



DIRECTORATE
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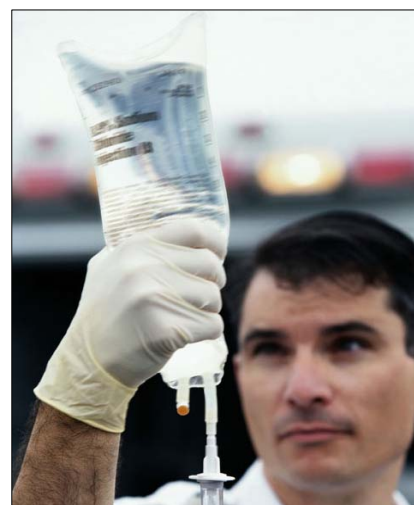
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RESPONSE PLAN FOR AN INFLUENZA PANDEMIC

The Government of Iceland decided on 10 February 2006 to entrust to the National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police and the Chief Epidemiologist the formation of a steering group to prepare a response plan for pandemic influenza, to define the assignments and functions of the cooperating parties and to introduce time limits for civil protection operations. At present, the steering group has organised 27 working groups with close to 100 people involved in this work in one way or another.

All working groups are to deliver draft proposals by the end of September this year and subsequently the coordination of the groups' papers will begin. The combined final draft is to be ready in November. The working groups have discussed the following topics: Breakdown of machinery, vaccinations, distribution of necessity goods, information for the general public and for professionals, animal health care, internal and external security



and the monitoring of health care institutions, pharmaceuticals and nursing supplies, the treatment and storage of human remains, the postal services, both standard and special delivery, psychological support, ambulance services, schools, garbage collection, travel restrictions, the functioning of government and public administration, antiviral drugs, house calls, prisons, home health care, and the external security of major institutions. In addition, preparations are under way for the establishment of working groups on banking and finance, and food production and supplies.

In several areas important milestones have been reached. As reported earlier, 89,000 doses of influenza drugs have been obtained and contracts have been signed on additional 20,000 doses, to be delivered this year and the next. The stockpile of influenza drugs will continue to be enlarged.

A contract has been signed on the delivery of emergency stockpiles of intravenous (IV) solutions that are estimated to last for three months in a severe epidemic even though imports to the country were to fail. This is

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necessary in view of the fact that IV solutions are not produced in Iceland at the moment. A regulation on the stockpiling of essential drugs in the country will soon be issued.

Iceland participated, together with Denmark, in a tender for an advance purchase agreement on pandemic influenza vaccines and a contract to that effect is expected to be

signed on behalf of Iceland in the coming weeks. In addition, a contract on the purchase of protective clothing for epidemics will be signed in the close future.

The summary draft of the response plan is expected to be ready in November of this year and a rehearsal of the response plan will be conducted in the spring of 2007.

ANTIBIOTICS DATA BANK

In the past decade bacteria have become resistant to a number of antibiotics which formerly were effective. The resulting reduced capacity of antibiotics to cure infections has made them more difficult to fight. This development is a matter of international concern that has prompted nations to combine their knowledge, in order to prevent further development of antimicrobially resistant bacteria strains, and to concert their goals and decide on measures to reach them. Iceland takes an active part in international and Nordic cooperation in this field.

The sensible use of antibiotics is part of the official policy of the Icelandic health service authorities. In 2004, an amendment was made to the Communicable Disease Control Act, requiring the Chief Epidemiologist to monitor the use of antibiotics as well as the

development of antibiotics immunity, and to enter data concerning these issues in a special data bank. The data is supposed to support communicable-disease control activities in the country as well as epidemiological research. At present the data to be entered in the data bank are being scrutinised in order to ensure their reliability and comparability. A report on the use of antibiotics in 2005 will soon be ready.

In the past several years the interest in pharmaceutical data has been increasing and pharmaceutical statistics have become an important issue for society. The total expenditure on pharmaceuticals was lower in 2005 than in the two preceding years, in spite of an increase in the use of antibiotics, as seen in the figure below.

The data to be entered in the data bank are being scrutinised in order to ensure their reliability and comparability.

