Bringing your Pandemic Plan to the Next Level – A Case Study

Presented by

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Session Objectives

- Quick overview of the WSIB's pandemic planning efforts to date
  - Internal Pandemic Awareness Campaign
  - External Pandemic Planning guidance
  - Pandemic tabletop exercises
  - Materials accessible through WSIB website

- The Next Level of Pandemic Planning – the Human Factor
  - Internal Critical Incident Stress Management Teams
  - Senior Management Roster of Coverage
  - Skills Inventory Lists
  - Involving Unions/Labor Relations

Company Background

- Ontario's Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), founded in 1915, plays a key role in the province's occupational health and safety system.
  - Administers no-fault workplace insurance for employers and workers
  - Committed to the prevention of workplace injuries and illnesses
  - Oversees Ontario's system of workplace safety education and training
  - Provides disability benefits, monitors quality of health care and assists in early and safe return-to-work for those who are injured on the job or contract an occupational disease
  - Entirely funded by employer premiums – no money is received from the Ontario government.
  - **WSIB Vision**: The elimination of all workplace fatalities, injuries and illnesses in Ontario.

WSIB Pandemic Planning - Background

- Pandemic Planning Committee set up in October 2005, led by VP of Human Resources and resident Medical Director, with reps from all key areas within WSIB, including union/labour representation.
- Internal awareness campaign started Fall of 2005, with posters, fact sheets, information booths, etc… provided annually to staff at all WSIB offices
- Prevention Division also prepared external materials for Employers and Workers
- All business areas continue to develop guidelines, policies and procedures for maintaining key services before, during and after a pandemic, working under a worst-case assumption of a possible 50% staff reduction at any given time over an 18-month period
- Pandemic Communication Plan developed to ensure WSIB staff and clients are informed/educated on pandemic influenza, including the many issues surrounding a possible pandemic.

WSIB Annual Pandemic Awareness Campaign – Highlights

- Broadcast Messages for all staff (holiday travel advisory, stay flu-free, pandemic awareness)
- Posters (travel advisory, hand hygiene techniques, general health, cover your cough)
- Pandemic tabletop exercises held at all WSIB offices
- Hand sanitizers and hand hygiene tip sheets for all staff, by OHS reps
- Pandemic Info Booth
- CONNEX (intranet) headlines with FAQ attachment

WSIB Annual Pandemic Awareness Campaign – Highlights

- Hand hygiene reminder signs for all washrooms
- Alcohol-based Hand Rub stations installed at elevator banks on all floors (at all WSIB offices across the province)
- **Lunch & Learns** – info sessions re: staying healthy, the flu and pandemic influenza to be provided to staff
- **Info Sheets** – Info sheet developed re: signs of influenza and when you should stay home, info sheets on hand washing, covering your cough and WSIB Flu Clinic info to be distributed to staff as well
- **Lapel stickers** – "Ban the Bug – Don't get it, Don't spread it" stickers handed out to all staff

WSIB External Campaign

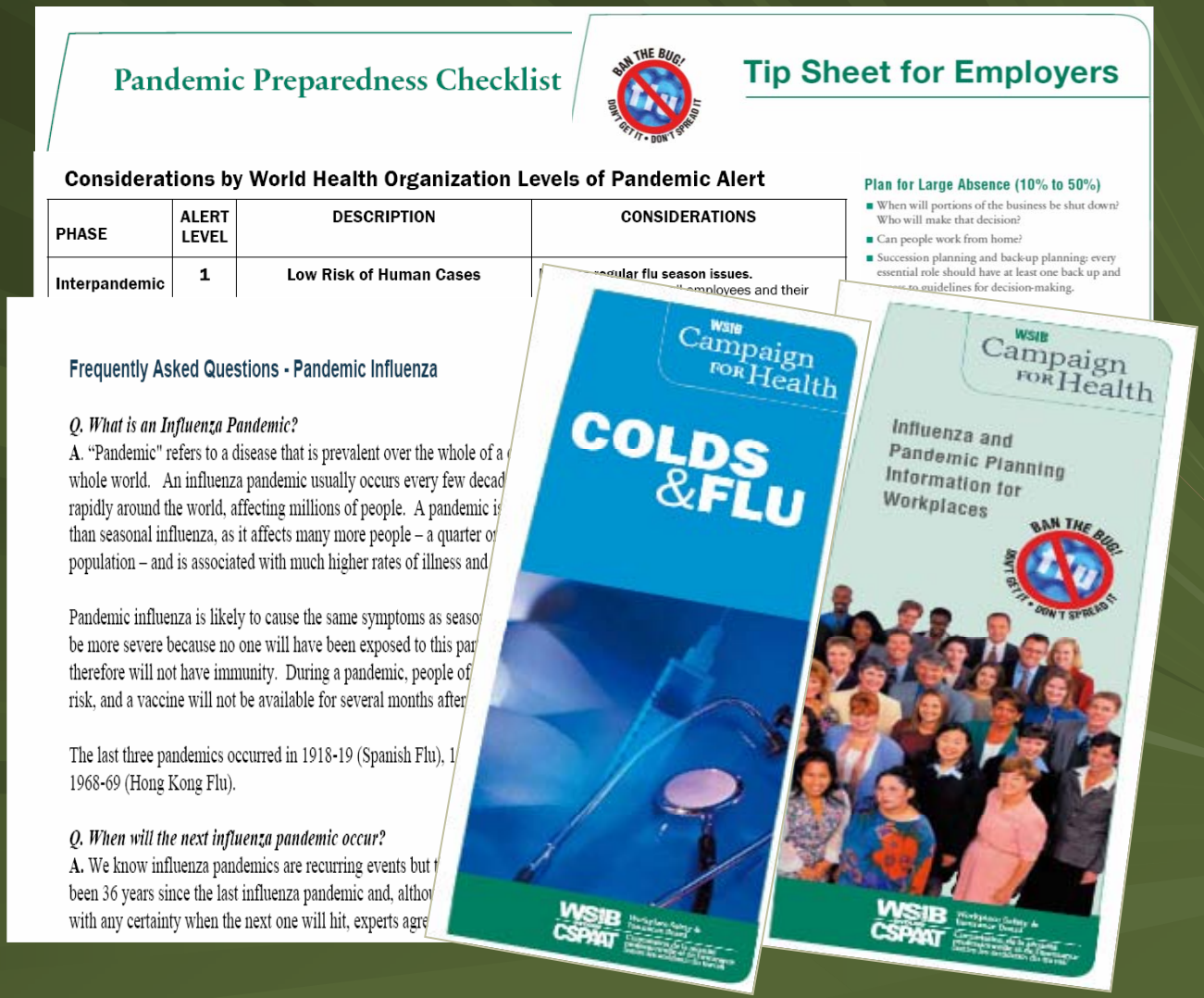
- Three letters sent to stakeholders, MPPs and Chambers of Commerce, encouraging them to share with members
- HSAs have also been advised of WSIB's pandemic planning efforts and are working on developing their own plans, in concert with WSIB
- Customers/clients requesting hard copies of Campaign for Health materials will be accommodated via referral to WSIB's external printer, Data Group
- Policy developing Q&As re: how WSIB will manage claims during a possible pandemic and other large-scale emergencies

WSIB Resource Products Available Through Our Website (www.wsib.on.ca)

- A general brochure about flu and colds
- A general brochure about pandemic illness that includes information for workers and employers
- An Employer Tip Sheet – pandemic planning tips for employers
- A checklist of considerations when planning for pandemic
- Links to relevant websites and expertise

Our Products – Written Resources

These resources can all be downloaded from the WSIB website.



Posters

BAN THE BUG!
flu
DON'T GET IT • DON'T SPREAD IT
WSIB Campaign FOR Health
Hand Washing Prevents the Spread of Infection
Hand washing is recognized as the single most effective way to prevent the spread of infection.
When to Wash
Wash before touching , preparing or eating food.
Wash before a meeting where you know you will be shaking hands, especially when you have a cold.
Wash after playing with animals, handling money, shaking numerous hands.
Wash after coughing, sneezing and using the washroom.
Wash whenever you are in doubt.
What to Use
Bar soap should be free of cracks. Cracks and bits pieced together can create a great hiding place for moisture and growth of bacteria.
Using a hand sanitizer isn't a replacement for good hand washing. It should be used when you can't get to sink to wash your hands and when there is not a large amount of visible contaminant or dirt on your hands.
Points to Note
Don't share facecloths.
Don't leave the sink full of water to repeatedly wash hands and/or dishes.
Don't use a common hand towel in public places.
Add a few drops of bleach to your dish water to clean dish cloths.
Use your hand towel in a public washroom to dry your hands, turn off the tap and open the door. Door handles are one of the dirtiest spots in a washroom.
Stay healthy. Stay flu free!
www.wsib.on.ca
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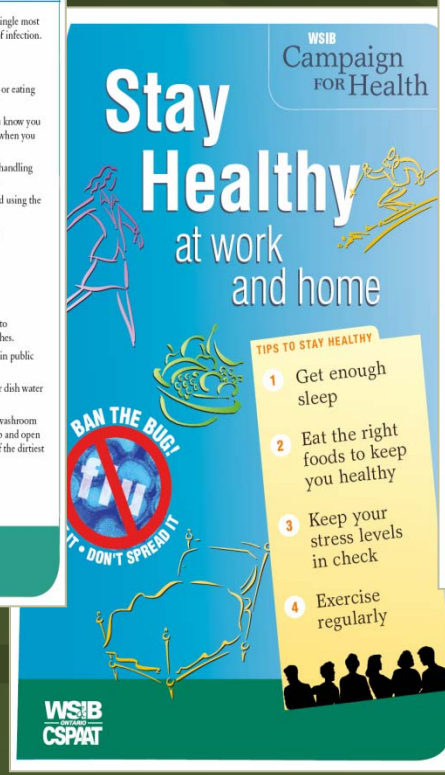
WSIB Campaign FOR Health
Stay Healthy at work and home
BAN THE BUG!
flu
DON'T SPREAD IT
TIPS TO STAY HEALTHY
1 Get enough sleep
2 Eat the right foods to keep you healthy
3 Keep your stress levels in check
4 Exercise regularly
WSIB
CSPAAT

WSIB Campaign FOR Health
Travel Smart, Stay Flu Free
BAN THE BUG!
flu
DON'T GET IT • DON'T SPREAD IT
TRAVEL TIPS
If you're travelling to an area where avian flu has been found, consider these travel tips:
1 Avoid contact with live or uncooked fowl.
2 Avoid eating uncooked or partially cooked fowl, egg or egg products. Salad eaters note that Ceasar salad dressing may contain raw egg.
3 Frequently wash your hands using warm soapy water or waterless disinfectant.
4 Upon your return to Canada, monitor your health. Influenza symptoms could take up to 14 days to develop and will need immediate medical attention.
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Did you know...
WSIB Campaign FOR Health
The flu virus can live on surfaces for 8 hours?
The flu virus can travel from a cough or a sneeze?
BAN THE BUG!
flu
DON'T GET IT • DON'T SPREAD IT
Take care of yourself. Wash your hands often.
CHECK OUT THESE FLU BUSTING TECHNIQUES
USE TISSUE
USE UPPER SLEEVE (not hands)
1 Cover your cough the right way!
2 Wash your hands the right way!
3 Sanitize your hands often!
• BEFORE handling or eating food
• AFTER wiping your nose or coughing
Stay healthy. Stay flu free!
www.wsib.on.ca
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Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

How to develop internal CISM teams within your organisation

How to develop internal CISM teams within your organisation

- Need to ensure employees receive necessary psychological support in event of a pandemic
- Important part of effective emergency preparedness and supporting a healthy workplace
- Employee Assistance Program Providers may be unable to provide sufficient support due to multiple client demands and their own absenteeism issues

Internal Volunteer CISM Teams

- WSIB is training selected employees to be called upon to provide primary level of support during pandemic
- Number of candidates for program to be effective is ratio of 1-50 or 1-75 (WSIB recruiting approx. 90 staff in total)
- No fewer than 2 candidates in district offices with under 50 employees

How to recruit CISM volunteers

- Are there staff within your organisation that would be a natural fit?
- Nurse Case Managers, Social Workers, Occupational Health Nurses, Physicians, Psychologists, Professional Practice Leaders, Human Resources Business Partners
- May be other job classifications that would be suitable as well
- Contact managers/directors to communicate initiative and assist in selection of candidates

How to recruit CISM Volunteers

- Important to screen potential volunteers
- Provide list of skills and/or qualities to look for
- Provide examples of difficult situations CISM volunteers may face
- Provide information on what may be expected of them during a pandemic

Other CISM considerations

- May want volunteers to undergo police checks, as they may be dealing with vulnerable people
- Check with your insurance provider re: liability
- Ensure timely replacement and training of new volunteers, as others retire or resign from CISM teams
- Ensure your CISM Team members also receive CISM support, as they will be affected by pandemic as well

Pandemic Roster of Coverage

How to ensure adequate Senior Management coverage during a pandemic

Roster of Coverage

- To ensure adequate Senior Management and Emergency Response Team (ERT) coverage during a Pandemic, staff rosters, Primary and Back-up teams should be developed

- Your ERT is key to ensuring the health and safety of employees, while also directing how to maintain key services to clients

- Ensure for adequate coverage when pandemic hits, by developing a draft roster in advance

Developing a draft pandemic roster

- Anticipate 16-hour coverage (or whatever best suits your organisation)
- Keep in mind the potential for lengthy duration (up to 18 months)
- Plan for 2 shifts of 8 hours each, with on-call coverage evenings/weekends
- Consider “primary” and “back-up” teams, with one team working from home or isolated offsite location

Skills Inventory Lists

How to identify your current resources and train back-ups for your back-ups

Creating a Skills Inventory

- During a pandemic, up to 50% of your staff may be absent at any given time
- Review business continuity plans to identify staff with special skills, training required to perform critical functions
- Work with HR Department to develop Skills Inventory of current staff with previous experience/training in critical functions
- List should be reviewed/updated annually, and only keep info from past 5-10 years

Sample Skills Inventory

Name & Title	Positions held (within past 10 years)	Time in position	Last performed	Other Languages
	Business Analyst Claims Alloc.Control Adj. Claims Adjudicator	15 years 2 years 1 year	Current	Italian
	A/ Asst., Director **Manager, XXXX Program** Manager, XXXX Program Coordinator, XXX Project	3 months 5.5months 6yrs 5months 1yr 9months	Current January 20, 2007 March 28, 2006 Sept. 20, 2000	Tagalog
	Claims Reg Clerk Issue Id Clerk Secretary	1 year 3 years 5 years	Current	French, Spanish
	Manager Business Assistant Incentive Program Advisor Cost Allocation Control Clerk	1.5 years 3 years 3 years 7 years	Current 2006 2003 2000	

Working with your Labor Union

How to work with staff in advance, to enhance cooperation during an emergency

Collaboration with Labor Unions

- Remember – your staff are the backbone of your organisation!
- If you have unionized employees, ensure Union reps are involved throughout the planning process
- If arrangements/agreements can be firmed up ahead of time, you'll be better prepared to respond quickly and effectively during a pandemic
- Consider creating a "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOU) between your organisation and the Union

Memorandum of Understanding

- Topics to be addressed in an MOU could include:
  - Office closures
  - “Stay Healthy” strategies for employees
  - Alternative work arrangements
  - Personal Protective Equipment and Antivirals
  - Use of external resources/staffing (retirees, volunteers)
  - Work refusal scenarios
  - Grievance Management
  - Compensation for lost time
  - Volunteer lists

Different types of absences

- Quarantine Orders
- Exhibiting flu symptoms
- Personal pandemic Illness
- Caring for ill family members
- Caring for dependants if schools/daycares are closed
- Death of a family member/bereavement leave
- Being told by employer to stay home because business service not being delivered
- Being unable to get to the workplace
- Approved volunteering in the community
- Work Refusals

Summary

- Your employees are the backbone of your organisation
- Ensure you have plans in place to support the health and well-being of employees before, during and after a pandemic
- Consider training non-essential staff to perform critical functions, particularly if they have past experience/training
- Involve your Union, and keep employees informed of your plans

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www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/Public/flu_resources

QUESTIONS?