

University of Ottawa Pandemic Plan



uOttawa

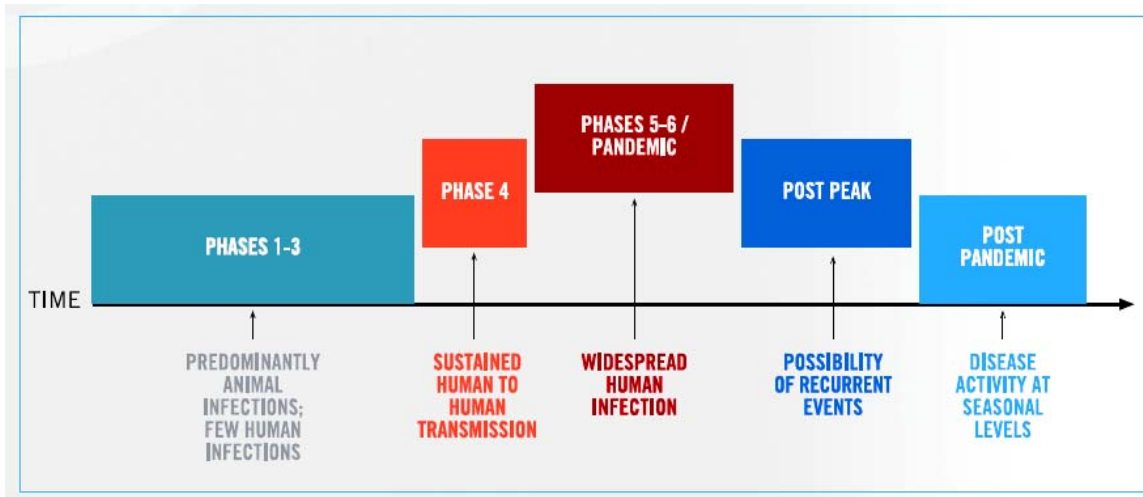
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Introduction

A disease epidemic occurs when there are more cases of a disease than normal. A pandemic is a worldwide disease epidemic.

A pandemic may occur when a new virus appears against which the human population has little or no immunity and there is no immediate vaccine. With the increase in global transport, as well as urbanization and overcrowded conditions in some areas, epidemics due to a new virus are likely to take hold around the world and become pandemics faster than ever before.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has defined the phases of a pandemic, to provide a global framework to aid countries in pandemic preparedness and response planning. Pandemics can be mild, moderate or severe in the illness and death they cause. The severity of a pandemic may vary from one region to another and can change over time.



Commitment

The University of Ottawa is committed to the following:

- providing students, faculty, staff and visitors with as safe and healthy a campus environment as possible;
- minimizing serious illness and death, and disruption to normal operations; and
- limiting the impact on the University community and its responsibility to teaching and research.

Purpose

This document outlines the main response mechanisms and the roles and responsibilities of key University services and members in order to provide guidance for the effective management of an epidemic on campus. The plan approaches a pandemic response at a general level and is supported by more detailed plans that outline the responsibilities of each service and faculty. The plan is not specific to any one type of pandemic: once a pandemic is identified, specific protocols, processes and procedures will be developed under this framework.

The University of Ottawa will prioritize its pandemic response on the basis of the following factors (presented in alphabetical order):

- animal life;
- competitive loss for student registrations;
- financial;
- human life;
- legal compliance;
- morale;
- operating efficiency;
- research;
- teaching; and
- University reputation.

Assumptions

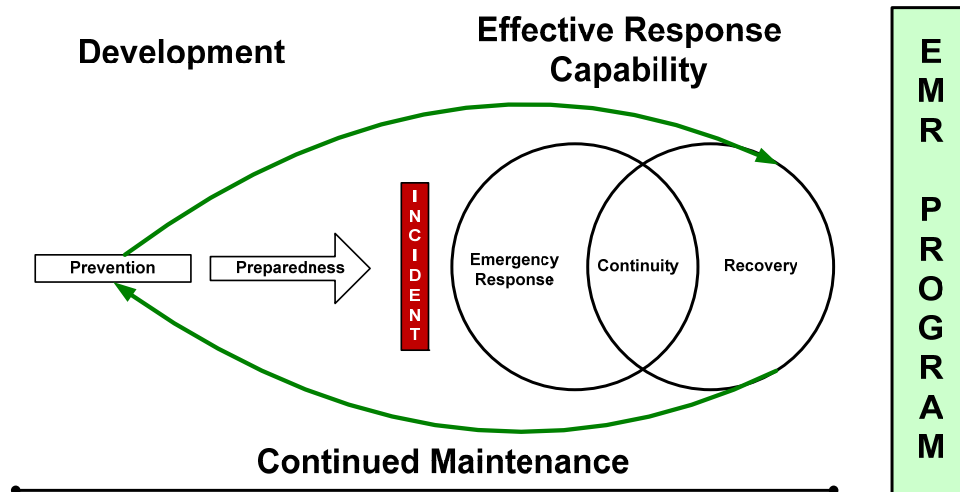
The plan is based on the following assumptions:

- A national emergency may be declared soon after an influenza pandemic has been identified in Canada, and a provincial emergency may be declared before the strain of influenza appears in Ontario. It is likely that a municipal state of emergency will be declared shortly after a provincial emergency has been announced.
- The city of Ottawa and the University may be affected within days and likely no more than three months from the time that a pandemic is first declared by the WHO.
- An influenza pandemic can occur in one or more waves, each lasting six to eight weeks or longer.
- A vaccine will not be available until at least four to six months after the virus has been identified, so it will likely not be available for the first wave.

- All local efforts and communications will be consistent with guidelines and directives from the Province of Ontario and the City of Ottawa. It is expected, however, that there will be areas not covered by the directives and that the University's Emergency Coordination Team (ECT) will need to provide leadership to the University community.
- Individual illness could last days or weeks, depending on severity.
- A pandemic could result in increased absenteeism due to direct illness, family illness or fear of disease transmission.
- Students may be considered a potential vulnerable population for influenza-like illnesses (ILI), depending on the type of illness.

Emergency Management and Recovery Program (EMR Program or EMRP)

The EMR Program is responsible for educating the University community on what to do in emergency situations.



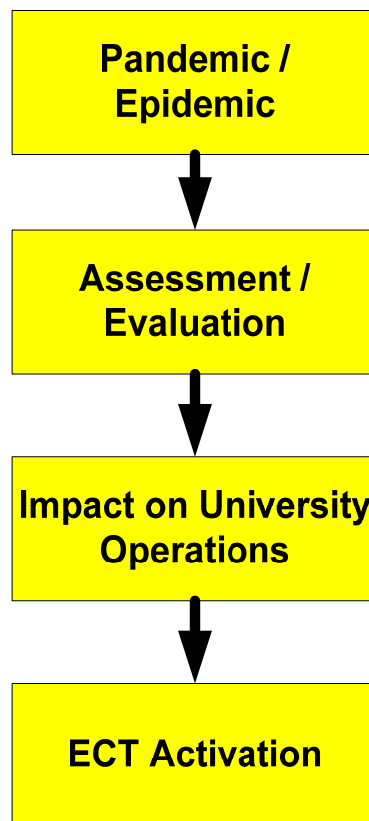
Every member of the University community has a role to play in an emergency and, for the response to be effective, plans must be developed, communicated and kept current. The EMR Program follows the guiding principles of emergency management: prevention, preparedness, response, business continuity, and recovery.

This document specifically addresses the pandemic component of the overall EMR Program.

Plan activation, organization and decision making

When an infectious disease outbreak occurs, the situation is assessed by University stakeholders and, if an epidemic or pandemic is believed to be imminent, the Emergency Coordination Team (ECT) is activated and the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) is established.

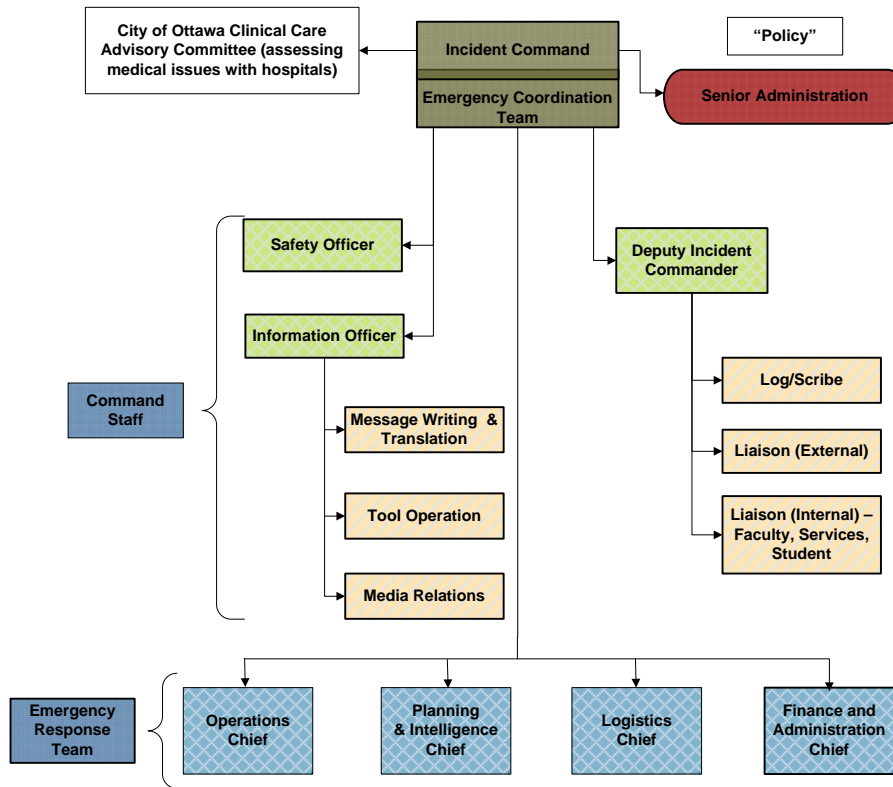
The following describes the process by which the ECT is activated:



The University of Ottawa's approach to incident response is based on the Province of Ontario's Incident Management System (IMS). That system provides standardized organizational structures, functions and processes to effectively manage the resources, personnel and equipment needed to mitigate an incident.

Members of the ECT make strategic and tactical decisions based on the latest recommendations from the City of Ottawa, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, and the Public Health Agency of Canada, and then allocate resources to implement them. The ECT communicates directly with civil authorities, the University's senior administration, as well as critical staff, services and faculties that may assist with the response.

The University of Ottawa Emergency Coordination Team



Roles and responsibilities

The ECT is responsible for coordinating the University’s response to the incident. ECT members are appointed from within the University community based on current responsibilities, experience and subject matter expertise.

Incident Commander (IC)

- Activates the ECT and the Pandemic Plan when the potential of an outbreak occurs that has been evaluated and assessed to have a material impact on the University’s operations.
- Leads the ECT, prioritizes the response actions of the University and manages all activities related to the pandemic.
- Keeps the senior administration informed on the current situation and the progress made by the ECT.

Deputy Incident Commander

- Assists the IC in managing the incident and assumes command in the absence of the IC.

Information Officer

- Develops and releases all information regarding the situation to the University community, the public and the media.

Safety Officer

- Monitors safety conditions and develops measures for the overall health and safety of the University community and the responders to the situation.

Operations Chief

- Implements action plans and protocols and manages operational units tasked with stabilizing the situation.

Planning and Intelligence Chief

- Collects, evaluates and disseminates information on the situation and leads the development, implementation and updating of action plans and protocols.

Logistics Chief

- Provides facilities, services, personnel and other resources to ensure the safe and successful resolution of the incident.

Finance and Administration Chief

- Provides the financial and cost analysis aspect of the situation.

Response and business continuity

Some of the challenges that the University of Ottawa may face in the event of a pandemic are employee and faculty absenteeism, student absenteeism, illness in the residences, infection control, essential service continuity and support for those affected by the outbreak. Under the direction of the ECT, the following key services and faculties will be responsible for meeting those challenges:

Communications Office

- Communicates with the media, staff, faculties and students in various ways, using a number of tools.
- Handles messaging throughout the pandemic.

Computing and Communication Services (CCS)

- Maintains up-to-date email and phone message distribution lists.
- Maintains telephone and Internet services.
- Backs up essential computer files.
- Provides access to the telephone emergency messaging service for fast distribution of emergency messages to University personnel.
- Posts messages on the University's home page as directed by Marketing and Communications.

Health Services

- Provides support to assist the University community.
- Provides information and assistance during health emergencies.
- Provides psychological services as required.

Housing and Conventions Service

- Ensures the safety of students in residence.
- Provides information to students in residence and off-campus housing.
- Responds to the direction of Public Health with regard to isolation and quarantine orders.

Human Resources Service

- Communicates with the Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) and Employee Assistance Program.
- Provides health information to the University community.
- Monitors employee absenteeism.
- Provides direction on sick leave management.

Materials Management Service (MMS)

- Monitors negotiated contracts for goods and services.
- Ensures the provision of supplies to deal with the pandemic.

Office of Risk Management (ORM)

- Liaises with the City of Ottawa's Pandemic Planning Group and Emergency Operations Centre.
- Liaises with regulatory agencies such as the Ministry of Labour and Ottawa Public Health.
- Addresses insurance and contract issues.
- Provides directives on biosecurity.
- Liaises with the Workplace Safety Insurance Board of Ontario

Physical Resources Service (PRS)

- Ensures the regular operation of buildings, vehicles, specialty trades, engineering and utilities that the University requires to maintain teaching, research and administrative facilities.
- Ensures the continuity of utility services (steam, gas, water, electricity, etc.).

Protection Services

- Ensures security of the campus.
- Maintains a 24-hour emergency phone line for the University community.
- Responds to health emergencies on campus.
- Coordinates access to University facilities for ambulances and other emergency services when they respond to calls from the campus.

Registrar

- Monitors impacts on academic programming.

Faculties (and other services)

- Maintain information on research projects in their buildings, teaching and research equipment needs, and contact names and numbers associated with each space or program.
- Communicate that information to the ECT in case of an emergency affecting them.

Specific responses

The specific response measures taken will depend on the specifics of each pandemic but will include a review of each of the following:

- academic operations on and off campus;

- research operations on and off campus;
- support service activities, including third-party relationships; and
- health and safety protocols for students, employees and visitors, including preventative and response aspects.

Recovery (post-pandemic response)

Upon the recommendation of Ottawa Public Health, the pandemic will be declared over by the Incident Commander and the recovery stage will begin. The recovery stage involves a number of important elements vital to ensuring business continuity, such as assessing the effects of the emergency, providing medical and psychological assistance to those affected, adjusting academic programming (if required) and initiating repairs and cleaning as required. To ensure an effective and efficient return to normal operations, the recovery phase must include the following steps:

- impact assessment;
- recovery evaluation;
- reconstruction;
- debriefing; and
- review.

Impact assessment and recovery evaluation

Assessing the impact of the pandemic on the operations of the University involves examining the impact on staff, students, academic programming and the research community. Different groups within the University will be involved:

- the Registrar, to assess the University's ability to deliver academic programs and alternatives, if required;
- the Vice-President, Research, to assess the impact on research activities;
- ORM, to determine insurance issues and handle any claims that are required;
- Occupational Health and Disability, to determine medical needs and communicate with the Workplace Safety Insurance Board, if needed;
- Protection Services, to ensure continued safety and security on campus; and
- Financial Services, to ensure funding for necessary activities.

Based on the impact assessment, an evaluation of the requirements to return the University to full operational status must be completed. Areas that need to be addressed will be prioritized, and an action plan will be created.

Reconstruction

Reconstruction focuses on the return to normal operations and involves implementing the plan developed during the recovery evaluation phase.

Debriefing and review

The ECT will conduct a full debriefing after the outbreak has ended, to ensure that a review and summary of the events and the University's response can be prepared, to optimize future responses.

A review of all emergency plans will be conducted annually to ensure that all information is up to date. The review will include:

- the effectiveness of plans, procedures, equipment, and facilities, and the training of personnel;
- an evaluation of the results from any exercises or actual situations; and
- the initiation of changes to the plan, where appropriate.

Resources

The ECT will monitor the progress of an infectious disease outbreak and follow recommendations made by the following governmental organizations:

- World Health Organization;
- Centres for Disease Control;
- Public Health Agency of Canada;
- Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care;
- Ottawa Public Health; and
- other governmental and non-governmental health agencies.