



## **PANDEMIC PERFORMANCE PLAN**

### **I. BACKGROUND**

An influenza pandemic has the potential to cause widespread illness and death. Planning and preparedness before the next pandemic strikes are critical for an effective response.

The increased demand for health care services during an influenza pandemic will challenge existing health care services in Arizona to a level not previously experienced. A pandemic will require a sustained health response for months or years. Planning for this kind of sustained response presents a unique challenge to direct care providers and will require collaboration and integration among all Division of Developmental Disability partners.

Lessons learned from hurricanes Katrina and Rita demonstrate that special populations have difficulty accessing and utilizing medical services in both the public and private sectors. Prior to a pandemic, efforts must be made to identify populations with special needs as well as mechanisms to ensure their receipt of services.

Planning assumptions include:

- An influenza pandemic will cause simultaneous outbreaks in communities across Arizona and the United States;
- There will be an overwhelming number of ill persons requiring hospitalization and/or outpatient medical care;
- The Department of Health will activate its risk communication strategies and disseminate public health advisories and alerts based on information received from the CDC and other credible sources;
- The ability of the federal government to support Arizona will be limited at the onset of a pandemic and may continue to be limited for an extended period;
- Direct Support Providers, including Absolute HCBS, LLC, must be prepared to manage the surge of pandemic influenza patients presenting for care;
- The clinical disease attack rate is estimated to be 25 to 35 percent of the population;
- About 50 percent of ill persons will seek outpatient medical care;
- Health care providers will experience staffing shortages throughout the pandemic and into the recovery periods;
- Home-based treatment provided by families, and supported by Direct Support Providers, home health agencies, and other professionals, will be essential during a pandemic;

- As is true of most diseases, an influenza pandemic is likely to disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, such as the poor, those with low literacy levels, the uninsured, ethnic and racial minorities, and those with disabilities. Attempts to meet the special needs of these populations should be addressed in planning;
- There will be shortages and delays in the availability of vaccine and antiviral medications;
- Public, private and non-profit sector partners have been brought into the planning process and are encouraged to develop plans for some period of self-sustained operation;
- Pandemic influenza planning will be integrated into other preparedness activities;
- Up to 30 percent of the workforce will be too sick to come to work at some point during the pandemic. Rates of absenteeism may be driven to 40 percent during the peak weeks of a community outbreak. This could continue well into the post-pandemic (recovery) period. Therefore, planning for continuity of operations is an essential component of pandemic influenza preparedness;
- Supplies, equipment and pharmaceuticals will be in short supply during an influenza pandemic;
- Traditional standards of care may need to be altered to maximize health care resources and benefits; and

These assumptions were based on available information about past pandemics, especially the severe 1918 pandemic. It is important to recognize that many aspects of a pandemic cannot be predicted and any plan must include the flexibility to adjust to the characteristics of an actual pandemic.

## II. PURPOSE

To ensure that Absolute HCBS, LLC is prepared to efficiently provide home and community based services during an influenza pandemic. Absolute HCBS will:

- continue to coordinate with on-going local, regional and state planning efforts.
- monitor and adjust practices as necessary.
- communicate with members, their families, and our providers company responses and changes made due to pandemic measures.

## III. RESPONSIBILITY

All Absolute HCBS administration as well as Direct Care Workers employed by Absolute HCBS shall be responsible for adhering to information outlined in this document.

## IV. POLICY

In the event of an influenza pandemic, Absolute HCBS, LLC has clearly defined roles and procedures to meet the demands placed on the agency while:

- maintaining, to the extent possible, the provision of direct care services to meet the needs of Absolute HCBS, LLC members during an influenza pandemic
- maximizing Absolute HCBS, LLC ability to respond to members' service care needs (and surge care demands) resulting from an influenza pandemic
- providing for prophylaxis and masks to Absolute HCBS, LLC staff and members

## V. PROCEDURES

Absolute HCBS is committed to the health and safety of our employees and the members who receive services from us. To that end, Absolute HCBS will continue to follow the guidance received from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the AZ Dept of Health Service (ADHS) with regard to:

- Health
- Safety
- Hygiene
- Cleaning/disinfecting
- Training
- Staff Screening
- Overall risk mitigation for staff and members

In the event of a pandemic, the staff shall follow the Emergency Preparedness plan for the agency and proceed as an external disaster.

### Inter-Pandemic Procedures

- Estimate the impact of an influenza pandemic on Absolute HCBS, LLC services
  - Area Managers will alert their respective Area Supervisors and Administrative Assistants. They will take an inventory of staff availability and reallocate critical functions among team members as necessary to ensure coverage of critical functions and services. If the available team members are insufficient to complete the assigned duties the Area Manager or designee will contact Lisa Laurence (or designee) to arrange for additional support(s) by phone 602.702.6103; text or email [lisa@absolutehcb.com](mailto:lisa@absolutehcb.com).
  - The Pandemic Lead will reassign team members from different areas who serve the same team function.
- Ensure pandemic influenza plan and protocols are in place
- Establish contact and plan with state and local public health agencies
- Establish/maintain inventory of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Develop and maintain contact lists of Absolute HCBS, LLC personnel (including work and home communication information)

- Conduct education/training for staff on the Pandemic Plan, Personal Pandemic Plan, infection control, respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene
- Conduct surveillance for influenza

#### Mitigation Strategies

- Maintain social distancing
- Operate with reduced capacity based on the size of the business location with special attention to limiting areas where members and staff can congregate
- Comprehensive sanitation protocols when applicable
- Symptom Screening for employees
- Offer face coverings and gloves to employees and members
- Use of flexible work sites and work hours within Administrative Staff
- Required training of all staff on the corona virus to include training modules in the new hire process.
- Identify the members with no external supports in case of a positive test to allow for the proper PPE to be utilized with these members
- In case of positive test, member or provider will remain isolated for the duration and in coordination with PCP and CDC recommendations
- Use of additional PPE by staff who need to have contact with members who test positive
- Reporting protocol for staff and/or members who test positive
  
- Avoidance of community outings to congregate settings
- Sick leave policies require employees to stay home if they have symptoms of respiratory infection or have been exposed to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19
- Training will be regularly conducted for members and employees on specific handwashing and respiratory hygiene, as well as cough etiquette

#### Pandemic Alert Period Procedures

- Continue activities of the Inter-pandemic Period
- Review and update Absolute HCBS, LLC Pandemic Performance Plan
- Obtain from DOH and public health authorities case definitions, protocols and algorithms to assist with case finding, management, infection control, and surveillance reporting
- Review, revise as needed, and activate guidelines for prevention and control measures
- Maintain contact and continue planning with state and local public health agencies
- Conduct surveillance
- Provide training to staff and cross-train staff as appropriate
- Begin education of members and staff (ensure uniformity of message with state education) to include
  - Seasonal influenza vs. pandemic influenza
  - Prevention activities (i.e. hand washing, social distancing, etc)
  - Home care of those ill with influenza

- Exercise each of the key components of the plan and revise/adjust plan accordingly

#### Procedures During Pandemic

- Continue activities of the Pandemic Alert Period
- Activate Pandemic Performance Plan
- Keep up-to-date on the latest recommendations from governmental public health authorities
- Reinforce infection control procedures to prevent the spread of influenza and utilize appropriate PPE
- Maintain close contact with state and local public health agencies
- Post signs for respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette
- Maintain high index of suspicion that patients presenting with influenza-like illness could be infected with pandemic strain
- Cohort and isolate administrative staff, members, and Direct Support Providers
- Follow guidelines for when sick staff are allowed to return to work
- Increase environmental cleaning efforts in offices

#### Procedures Between Waves

- Scale back pandemic response activities as appropriate returning to Pandemic Alert Period activities
- Initiate recovery operations including stress management and crisis counseling
- Summarize and analyze the pandemic response and lessons learned for next wave
- Review and revise the Pandemic Performance Plan based on outcome measurements and performance results of current plan
- Rebuild/reinstate essential services

#### Post-Pandemic Period Procedures

- Scale back activities as appropriate returning to Inter-Pandemic Period activities
- Initiate recovery operations including stress management and crisis counseling
- Summarize and analyze the pandemic response and lessons learned for future pandemic situations
- Review and revise the Pandemic Performance Plan based on outcome measurements and performance results of current plan
- Rebuild/reinstate services

## VI. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Pandemic Response Team consists of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Director of Operations (DoO). They will be primarily responsible for preparations and implementation of disaster response during all periods of the pandemic.

The CEO and DOD will be immediately notified of the pandemic and will have oversight of the handling of the emergency. They will ensure that communications between outside agencies and Absolute HCBS, LLC's members, members families, Direct Support Providers, and Administrative Staff are in place.

Staff notifications will be through normal chains for command. (See Organizational Chart)

## VII. CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS FOR CRITICAL SERVICES

The Pandemic Response Team will communicate the nature of the emergency to the staff. In the event that the emergency occurs during off hours and the staff is required to congregate in the health center, the call-back list will be activated, and all appropriate staff will be called to report to the health center. Staff shall be informed of sick leave procedures during the pandemic, and shall follow those procedures as per the Sick Leave during Pandemic policy.

The CEO, CFO and DoO will be responsible for:

- Obtaining and disseminating information from outside agencies and resources as to the nature and extent of the emergency.
- Obtaining supplies, manpower and resources as needed and requested by the provider staff.
- Ensuring the safety of the staff and the patients during the emergency.
- Making a determination of personnel needs and determining who can be released to attend to their own families during an emergency.
- Giving report to outside agencies regarding the emergency.
- The CEO and her staff will direct staff on the basic information needed to continue operations during the pandemic.

The CEO or designee responsibilities include:

- Determining resources that are needed given the information obtained regarding the pandemic.
- Communicating between the Division of Developmental Disabilities and administrative staff, members of the agency, and Direct Service Providers.
- Educating staff and patients on precautionary and preventive measures to take during the pandemic.
- Assisting in the deployment of staff to the appropriate roles depending on who is available and the nature of the emergency.
- Heading the triage system as assigned.

- Ensuring that adequate supplies such as PPE are available during a pandemic.
- Communicating needed resources, identified issues, and problems to Advisory Council.
- Collecting requested information to supply to the Division of Developmental Disabilities, CDC, and the WHO.

## VII. PLAN MAINTENANCE

Absolute HCBS, LLC's Pandemic Performance Plan is a dynamic document and will be updated periodically to reflect new developments in understanding of the novel influenza virus with potential to cause a pandemic, its transmission, prevention, and treatment.

The plan will be exercised to identify operating challenges and promote effective implementation. Plan updates will incorporate changes in response roles and improvements in response capability developed through ongoing planning efforts and exercises.

## VIII. REFERENCES

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Interim Pre-pandemic Planning Guidance: Community Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Mitigation](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette in Healthcare Settings](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [Pandemic Planning Tools](#).
- Arizona Department of Health. [Arizona's Pandemic Influenza Plan](#).
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. One-stop access to U.S. Government avian and pandemic flu information. Accessed at: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [HSS Pandemic Influenza Plan](#).
- World Health Organization. [Global Influenza Programme](#).
- Division of Developmental Disabilities. [DDD Actions Related to COVID-19](#)