

## **THE DIOCESE OF OXFORD**

### **FLU PANDEMIC PLAN**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

1. The Pandemic Influenza Plan has been prepared on the basis of the appropriate risk assessment. It forms part of the Business Resilience Plan of the Diocese of Oxford, in relation to the separate Resilience Plan for Diocesan Church House (DCH).
2. This plan covers the diocesan response in event of a flu pandemic. It indicates the responsibilities for the departments, areas, parishes and other places of ministry/”ministry units” within the diocese.
3. To assist with the preparations of local plans the following annexes are provided.
  - 3.1. Annex A – International and national flu pandemic states including planning assumptions
  - 3.2. Annex B – Programme of actions to be taken at different phases and alert levels which shows what your local contingency planning group should be preparing or carrying out your plan at the various stages and levels of alert
  - 3.3. Annex C - Information on pastoral care, including items to be included in your plan.
  - 3.4. Annex D and E – Two planning aids to help you formulate your plan and check on its progress and your state of readiness.
  - 3.5. Annex F – a template about precautions to be taken in relation to any activity that is considered essential to be continued during a pandemic e.g. meetings or groups. This template should be adapted for local needs.
  - 3.6. Annex G – Information on ‘flu friends.’
4. A main source for the material in the plan is the government website on preparing for emergencies <http://www.pfe.gov.uk/index.shtm>

#### **INVOCATION**

5. This plan will be invoked by the Bishop of Oxford in response to changes in the Pandemic Flu Status Alert (Annex A) and/or significant changes to the welfare of diocesan staff and clergy.
6. The appropriate levels of response are outlined in Annex B
7. The implementation of the plan is carried out at four ministry levels
  - 7.1. Diocese
  - 7.2. Archdeaconry
  - 7.3. Deanery
  - 7.4. Parish/Ministry Unit
8. Each ministry level has four component parts.
  - 8.1. Communication & Administration
  - 8.2. Leadership
  - 8.3. Pastoral Care
  - 8.4. Finance

#### **NOTE ON ECUMENICAL, INTERFAITH AND COMMUNITY LIAISON**

The Plan is concerned first with the responsibility of maintaining the work of the Diocese and its offering of pastoral care during and after the pandemic. However, wherever possible, liaison should be made with other churches e.g. through local Churches Together Groups, with other faith communities e.g. through local Councils of Faith and with community and welfare organisations e.g. NHS and GP surgeries, voluntary organisations.

## **DIOCESE**

### **Communication & Administration**

9. The central point for communication & administration at a Diocesan level will be Diocesan Church House.
10. The Diocesan website <http://www.oxford.anglican.org/index.php> will be the primary point of communication across the Diocese.
11. Information input will be by email to [resilience@odbf.co.uk](mailto:resilience@odbf.co.uk) or by telephone to 01865 208200.
12. The Diocesan webmaster is to be responsible for:
  - 10.1 ensuring adequate staff backup provisions are in place to support the additional workload.
  - 10.2 ensuring offsite server capacity is available
13. The website will be updated daily with
  - 13.1. the latest news and advice.
  - 13.2. prayers / devotions and relevant liturgy
14. The Diocesan telephone system must be capable of being diverted off site.
15. Administration support will be provided by the Diocesan Secretary or those whom she nominates from the Diocesan Staff
16. Security and DCH key holder lists need to be checked for resilience.

### **Leadership**

17. The Bishop of Oxford is the primary point of contact, Shepherd and Spiritual Leader for the diocese. His role will be primarily pastoral.
18. If required the order of succession would then follow: Bishop of Dorchester, Bishop of Buckingham, Bishop of Reading.
19. Area Bishops will be responsible for their own area. However, the following mutual support will be given (Oxford – Bucks, Bucks-Berks, Berks-Oxford)

### **Pastoral Care**

20. The Bishop of Reading will be responsible for
  - 20.1. providing daily prayer / devotions for the diocesan website.
  - 20.2. providing prayer resources / liturgy suitable to support for any mass burial policy that may be instigated and also resources and liturgy for persons who, because of restrictions on either travel movement or gatherings have been unable to attend a funeral.
21. The Bishop of Dorchester will be responsible for issuing policy to enable lay members of the church to perform duties normally undertaken by ordained ministers.

### **Diocesan Church House**

22. The Diocesan Secretary is responsible for preparing and implementing the Diocesan Church House Business Continuity plan for DCH Staff utilising the resources at Annexes A-E
23. The Director of Finance is responsible for implementing the Finance Department's Business Continuity plan to ensure that any changes in the cash flow from parishes, or the pandemic's impact on rents, glebes or investment income does not damage the financial integrity of the Diocesan Finances.

## **ARCHDEACONRY**

### **Communication & Administration**

24. Archdeacons are to prepare a Business Continuity Flu Pandemic Plan for their office, utilising the resources at Annex A-E
25. The plan is to be implemented at the appropriate changes in the Pandemic Flu Alert State (Annex A) or as advised by the Diocesan Bishop. In addition the following actions will be taken.
26. Archdeacons are to hold current home & office email addresses, and contact details for Archdeaconry clergy.
27. Archdeacons will provide the conduit for information between
  - 27.1. the Bishop and the wider diocese.
  - 27.2. The Area Deans.

### **Leadership**

28. Archdeacons are to nominate a second and third successor. Names should be submitted to the Bishop.

### **Pastoral Care**

29. Archdeacons are to implement the Archdeacon's Office Business Continuity plan for their office staff
30. Archdeacons are to be in daily contact with
  - 30.1. Diocesan Bishop
  - 30.2. Area Bishop
  - 30.3. Area Deans

### **Finance**

31. The Financial situation is to be managed as required by the Diocesan Director of Finance. The Archdeacons will be in regular liaison with him over financial management in relation to the Deaneries and parishes of their Archdeaconry.

## **DEANERY**

### **Communication & Administration**

32. Area Deans are to prepare a Deanery Business Continuity Flu Pandemic Plan utilising the resources at Annex A-E
33. The plan is to be implemented at the appropriate changes in the Pandemic Flu Alert State (Annex A) or as advised by the Diocesan Bishop. In addition the following actions will be taken.
34. Area Deans are to hold current home & office email addresses, and contact details for Deanery clergy.
35. Area Deans will provide the conduit for information between
  - 35.1. the Archdeacon
  - 35.2. The Parish/Benefice
36. The Area Dean will maintain a list of
  - 36.1. Clergy deputies/backup
  - 36.2. key organisation/staff contact details
  - 36.3. churchwardens
  - 36.4. pastoral care networks

### **Leadership**

37. Area Deans are to nominate a deputy. Names to be submitted to the Archdeacon.

### **Pastoral Care**

38. Area Deans are to implement the Area Dean's Business Continuity plan for deanery staff
39. Area Deans are to be in daily contact with
  - 39.1. the Archdeacon
  - 39.2. Parish/Benefice Clergy (e-mail or phone)

### **Finance**

40. The Financial situation to be managed as required by the Archdeacon.

### **Note on Ecumenical, Interfaith and Community Liaison**

The Plan is concerned first with the responsibility of maintaining the work of the Deanery and its offering of pastoral care during and after the pandemic. However, wherever possible, liaison should be made with other churches e.g. through local Churches Together Groups, with other faith communities e.g. through local Councils of Faith and with community and welfare organisations e.g. NHS and GP surgeries, voluntary organisations. Details of support offered by local churches to the NHS by the creation of 'flu friends' networks can be found at Annex G.

## **PARISH / MINISTRY UNIT**

### **Communication & Administration**

41. The incumbent (or lead minister, Chaplain etc) in conjunction with the Churchwardens (or equivalent lay leaders) of each parish/ministry unit is to prepare a Business Continuity Pandemic Flu Plan for the approval of the PCC or appropriate body. The plan should include the items listed below and also utilise the resources and information found in Annex A-E.
42. The plan is to be implemented at the appropriate changes in the Pandemic Flu Alert State (Annex A) or as advised by the Diocesan Bishop.
43. Parish Clergy are to hold the details of
  - 43.1. key organisation/staff contact details
  - 43.2. churchwardens
  - 43.3. pastoral care networks
44. They are to ensure that:
  - 44.1. they have available the latest advice leaflet published by the respective NHS Primary Care Trust (See Annex A)
  - 44.2. information on all newsletters and other communications is current and accurate
  - 44.3. Diocesan website details are on all newsletters
  - 44.4. Parish website details are up to date and linked to the Diocesan website.
  - 44.5. answer-phone messages are clear and effective.
  - 44.6. the latest advice from the Diocese is implemented
  - 44.7. regular parish activities e.g. toddler groups, Alpha courses are monitored as to whether in the light of advice from the Diocese or the PCT they should continue and on what basis. Annex F is provided as a template for such assessment.
45. They are to:
  - 45.1. contact the Area Dean daily by email or phone.
  - 45.2. Set up “telephone trees” or “e mail trees” for daily contact
  - 45.3. Consider dividing the parish/ministry unit into a geographic grid and develop local contact lists.
  - 45.4.

### **Leadership**

46. Vicar / Priest in Charge/ Ministry Team is to identify back up for
  - 46.1. Laity - Wardens
  - 46.2. Service Leaders
  - 46.3. Clergy
47. Vicar / Priest in Charge / Ministry Team Administrator, each to have
  - 47.1. a hard copy of the Parish Roll
  - 47.2. Identify critical leadership roles e.g.; Pastoral Team co-ordinator etc.
  - 47.3. Identify essential parish functions and ensure they are staffed adequately.
  - 47.4. Protection Kits as recommended by the PCT for all clergy and key lay persons.
  - 47.5. alcohol wipes for parish office phones and key boards and alcohol based hand wash gel for carers and visiting to be in place

## **Pastoral Care**

48. Clergy can offer public reassurance through 'the sacrament of presence' and being seen to be present.
49. The pastoral needs will be diverse. Prior planning is essential and due consideration should be given to the areas detailed in Annex C and Annex G.

## **Liturgical & Sacramental Support**

50. Train and equip LLMs to offer appropriate support and prayer, lead memorial services etc.
51. Consider the practicality of supplying each home with a Bible and resources for prayer. If necessary on loan from the church.
52. Consider promoting Midday Prayer as a community activity. Church bells might be rung to indicate Midday Prayer even if attendance is not possible.
53. If the congregation is able to gather, it is vital to be very aware of hygiene in accordance with advice from the PCT. Keep contact with others to a minimum and encourage people to not sit too close together in gatherings. Consider not passing the peace and it is recommended that communion in one kind only is offered, distributing only after using alcohol hand wash gel or similar.
54. If anointing people for healing wash/wipe hands between people.
55. When ministering with people who are ill, dying or at the time of death, take appropriate hygiene precautions e.g. use of alcohol solution for hands etc. and consider the need to wear a mask.
56. In situations of death Clergy and Pastoral Team members need to be aware that health protocols may change funeral/burial practices and it may be necessary to prepare families appropriately. Use the resources found in Common Worship and those published on the Diocesan website

## **Post Pandemic / Crisis**

57. Although the danger period may be formally declared as over the grief and trauma suffered by communities will need sustained pastoral ongoing consideration There may also be phases of remission in the pandemic and care will be needed in recognising this in pastoral situations and any advice given.
58. Mass burial / cremation is the likely process if large numbers of deaths occur. Offering Memorial Services once people are able to gather again will be very necessary.

## **Finance**

59. It will be important in the course of the emergency to ensure adequate security of any money and other valuables in the parish.
60. Parish finances and cash flow will need to be monitored.

## **Note on Ecumenical, Interfaith and Community Liaison**

The Plan is concerned first with the responsibility of maintaining the work of the Deanery and its offering of pastoral care during and after the pandemic. However, wherever possible, liaison should be made with other churches e.g. through local Churches Together Groups, with other faith communities e.g. through local Councils of Faith and with community and welfare organisations e.g. NHS and GP surgeries, voluntary organisations

# Annex A

## Planning for a Flu Pandemic

The following information is taken from the booklet published by Oxfordshire NHS Primary Care Trust and Oxfordshire County Council **Planning for a Flu Pandemic – Essential information for voluntary and community groups (dated Dec 2008)**

**Note:** This is included for guidance only and reference should always be made to the latest edition published by Oxfordshire NHS PCT.

Web Site: <http://www.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk/about-us/emergency-planning/pandemic-flu.aspx>

### WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE UK IN A FLU PANDEMIC?

Below is the UK version of the World Health Organisation flu status alert with current UK planning assumptions.

INTERNATIONAL PHASES		UK PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Inter-pandemic period</b>		
<b>1</b>	No new influenza virus subtypes detected in humans.	No action.	
<b>2</b>	Animal influenza subtype poses substantial risk.	No action.	
<b>Pandemic alert period</b>			
<b>3</b>	Human infection(s) with a new subtype; no new human-to-human spread to a close contact.	No action.	
<b>4</b>	Small cluster(s) with limited human-to-human transmission; spread is highly localised suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans.	Advice against non-essential travel to affected countries.	
<b>5</b>	Large clusters but human-to-human spread is still localised suggesting that the virus is becoming increasingly better adapted to humans.	Advice against non-essential travel to affected countries.	
<b>Pandemic period</b>			
<b>6</b>	Increased and sustained transmission in general population.	Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) will be responsible for community arrangements. Antivirals distributed through distribution centres in Oxfordshire. Voluntary organisations expected to develop their own service continuity arrangements.	
	<b>UK Alert Level:</b>		
	<b>1</b>	Human virus/cases only outside the UK	
	<b>2</b>	Human virus isolated in the UK (expected to last two weeks)	Two week Tamiflu supply given to each PCT. Limits on travel to affected countries including international events. NHS plans to limit care to essential needs. Reduction in routine repairs on energy supplies, water supplies and communication lines.
	<b>3</b>	Outbreak(s) in the UK (expected to last one to three weeks)	Some disruptions to fuel supplies, banking systems, refuse collection. Closure of schools and child care settings. Ill patients advised to remain at home.
<b>4.</b>	Widespread activity in the UK (expected to last in total 15 - 16weeks )	Clinical prioritisation of services across the health sector - all non essential work postponed	

# Annex B

## Actions at different phases and alert levels

### Phase 3 (current level)

Convene a Contingency Planning Group to establish a contingency plan. - see Annex E  
Start stocking any relevant items that are not lifed

### Phases 4 and 5

Start stocking consumables (eg foodstuffs, alcohol wipes). Prepare protection kits.

### Phase 6: UK alert level 1 and 2 –declaration of pandemic

Train key workers in priority support roles, eg infection control/food preparation/switchboard/housekeeping.  
Confirm orders/deliveries of key supplies and adjust stock levels.  
Advise staff on self care and 'sign post' to appropriate information. i.e. NHS PCT bulletins and internet sites.  
Issue agreed communications to staff and communities (with especial reference to non English speaking community leaders

### Phase 6: UK alert level 3 – on declaration of the pandemic

Activate all aspects of the contingency plan.  
Consider cancelling all non-essential meetings and visits (including training).  
Consider cancelling all non-urgent activity (re-deploy staff as required).  
Where relevant prepare a staff roster to minimise spread/voluntary quarantine of teams affected by flu.

### Phase 6: UK alert level 4 – widespread infection in local population

Monitor decisions and stock levels of consumable items.

### Post Event Actions

Stand down major incident arrangements.  
Review response to the emergency.  
Implement ongoing pastoral care plan

# Annex C

## Pastoral Care

### The most important thing we can offer is hope!

1. Clergy can offer public reassurance through ‘the sacrament of presence’ and being seen to be “present”, e.g.. by wearing clerical collars.
2. Prepare publicity about prayer, material for home worship and alternative services.
3. Help with the distribution of government advice ensuring isolated members of the community are aware of the precautions they can take.
4. Check Parish First Aid Kits and availability of trained first aid people.
5. Encourage parishioners to check & restock personal First Aid Kits, especially with additional paracetamol.
6. Network with local health, welfare, safety networks, funeral directors and other service providers. Ensure contact details for these service providers are held by key parish leadership.
7. Be aware of local information and peculiarities e.g. changes in public utilities or services that affect your community specifically.
8. Ensure information regarding contacts for GPs and NHS and Primary Care Trusts are published in weekly newsletters.
9. Parishes/Benefices are encouraged to stockpile in a responsible way non perishable food items sufficient to support families suffering particular hardship or those in immediate need.
10. Parishes/Benefices are encouraged to use paper hand towels, and supply tissues rather than communal towels.
11. Parishes/Benefices are encouraged to hold next of kin details especially for parishioners who live alone.
12. Using the Parish Grid established under ‘Communication & Administration’, establish pastoral ‘Neighbourhood Care’ networks (remembering ‘who is our neighbour’), the grid should be reasonably small scale with all occupants within walking distance
13. Identify a leader/contact person for each ‘Neighbourhood Care’ network.
14. Distribute ‘Care Cards’ containing essential information such as phone tree process, pastoral contacts, prayer contacts etc.
15. Build up and equip Lay Ministry networks – if necessary over and above those licensed by the Diocese.
16. Identify and brief lay people who can provide telephone support and prayer for those who are fearful or otherwise distressed.

### DAILY PRAYER IN TIME OF AN EMERGENCY

17. When the flu pandemic strikes, it is likely that households will be encouraged not to mingle with others. Schools will be closed, and places of business including supermarkets, and even church services may be forbidden. In such a situation anxiety levels will rise and our people will be looking for spiritual resources to help them which they can access and use in their homes. Common Worship is a rich resource and PCCs could help to ensure that households have extracts suitable for such use and a Bible.
18. Daily prayers can help give structure to our days; especially when folk have more time for thinking and reflecting. Utilize the Diocesan web site resources to locally produce service book containing Daily Devotions , Midday Prayer , Night Prayer. In addition the Psalms are a useful resource for adults.
19. For families with young children Family Prayers and worship might be more appropriate
20. Copies of prayers for the sick and the dying and also a copy of the funeral service could be helpful to those unable to attend a funeral of a friend or relative.
21. Setting up regular prayer times and using the church bell to sound the times of prayer will help to establish a sense of prayer and strengthen the praying community.

# Annex D

## Flu planning Initial Checklist (As advised by PCT)

This checklist provided by the Oxfordshire PCT may help your organisation start to plan for a flu pandemic or similar emergency

### First actions

Establish or activate a Contingency Planning Group (CPG)  
(This Group can be used for any emergency planning, not just flu)

The group should start work now to develop a Pandemic Plan.

The size of the group will reflect the size of the organisation. If possible, deputies should be available if one member cannot attend.

It is suggested that the CPG initially needs to meet monthly to establish policy, consider impact on each area of activity and set up action templates (See Appendix ?? for blank template). Consider:

### Staffing

For each area of activity,:

- a) What would happen if there were reduced numbers of staff, but able to maintain service
- b) What would happen if there were insufficient numbers of staff to maintain service
- c) Role of volunteers

Consideration should include:

- estimates of minimum staffing to maintain a service
- which services would close in early stages of pandemic
- creating list of local staff if public transport or fuel become compromised.

### Supplies

- a) Essential supplies to function and reduce spread of infection in the work place e.g. cleaning materials

### Space planning

- a) Storage for essential supplies
- b) Office facilities

### Services

- a) Infection control
- b) Transport (staff, supplies)
- c) Organising and checking supplies

### Information/PR

- a) Information to staff and clients at start of outbreak
- b) Information to staff and clients during outbreak
- c) Information to press

### Inter-organisational links with:

- a) Define role and function in a pandemic – including possibility of redeploying staff to help local communities in need
- b) Suppliers of essential goods
- c) PCT may link with local emergency response

### Create action list for each alert level during phase 6 (see Appendix A)

# Annex E

## Checklist for Pandemic Flu Planning

The following checklist is to assist in the development of a flu pandemic plan within the organization, parish or ministry unit. The check list should not be treated as the definitive answer to the problem we will face but rather an aide, some parts may not be relevant to your organization or area and while it is hoped all aspects are covered, each community will have its own particular issues that may require additional preparation.

<b>Step One</b>		<b>Not Started</b>	<b>In Progress</b>	<b>Completed</b>
1	Determine the potential impact of a pandemic on the congregation's usual activities and services.			
2	Plan for situations likely to require increasing, decreasing or altering the activities of the congregation			
3	If possible, have computer access of working documents available to those holding essential positions in off-site locations.			
4	Attend workshops provided by the Diocese.			
<b>Step Two</b>				
5	Identify essential positions in relation to the essential functions, including paid and volunteer positions, needed to carry on the work of the congregation during a pandemic.			
6	Determine the potential impact of a pandemic on outside resources that the congregation depends upon to facilitate its activities, e.g. liturgical and cleaning supplies, outsourced services especially janitorial services, etc.			
7	Be aware of NHS PCT advice. Establish safe practices for sanitizing classrooms, food handling and safety, cleansing of nursery toys and children's toys, etc.			
8	Train all voluntary and employed staff and ministry members in basic health procedures, such as proper hand washing techniques, cough etiquette, distribution of communion elements, etc.			
9	Evaluate the congregation's usual activities and 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 prior to a Pandemic			
<b>Step Three</b>				
10	Develop back up plans for essential functions.			
11	Cross-train people for essential positions so that if a person is ill, others are available to complete tasks.			
12	Outline what the organizational structure would be during an emergency and revise periodically. Identify key contacts with multiple back-ups, roles and responsibilities.			
13	Develop and maintain contact listings for those individuals providing essential functions and their back-up, including back-up for clergy.			
14	Encourage use of pre-authorized giving as a means of mitigating the impact of reduced attendance on the parish/benefice income. Discuss ability to access a line of credit with the bank.			
15	Determine which and the quantity of supplies that will be required to promote good hygiene during a pandemic; have these supplies on hand, keeping in mind that the predicted length of the first wave of an influenza pandemic is three months. Establish a protocol for reviewing these supplies and replacing those which have outlasted their expiry dates.			

16	Ensure that all those using the church's facilities follow the pandemic protocol.			
17	Advise parishioners that the congregation will be following Diocesan protocol by adhering to guidelines provided by the NHS and local PCT. When appropriate, include basic information about pandemic influenza in public meetings, e.g. sermons, small group meetings and announcements.			
18	Develop tools to communicate information about pandemic status and your organization's actions. This might include websites, flyers, local newspaper announcements, pre-recorded widely distributed phone messages, etc.			
19	Consider your organization's unique contribution to addressing rumors, misinformation, fear and anxiety.			
20	Identify people with special needs (e.g. elderly, disabled, English as a second language) and be sure to include their needs in your response and preparedness plan. Establish relationships with them in advance so they will expect and trust your presence during a crisis.			
21	Test your response and preparedness plan using an exercise or drill, and review and revise your plan as needed			

# Annex F

## Action template For Pandemic flu Emergency Plan

Activity:

Flu Pandemic State Trigger	
Action to be taken	

Key People	Names	Contact Numbers
Area Dean		

Key Organisations	Names	Contact Numbers

Reporting Arrangements	During Normal Working Hours	Out of Hours

Resource needed to implement	

Who needs to know		

Plan completed by	
Date Plan prepared	
Date Plan Reviewed	

## **Annex G**

### **Flu Friends**

The 2009 outbreak of H1N1 demonstrated the crucial role that the Church can play in giving very practical support to those suffering from 'flu. Using existing pastoral networks, local churches are encouraged to identify people who can act as 'flu friends' and collect medication, food or other supplies for vulnerable or isolated people within their communities.

Requests for 'flu friend' support will come primarily from NHS contacts, who will submit details via the Bishop of Oxford's Chaplain by email to [resilience@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:resilience@oxford.anglican.org) or by telephoning 01865 208221. The Bishop's Chaplain will pass requests to nominated people within parishes who will then make direct contact with individuals asking for help.

Detailed information about flu outbreaks, flu friend procedures and Diocesan advice will be disseminated by Communications via the Diocesan website, emails to clergy and *The Door*.