



Good Hand Hygiene is the best way to prevent the spread of all flu viruses.

What is BICR doing about a flu pandemic?

An influenza (flu) pandemic spreads easily through many countries and regions of the world. Public Health tells us that another flu pandemic could happen again. They also tell us that if we are prepared, we can reduce the number of people who become infected and the number who die.

Since the pandemic flu spreads the same way as seasonal flu-through droplets contained in sneezes, coughs and by hand contact-basic precautions can greatly reduce its spread. There are drugs known as antivirals that can treat flu, but to be effective people have to take them before or very soon after they start to get sick-in some cases before the symptoms start. Ontario has a stock pile of antiviral drugs for the Province. In the case of the pandemic, we will only know if Ontario's supply of antiviral drugs works when we know more about the specific strain. The number of people that can be treated will depend on the supply of vaccines available. Once the strain is identified, Ontario then can produce a vaccine. It will take time to produce the vaccine, but our best defense is being prepared.

KNOW THAT BRAIN INJURY COMMUNITY RE-ENTRY IS PREPARED AND HAS A PANDEMIC PLAN.

All staff at BICR complete training and are educated on what to do if there is a pandemic flu outbreak. Staff will continue to follow routine practices to ensure minimal risk of spreading any virus. Staff will be required to wear personal protective equipment when providing direct care to a participant. This includes wearing gloves, gowns, masks and eye protection. In the case of a flu pandemic BICR may have a limited number of staff who are available to work and this may have an impact on participant programming. During a pandemic, depending on the severity of the outbreak BICR may have to cancel group events and may need to limit services to only those that are classified as essential. During a pandemic BICR will continue to update you and your families with regards to information on what to do. The following is a list outlining ways to reduce your risk.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FROM A FLU PANDEMIC

- ❖ Get your flu shot every year- the flu shot will not protect you from a pandemic flu virus, but it will protect you from getting ordinary flu, which could weaken your immune system or resistance to the pandemic flu.
- ❖ Wash your hands thoroughly and often with soap or alcohol based hand sanitizers-good hand hygiene is the best way to prevent the spread of all flu viruses.
- ❖ Keep an alcohol-based sanitizer (gel) handy at work, in your purse, at school, home and in your car.
- ❖ Cover your mouth when you cough. Try to use a Kleenex when you cough or sneeze.
- ❖ Stay home when you are sick.
- ❖ Avoid large crowds of people where viruses can spread easily.
- ❖ Reduce non-essential travel.
- ❖ Follow any instructions given by public health officials.