



# JUST THE FAX

Newsletter of the Morden and District Chamber of Commerce

[www.mordenchamber.com](http://www.mordenchamber.com)

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## H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> ADVICE FOR BUSINESS

H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> influenza doesn't just threaten your health, it threatens our economy. Studies have shown that small & medium sized enterprises aren't as well prepared as they should be for the economic and business challenges that come with a pandemic. That is why the International Centre for Infectious Diseases and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce have partnered to help SME's plan to limit the economic impact of a flu pandemic. It is best to involve workers in a flexible strategy, which takes into account how severe the disease is in our community, how many of your staff is absent, and other factors such as school closures. Check the website [www.businessfluplan.ca](http://www.businessfluplan.ca) which will be launched shortly.

### Three Main Strategic Objectives:

#### 1. Reduce Transmission Among Staff

- Keep sick workers home and stay home until 24 hours after fever stops.
  - Expect sick workers to stay home for 3-5 days in most cases.
  - Develop non-punitive and flexible leave policy. Do not require a doctor's note as medical facilities are likely swamped with other priorities.
- Encourage good hygiene practice.
  - Place posters in workplace encouraging cough and sneeze etiquette.
  - Provide tissues and no touch disposable receptacles.
  - Encourage frequent hand washing.
  - Clean surfaces that may have frequent hand contact.
- Consider increasing spacing between employees or staggered shifts to enable less crowding.
- Encourage employees to get vaccinated.

#### 2. Protect Employees At High Risk

- Pregnant women and people with certain chronic conditions such as hypertension/diabetes may be at higher risk.
- Consider reassigning these workers to areas where they will be less exposed to other people.
- Keep track of those who have recovered from H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> and are now presumably immune. They could serve as frontline staff now.

#### 3. Maintaining Business Operations

- Identify essential business functions and essential job roles. Determine critical elements within your supply chain (raw materials, supplies)
- Think about how your business would operate if 30% or 50% of your staff is sick and away or if a supplier cannot supply an essential component.
- Cross train staff in especially critical areas of your business function.
- Consider at what point you would have to partially or completely shut down the business.
- Consider how school closures might affect your employees. Parents may have to stay home to care for their kids. Plan a flexible leave program to enable this or encourage workers to think now about alternative childcare.
- Strongly recommend that parents not bring their children to work in such a situation.
- Can some work functions be done remotely from workers' homes (eg. over the internet)?

### Conclusion

As employers, you need to balance several objectives in trying to reduce the impact of H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> on your business.

Whilst attempting to maintain your operations, you need to handle ill patients and their ill families with sensitivity.

Crucial to your success is to have a plan in place before any potential problems emerge.

## COMING EVENTS

- Sep 28 CF Heartland Video Conference – Preparing a Winning Business Plan – register 1-877-472-7122
- 28 *Town Council Meeting – Civic Centre*
- 29 Morden Historical Society Meeting – Library 7:00 p.m. All are welcome
- 30 CF Heartland Video Conference – Employee Relations – Intervention Skills – 1-877-472-7122
- Oct 1 Farmers' Market-4-6:30**
- 4 *2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Curves Breast Cancer Walk for Awareness – 1 p.m.*
- 6 *Town Council Meeting*
- 8 Last Farmers' Market -4-6:30**
- 13 Chamber of Commerce Executive Meeting - MMI**
- 15 CF Heartland Video Conference – Business Opportunities & Ideas – Choosing the Right One –1-877-472-7122
- 18-24 Small Business Week**
- 22 *Annual Variety Show – Kenmor Theatre*
- 24 *Morden Area Foundation Million Dollar Gala – Timbers – 822-5614 tickets*

## OF MEMBERS & MORE

Have you checked out the 2010 **Morden Rose Calendars** offered by the Morden Horticultural Society? They are \$10 each available at the Art Gallery, Friendship Centre and Chamber Office.

There are only 2 **Farmers Markets** left this season. Check out the fresh fall produce before it's all gone.

*Workplace Education Manitoba* will open their first rural **Workplace Essential Skills Training (WEST)** Centre in partnership with *Pembina Valley Language Education for Adults* in the new Regional Connections annex at **725 Main Street, Winkler**. WEST offers free Essential Skills training and assessment services on a drop in basis.