

# Glen Abbot Ltd.

## Swine Flu Briefing 03 - 29/04/2009

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### Current Situation

As of 19:15 GMT, 28 April 2009, seven countries have officially reported cases of swine influenza A/H1N1 infection. The United States Government has reported 64 laboratory confirmed human cases, with no deaths. Mexico has reported 26 confirmed human cases of infection including seven deaths. Overall in Mexico the number of deaths now sits at 159.

The following countries have reported laboratory confirmed cases with no deaths - Canada (6), New Zealand (3), the United Kingdom (2), Israel (2) and Spain (2).

### Travel

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office are advising against all but essential travel to Mexico. No other travel restrictions have been suggested although the FCO do suggested checking before travel to areas of the USA which have infections identified.

### UK

All homes in the UK are to receive a leaflet about the swine flu outbreak and how to prevent its spread.

The level of calls to NHS Direct which covers England and Wales has significantly increased and their website has seen a 57% increase in traffic.

There seems to be some doubt as to when the National Flu Helpline will be available. Some reports say this may be several months away.

### Media

Sadly we are already seeing media headlines about the 'killer' flu. It is important that all companies are in a position to counter such scare stories. Staff should be able to read some clear basic information on health and hygiene on your intranet site or given out as a leaflet if you don't have that.

If you would like some information you can use please email me and I will send something out to you.

## PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS: Who is and who isn't

Interviewed on BBC Radio this morning I said that I was confident that most large firms have plans in place and will be able to cope. My real concern is for the SME (Small to Medium Enterprise) sector where we have seen little or no planning.

For large organisations this also presents a threat as it could mean a break in your supply chain. Large firms should be checking that their supply chain have got plans in place. You may even consider helping them.

What steps should an SME take? Well here a few basic pointers:

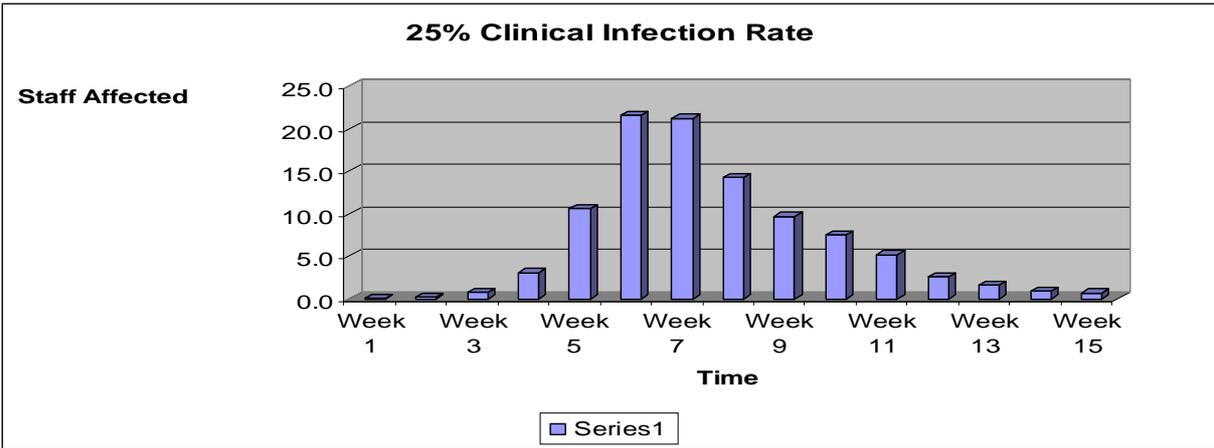
- Identify your most important activities
- Consider how you would cope if between 25% and 50% of your staff were off over a 4-5 week period (this could be the case at the peak of a pandemic)
- Look at whether you could transfer staff from non-critical tasks to front line operations
- Could any of your staff work from home?

For all companies it will be worth considering whether you can stagger the working patterns of your staff to allow them to avoid travel at rush hour.

### When will it be worst?

Flu outbreaks in the past have followed a definite pattern of infection and spread. The graph below shows the standard model and when you can expect the maximum level of absence. We suggest that for every person off sick you will lose one for caring reasons or perhaps because schools will shut.

This is version is for 25% of the population catching flu.



## Training

We provide specific pandemic training courses both publicly and bespoke to companies. If you are interested please contact me directly or email Geoff Howard at Continuity Shop ([goward@continuityshop.com](mailto:goward@continuityshop.com)).

## HR

Tomorrow I will look at some of the HR issues you should be addressing.

If you have any further questions about pandemic planning please contact me directly.

Yours sincerely



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