

Health and Wellness Committee - December 2015 Updates

Information was given to a parishioner at Resurrection Parish on how to gain information about Respite Care and how to connect with Holly Brown at Elder Network.

The next meeting is on January 19, 2015 and we will be reviewing the Avian/Pandemic Flu Policy and Checklist which are copied into the end of this message.

Think about ideas to update and assess the needs to the parish. I wonder if any of the visioning or mission ideas fit with the committee goals?

Other 2015 meeting dates

March 16

May 18

September 21

November 16

St. Francis of Assisi Avian/Pandemic Flu Policy and Checklist Purpose

To identify levels of responsibility and actions to assure a coordinated and effective response at the parish level to provide a safe and healthful environment for staff, volunteers, and parishioners in the even of an outbreak of Avian/ Pandemic Flu or other biological emergency.

To define requirements for training plans which are designated to protect staff, volunteers, parishioners and the parish infrastructure while maximizing the role of the parish during an Avian Influenza/ Pandemic Flu or other biological emergency.

Policy

St. Francis of Assisi Parish will collaborate with health organizations and directives of the diocese during outbreaks of Avian Influenza/ Pandemic Flu or other biological emergency.

Procedure

St. Francis of Assisi Parish will develop and maintain a plan for response at the parish level for an Avian Influenza/Pandemic Flu or other biological emergency that will be reviewed on an annual basis. The Pastoral Council and the Health and Wellness Committee will provide oversight for annual review with input from Internal parish committees and groups.

The authority to act upon the preparedness and response plan is assigned to 1) the pastor, 2) the parochial vicar (as available), 3) the parish administrator, and 4) the parish office manager.

The plan will be implemented in accordance with the response level identified by national, state and county public health organizations including the school nurse and any directives of the diocese.

The pastor, parish administrator, or office manager will identify the appropriate internal structure to notify.

Health education training of all staff and volunteers will occur and include hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and social distancing. Educational information will be available for the broader membership.

Faith-based Organization Infectious Disease Emergency Preparedness Checklist

1. Plan for the impact of a pandemic on your organization and its mission.

Assign key staff with the authority to develop, maintain and act upon an influenza pandemic preparedness and response plan.

Three level deep authority --- pastor, parochial vicar (as appropriate), parish administrator, office manager

Determine theoretical impact of an infectious disease emergency on your organization's usual activities and services.

Consider scheduling simultaneous prayer opportunities.

Consider expanding church audio messages (multilingual) and web site messages to include information on televised Masses and programs.

Consider using the outside Mass schedule sign to relay information.
Consider alternative means (phone, Mail, Internet/web links) for volunteer and committee work to committee.

Explore human resources and computer system potential for modalities to have chat rooms, streaming information for the parish web site or single contributions through the web site.

Encourage the use of the mail, or drop-off box.

Determine the potential impact of an infectious disease emergency on outside resources that your organization depends on to deliver its services (e.g. supplies, travel, etc.)

Outline what the organizational structure will be during the emergency and revise periodically. The outline should identify key contacts with multiple back-ups, role and responsibilities and who is supposed to report to whom.

The internal committee structure, groups and activities of the parish will be used.

Annual review of the policy and checklist will be set up and assigned to the Pastoral Council/ health and Wellness Committee.

Identify and train essential staff (including full-time, part-time and unpaid or volunteer staff) needed to carry on your organization's work during an infectious disease emergency. Include back up plans, cross-train staff in other jobs so that if staff are sick, others are ready to come in and carry on the work.

Hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and social distancing to staff and volunteers.

Test your response and preparedness plan using an exercise or drill, and review and revise your plan as needed.

2. Communicate with and educate your staff, members and persons in the committee that you serve.

Find up-to-date, reliable infectious disease emergency/pandemic information and other public health advisories from state and local health department, emergency management agencies, and the CDC.

Make this information available to your organization and others.

www.pandemicflu.gov

www.health.state.mn.us

www.cc.gov

<http://www.co.olmsted.mn.us>

<http://alerts.rochester.mn.gov>

A pandemic DVD from the Minnesota Health Department is available.

Distribute materials with basic information about an infectious disease emergency: signs and symptoms, how it is spread, ways to protect yourself and your family (e.g. respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette), family preparedness plans, and how to care for ill persons at home.

Emergency preparedness checklist offered - November Health and Wellness Newsletter 2010.

Hand hygiene information available in December Health and Wellness Newsletter
Educational materials regularly distributed during the Fall Festival

When appropriate , include basic information about pandemic influenza in public meetings (e.g. sermons, classes, training, small group meetings and announcements).

Newsletter containing information between seasonal, influenza and pandemic illness.

Information distributed through ministerial association, parish, administrator meetings, St. Francis of Assisi Pastoral Council and St. Francis of Assisi Health and Wellness Committee

Share information about your infectious disease preparedness and response plan with staff, members, and persons in the communities you serve.

Review draft of policy and checklist with Pastoral Council, Eucharistic Ministers, Extraordinary Ministers, Grief Counselors (TLC), Befrienders, Faith Justice Committee, Ministry of Hospitality, Sacristans and the Vietnamese and Spanish Councils.

Consider partnering with Resurrection Parish Develop tools to communicate information about the infectious disease emergency status and your organization's actions. This might include websites, flyers, local newspaper announcements, pre-recorded widely distributed phone messages, etc.

Consider your organization's unique contribution to addressing rumors, misinformation, fear and anxiety.

Advise staff, members, and person in the community you serve to follow information provided by health authorities –state and local health departments, emergency management agencies, and the CDC.

Ensure that what you communicate is appropriate for the cultures, languages, and reading levels of your staff, members, and persons in the communities you serve.

Explore bilingual options for audio messages and web site information.

Connect with key contacts for the Vietnamese and Hispanic leadership of the parish.

Identify current public/community bilingual that may be utilized.

3. Plan for the impact of an infectious disease emergency on your staff, members, and the community you serve:

Plan for staff absences during an infectious disease emergency due to personal and/or family illnesses, quarantines, and school, business and public transportation closures. Staff may include full-time, part-time and volunteer personal.

Work with the local health authorities to encourage vaccination for staff, members, and persons in the community you serve.

Evaluate access to mental health and social services during an infectious disease emergency for you staff, members, and persons in the communities you serve; improve access to these services as needed.

Identify persons with special needs (e.g. elderly, disabled, limited English speakers) And be sure to include their needs in your response plan. Establish relationships with them in advance so they will expect and trust your presence during a crisis.

Identify current lists in the Church Management System (CMS). Database that may identify vulnerable groups such as the home bound, the elderly, single head of household families and the First Friday List.

4. Set up policies to follow during an infectious disease emergency:

Set up policies for non-penalized staff leaves for personal illness or care for sick family members during an infectious disease emergency.

Set up mandatory sick-leave policies for staff suspected to be ill, or who become ill at the worksite. Employees should remain home until their symptoms resolve and they are physically ready to return to duty (Know how to check up-to-date CDC recommendation - Currently 24 hours without fever).

Set up policies for flexible work hours and working from home.

Evaluate your organization's usual activities and services (including rites and religious practices if applicable) to identify those that may facilitate virus spread from person to person. Set up policies to modify these activities to prevent the spread of pandemic influenza (e.g. guidance for respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, and instructions for persons with influenza symptoms to stay home rather than visit in person.)

Consider using the main St. Francis of Assisi or Health and Wellness website for communication.

Consider conference calls for meetings.

Consider increasing prayer resources on the St. Francis of Assisi web page.

Follow the CDC travel recommendations during an infectious disease emergency. Recommendation may include restricting travel to affected domestic or international sites, recalling non-essential staff in or near an affected site when an outbreak begins, and distributing health information to persons who are returning from an affected area.

Set procedures for activating your organization's response plan when an infectious disease emergency is declared by health information to persons who are returning from affected areas.

5. Allocate resources to protect your staff, members, and persons in the community that you serve during a pandemic:

Determine the amount of supplies needed to promote respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette and how they will be obtained.

Wear masks as possible.

Consider focusing your organization's efforts during an infectious disease emergency to providing services that are most needed during the emergency (e.g. Mental/spiritual health or social services).

6. Coordinate with external organizations and help your community:

Understand the roles of federal, state, and local public health responders and what to expect and what not to expect in the event of an infectious disease emergency.

Consider Resurrection Parish as a partnered parish for secondary level of assistance and national ministries such as the Red Cross Pastoral care or the Medical Reserve Corp as the third level of support.

Work with local and/or state public health agencies, emergency responders, local healthcare facilities and insurers to understand their plans and what they can provide, share about preparedness and response plans and what your organization is able to contribute, and take part in their planning. Assign a point of contact to maximize communication between your organization and state and local public health systems.

Contact the local Public Health Department to identify the parish as a communication link during an infectious disease emergency such as Avian Influenza/pandemic Flu or other biological emergency.

Past exploration of the Church as a shelter was investigated. This is not considered at this time.

Coordinate with emergency responder and local healthcare facilities to improve availability of medical advice and timely/urgent healthcare services and treatment for your staff, member, and persons in the communities that you serve.

Communicate to the local public health department the parish structure:

Pastoral Council

Joint parish administrator meeting

Share what you've learned from developing your preparedness plan with other Faith-based and community organizations to improve response efforts.

Share information with Resurrection from the Pandemic Conference.

Work together with other faith-based and community organizations in your local area and through networks (e.g. denominations, associations, etc.) to help your communities prepare for pandemic influenza.

Determine if partnership with Resurrection is feasible.

<http://www.flu.gov/professional/PDF/faithbasedcommunitychecklist.pdf>