Pandemic Flue Plan:

http://www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/influenza/pandemic/docs/pandemic_influenza_plan.pdf

Federal Emergency Support Function 8:

http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/nims_doc_full.pdf

Federal Government Website for Pandemic Flu:

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/>

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