



Glen Abbot Ltd.

Swine Flu Briefing 04 - 30/04/2009

Author: David Hutcheson MBCI, Managing Director of Glen Abbot Ltd.

Current Situation

The most significant issue is that the WHO have moved to Phase 5 which is defined as:

A new virus causes human cases with evidence of significant human to human transmission

The statement from the WHO is as follows:

Based on assessment of all available information and following several expert consultations, Dr Margaret Chan, WHO's Director-General raised the current level of influenza pandemic alert from phase 4 to 5. She stated that all countries should immediately activate their pandemic preparedness plans. At this stage, effective and essential measures include heightened surveillance, early detection and treatment of cases, and infection control in all health facilities.

Spread so far

Mexico: 159 suspected deaths - seven confirmed

US: one death, at least 91 confirmed cases

Canada: 13 confirmed cases

UK: 5 confirmed cases

Spain: 10 confirmed cases

Germany, New Zealand: 3 confirmed cases each

Israel: 2 confirmed cases

Austria: 1 case

UK Government Action

Here are some statements from Alan Johnson the UK Health Secretary made to the House of Commons yesterday:

We will now increase this stockpile of anti virals to cover 80 per cent of the population. This does not mean that we expect anywhere near this number of people to be affected. It does mean that we will have enough antiviral drugs to treat 50 million people, and make sure that all frontline NHS staff have their own supplies of antivirals as a preparatory measure.

In addition to increasing availability of antivirals, we are increasing our stockpiles of antibiotics. While antibiotics have no impact on the flu virus, they will be essential for dealing with any complications such as pneumonia, which might arise from infection.

There have been questions today about facemasks. As the Chief Medical Officer reiterated today, there is no convincing scientific evidence that the widespread issue of facemasks to healthy members of the public can stop this disease spreading. Moreover, they give can false reassurance, and can encourage people to ignore basic and straightforward hand hygiene measures which have proven effectiveness.

PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS: What should companies do now?

All companies should by now have their pandemic or incident management team meeting on a daily basis to review the situation.

Plans should be reviewed and you should begin immediate planning for retraining of staff from non-essential to essential activities.

HR policies should be reviewed to ensure they reflect the requirements of a pandemic. To help with that I have included a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) I have been using in my training course. The answers are generic, so you need to tailor them, but your HR policies should reflect this points.

Answers to these should be available to managers and team leaders to ensure that they do not make up policy 'on the hoof'

Q1 Schools have shut and I need to stay at home to care for my children. Will I be paid, do I take holidays or will I get unpaid leave?

Q2 My elderly parents have the flu and I need time off to care for them. I have no holidays left, will I be paid or given unpaid leave?

Q3 My children were exposed to flu at school before it shut, they are not sick yet but I want to stay at home to monitor them. Can I do this and will I be paid?

If you need to attend to time off to care for relatives then, in the first instance we would expect staff to take holidays or unpaid leave. We will continuously review the situation and consideration will be given to granting staff additional paid leave for the period.

In very difficult circumstances we will consider granting additional leave and extending discretionary sick pay.

Q4 I do not want to take public transport to get to work. Can I stay at home and will I be paid?

Q5 I have been designated a key worker and don't want to use public transport. Will you provide transport for me?

We would expect staff who can work to make their own arrangements to travel to work. If there are any problems with public transport we will consider reimbursing the additional costs that staff incur (such as car parking).

It is unlikely that we would provide transport directly at such a time, but would consider arranging taxis for key staff. We will also authorise temporary home working arrangements if these are viable.

Q6 A near relative has died from flu, can I have paid leave to make the funeral arrangements?

Yes, our usual policy for special leave would apply.

Q7 I have been told I am a key worker and should report to the office but I feel this puts me at risk. Can I refuse to come to work and what will be the consequences?

Q8 If I am expected to come to work and that is a risk to me, will I be paid extra?

We have a responsibility to ensure a safe and healthy work environment, if we are advised that attending any of our offices poses a significant risk to your health then we would not expect anyone to attend that office, but may require them to work remotely or at another location.

If we are advised that it is safe for our staff to attend work then we would expect you to attend. If you refuse to come to work then you risk being subject to disciplinary action.

Q9 My partner has the flu but I do not, should I come to work?

Please contact your manager. We would not normally expect you to come to work under those circumstances.

Q10 I have the flu and my doctor will not give me a sickness certificate as they are too busy to see me. What should I do?

You should still seek to get medical attention if you need it. In the circumstances we will extend the period you can self certificate your absence to 10 working days. Should you still be unable to return to work and cannot obtain a certificate you should contact you manager to discuss the situation.

Q11 Will the company provide extra medical help for me? For my family?

We do not plan to provide additional medical health care for our employees or their families.

Q12 Other staff are being allowed to stay at home but I have to work. Will I be paid a bonus?

We realise that in a very serious situation we will need to consider paying for additional sick leave or special leave and may grant extra annual leave. Staff who are required to work and do not access additional leave of any sort will be recompensed for this. Where a colleague has made a significant contribution in very difficult circumstances a bonus payment will be considered as part of the annual pay award and performance management process

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 (ghoward@continuityshop.com).

We can also help organisation review or create plans so if you need any assistance please contact me via this email or Andrew Sinclair on Andrew.sinclair@glenabbot.co.uk Our office number is 01738 580580.

Future Briefings

I head to China tomorrow to speak at the BCI conference so the briefings will continue but given the time difference may appear at a different time.

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

Yours sincerely



David Hutcheson
Managing Director

M: 07775 793858 T: 01738 580580 E: david.hutcheson@glenabbot.co.uk

Glen Abbot Ltd

Quayside House
Friarton Road, Perth PH2 8BB
Telephone: 08450 531537
Email: enquiries@glenabbot.co.uk
Website: www.glenabbot.co.uk

Company Registration No. 3569363 VAT No. 699 8562 44