

2010

INDIGO
SHIRE
COUNCIL

INFLUENZA PANDEMIC PLAN





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A message from the CEO

The threat of a pandemic has been in the news for some time, mainly because of the rapid spread of Swine flu in parts of Australia during 2009. We recognise that the greatest challenge when planning for a pandemic is that it is impossible to predict when it will occur and how dangerous it will be. The best thing we can do is be prepared. Thus, our Council has developed this plan which will lead the shire's response to a human pandemic.

The aim of the plan is to provide an effective response framework to minimise the health effects associated with an influenza pandemic and its impact on our local community, health care system and the economy. It focuses on how we plan to contain the virus while supporting and maintaining critical services. It also addresses how we will provide recovery support to any affected communities. Whilst the likelihood of an influenza pandemic is still low, the impact on this organisation and community in such an event could be devastating.

This plan builds upon the foundation established by the *Victorian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza (2007)* and other plans developed by Indigo Shire Council such as the *Municipal Emergency Management Plan*. David Koren, Manager Community Planning has been nominated as the Pandemic Coordinator for our municipality, and will work with all business units and sections in identifying critical staff and functions. Kim Felton, Indigo Shire Council's Environmental Health Officer, will assist Sally by taking on the role of Deputy Pandemic Coordinator. It is a requirement that all Council business units and sections offer their assistance to the Pandemic Coordinator and provide all necessary information.

To ensure our plan remains relevant and meets the changing needs of our community, Council will review it annually and use any amendments to inform an updated *Influenza Pandemic Plan* every four years.

I urge you to read this plan carefully and ensure that you understand your responsibilities to protect yourself and your community.

Brendan McGrath

CEO Indigo Shire Council
November 2010



CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

1.1 Background information

Pandemics are outbreaks of a disease on a worldwide scale. An influenza pandemic occurs when a new viral strain appears. It has significant impacts on communities where there is little or no immunity already existing within the population. These strains can be rapidly transferred between humans resulting in infection to a high proportion of those exposed. Influenza pandemics are associated with high rates of disease and significant numbers of deaths, and involve massive social and economic disruption. Recent outbreaks of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and bird flu have brought the issues of pandemic preparedness to the forefront; the possibility of a pandemic is real.

1.2 History of influenza pandemics

Previous pandemics have started abruptly without warning, swept through populations with ferocious velocity, and left considerable damage in their wake. The 20th century had three recognised influenza pandemics (Spanish influenza 1918–19; Asian influenza 1957–58; and Hong Kong influenza 1968). All three pandemics were associated with increased mortality rates in Australia. The influenza pandemic of 1918–19 was unprecedented in terms of loss of human life—between 20 and 40 million people died worldwide, with the highest numbers of deaths among those aged between 20 and 40 years.

The Asian influenza of 1957–58 had infection rates reported to range between 20 to 70 per cent, but case fatality rates were low, ranging from one in 2000 to one in 10,000 infections. Age-specific mortality rates showed that those aged over 65 years were most affected. The Hong Kong influenza was similar, with the highest mortality rates appearing in those over the age of 65. Infection rates were around 25 to 30 per cent.

1.3 Disease description

Influenza is an acute respiratory disease caused by influenza type A or B viruses. Symptoms usually include fever, cough, lethargy, headache, muscle pain and sore throat. Infections in children, particularly type B and A (H1N1) may also be associated with gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea. The incubation period for influenza is usually one to three days. Adults have shed the influenza virus from one day before developing symptoms, to up to seven days after the onset of the illness. Young children can shed the influenza virus for longer than seven days. Generally, shedding peaks early in the illness, typically within a day of symptom onset. The influenza virus remains infectious in aerosols for hours and potentially remains infectious on hard surfaces for one to two days.

1.4 Transmission

When the influenza virus passes from human to human, it is mainly transmitted when droplets from the cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled through the air (generally up to one metre) and land on the mouth, nose or eye of a nearby person. Influenza can also be spread by contact



transmission. This occurs when a person touches respiratory droplets that are either on another person or an object—and then touches their own mouth, nose or eyes (or someone else’s mouth, nose or eyes) before washing their hands. In some situations, airborne transmission may result from medical procedures that produce very fine droplets (called fine droplet nuclei) that are released into the air and breathed in. Personal protective equipment including a full gown (or coveralls), gloves, eye shield and P2 mask (or other recommended mask) are required to protect health care workers from influenza. Infected persons should wear an appropriate mask to prevent transmission to others.

1.5 Planning for a pandemic

The differences in past pandemics show the need for flexible contingency plans, capable of responding efficiently to any pandemic threat. While it is impossible to predict when a pandemic might occur, our shire needs to be prepared. Planning and preparedness is the best way to mitigate the potentially serious consequences of an influenza pandemic. It is important that effective strategies for control be activated as early as possible in response to all potential pandemic threats.

Indigo Shire Council’s plan has been developed with reference to a range of commonwealth, state and local government plans. These have included:

- *National Action Plan for Human Influenza Pandemic* – Council of Australian Governments July 2007;
- *Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza* – Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing May 2006;
- *Victorian Human Influenza Pandemic Plan* – Victorian Government April 2007;
- *Community Support and Recovery Sub Plan* – Victorian Department of Human Services March 2008;
- *Victorian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza* – Victorian Department of Human Services July 2007;
- Indigo Shire Council *Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN)*; and
- Indigo Shire Council *Business Continuity Plan*.

1.6 Predicted impacts

An influenza pandemic has the potential to impact on the health and wellbeing of the community which, in turn, directly impacts on our social and economic environments. Disruption and hesitation to use the health system may result in delays that could contribute to more serious outcomes from relatively minor or routine presentations. It is, however, important to note that, although many people may succumb or become unwell, most will survive.

Modelling the potential impacts of influenza pandemics involves a high degree of uncertainty. Factors such as the virulence and infectivity of the next pandemic strain limit our abilities to



characterise the next pandemic with any accuracy. It is, however, possible to model various pandemic scenarios given a series of pre-determined assumptions and limitations. Modelling provides a tool for guiding planning.

The attack rate in humans is estimated to be 40 per cent, with a case fatality rate of 2.4 per cent (i.e. of the 40 per cent ill, 2.4 per cent would die). For the Indigo Shire, it is expected that 6284 people (40 per cent of the municipality's population of 15,710 people) would be infected with pandemic influenza, and of those, 150 people (2.4 per cent of the infected people would die).



CHAPTER 2: AIMS, OBJECTIVES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

2.1 Aims

The aims of the plan are to:

- Assist in reducing the impacts of an influenza pandemic on the Indigo Shire;
- Provide support and recovery assistance throughout the duration of the influenza pandemic; and
- Ensure response activities are consistent with a whole-of-government approach.

2.2 Objectives

The objectives of the plan are:

- *Preparedness* – have arrangements in place to reduce the pandemic impact;
- *Containment* – prevent transmission, implement infection control measures, provide support services to people who are isolated or quarantined within the municipality;
- *Maintain essential municipal services* – provision for business continuity in the face of staff absenteeism and rising demand on local government services;
- *Mass vaccination* – assist in providing vaccination services to the community, if an influenza pandemic vaccine becomes available;
- *Communication* – develop media and communication messages, in line with whole of government messages, to inform the community and staff of any changes to normal municipal service delivery; and
- *Community support and recovery* – ensure a comprehensive approach to emergency recovery planning in the municipal emergency management plan, with particular focus on influenza pandemic. (Refer to the priority tasks recommended in the *Community Support and Recovery Sub Plan of the Victorian Human Influenza Pandemic Plan*).

2.3 Responsibilities

Indigo Shire Council has a responsibility to address the following four key areas:

1. Community Support and Recovery

- Identification of vulnerable groups;
- Establishment of communication links and provision of information services to affected communities;



- Establishment of community support services under the *MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN* and recovery plan;
- Provision of support services to people who are isolated or quarantined as a result of an influenza pandemic e.g. meals on wheels, personal care;
- Organising and coordinating volunteer helpers;
- Identification of support services that may be required beyond the scope of Council and establish a referral protocol;
- Management of Environmental Health including food and sanitation safety, vector control such as:
 - Routine food safety surveillance (includes ensuring food handlers and people working in food premises do not have flu symptoms); and
 - Routine Infectious Disease Outbreak Investigation – reports of gastro and food poisoning outbreaks may become more common if the flu virus strain on contaminated food or food contact surfaces generates gastro like symptoms (mainly in children).
- Post impact assessment – gathering and processing of information;
- Organising, managing or assisting with public appeals; and
- Providing and managing community development services.

2. Business Continuity

- Staff education and support programs to address infection control procedures;
- Identification of all Council services that could be shut down or suspended as a pandemic progresses;
- Identification of the critical business functions and essential services to be maintained at the height of a pandemic;
- Identify staffing and skill requirements to maintain services and critical functions;
- Provision of multi skilling training for staff and procedure mapping of services;
- Identify external contractors and for those providing a critical function or essential service, develop contingencies for the continuation of the service in the event that the contractor is no longer available;
- Identify volunteers that could assist in service delivery; and
- Provision of support services to staff.



3. Local Essential Services

- Overlaps with business continuity planning;
- Identify and maintain essential services; and
- Communication strategy to inform community on alterations to Council services.

4. Public Health

- Establishment of clear communication strategy;
- Provision and distribution of education material on control and prevention measures;
- Build community capacity to enable individuals to support themselves and neighbours during a pandemic; and
- Provision of mass vaccination services.

2.4 Influenza Pandemic Planning Sub-Committee membership and contact details

Indigo Shire Council’s Influenza Pandemic Planning Sub-Committee has responsibility to provide input into the plan from across the organisation and other community related health services. This will ensure that all issues relevant to all business units can be flagged and will result in a more effective plan (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Indigo Shire Council’s Influenza Pandemic Planning Sub-Committee

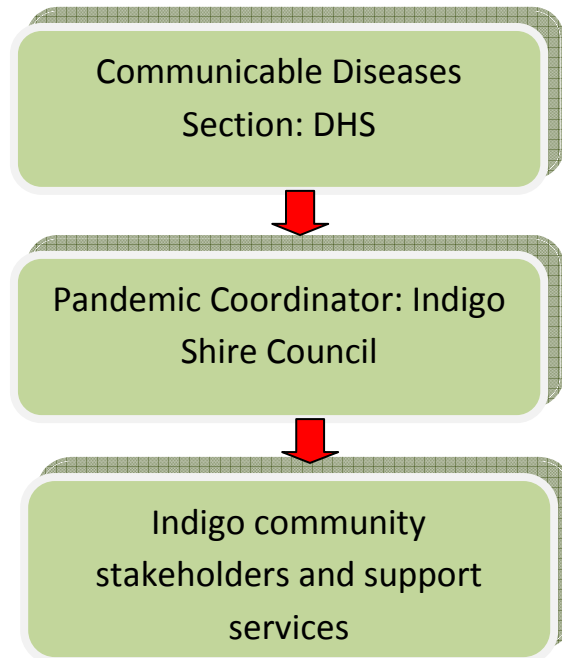
Name	Business area	Level of authority	Primary contact	Alternative contact
David Koren	Manager Community Planning	Pandemic Coordinator	02 6028 1121	0418 678 540
Kim Felton	Environmental Health Officer	Deputy Pandemic Coordinator	02 6028 1111	0418 228 170
Mark Florence	GMSC	Committee member	02 6028 1160	0407 529 770
Fiona Shanks	Organisational Development Advisor	Committee member	03 5728 8011	0408 602 394

2.5 Procedures

The Indigo Shire Council’s *Influenza Pandemic Plan* will be activated under the *Municipal Emergency Management Plan* when an alert is received from the Department of Human Services (DHS) regarding the Australian phase of an identified influenza pandemic. The identified pandemic phase will be the trigger for the implementation of corresponding actions by Indigo Shire Council. Note that the level of response required by Council will increase as an identified pandemic escalates and all actions will compound.



In the event of an influenza pandemic, the Indigo Shire *MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN* would be activated as follows:



At all times, any actions undertaken by Indigo Shire Council will be in line with, and in direct response, to directives issued by the Chief Medical Officer of DHS. This procedure will be guided by DHS recommendations according to the declared Australian Influenza Pandemic Phase (see Figure 2).



Figure 2: Activation procedure for Indigo Shire Council's *Influenza Pandemic Plan*

Activation procedure for Indigo Shire Council's <i>Influenza Pandemic Plan</i>				
Pandemic phase	Phase description	Dept. Health key actions	Local government key actions	Influenza Pandemic Plan Chapter Reference
Alert	A novel virus with pandemic potential causes severe disease in humans who have had contact with infected animals. There is no effective transmission between humans. Novel virus has not arrived in Australia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain the Victorian Health Management Plan for pandemic influenza. Encourage high coverage of pneumococcal and influenza immunization in identified high risk groups. Participate in disease surveillance procedures. Assist with influenza pandemic planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Municipal Influenza Pandemic Sub Plan and ensure that it is current. This process should be completed annually and an exercise conducted on a periodic basis in accordance with Emergency Management procedures. Encourage annual influenza vaccinations for all staff. Encourage pneumococcal and annual influenza vaccinations for all community members aged >65 years and for any other identified high risk groups. 	Immunisations – Chapter 7
Delay	Novel virus has not arrived in Australia. Small cluster of cases in 1 country overseas. Large cluster(s) of cases in only 1 or 2 countries overseas. Large cluster(s) of cases in more than	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of border control measures and establishment of protocol for the reporting of any suspected cases. Establish communication links with all stakeholders. Provide information on public health control measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement basic hygiene education program to all staff and display visual alerts. Review availability of hand washing facilities, alcohol based hand sanitiser and tissues. Review supplies of Personal Protective Equipment and cleaning chemicals. Conduct an IP planning committee meeting to review the plan and ensure that Council is prepared. 	Staff Support – Chapter 4 Influenza Pandemic planning committee – Chapter 2 Business Continuity – Chapter 10



Contain	2 countries		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review business continuity procedures. 	
	Pandemic virus has arrived in Australia causing small number of cases and/or small number of clusters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate community support and recovery activities. • Manage any suspected and/or confirmed cases. • Undertake contact tracing and implement quarantine and isolation procedures. • Provide assistance/advice to municipalities to deliver response activities. • Provide information to all suspected cases and contacts. • Maintain communication links. • Provide information on public health control measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a communication strategy to keep staff informed. • Establish the MECC if Council receives notification from the Department of Health of any cases within the municipality and maintain activity as required. • Provide community support, in partnership with appropriate services to any isolated or quarantined people as notified by the Department of Health. • Establish arrangements for managing increased community support requests. • Implement an education strategy for all staff regarding the use of Personal Protective Equipment and increased levels of personal hygiene and cleaning. • Encourage staff to stay at home if unwell 	<p>Community Information Strategy – Chapter 11</p> <p>Public Health Control Measures – Chapter 6</p> <p>Staff Support – Chapter 4</p> <p>Delivery of Food Services – Chapter 9</p>
Sustain	Pandemic virus is established in Australia and spreading in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide public health advice on signs, symptoms, control measures of disease. • Encourage home quarantine for people suspected of being infected. • Maintain intensive contact tracing amongst high risk groups to minimize disease transmission and protect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement all procedures to minimize the risk of infection at work in line with current Department of Health recommendations • Maintain staff communication links. • Encourage staff to stay at home if unwell. • Implement business continuity arrangements for the maintenance of essential services. • Continue community support measures. • Establish communication links to the 	<p>Staff Support – Chapter 4</p> <p>Public Health Control Measures – Chapter 6</p> <p>Business Continuity – Chapter 10</p> <p>Community Information Strategy – Chapter 11</p> <p>Delivery of Food Services – Chapter 9</p> <p>Mass Fatality Plan – Chapter 8</p>



		<p>those at risk of severe complications as a result of the disease.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain communication links. • Inform the community of any social distancing measures. • Inform the community of any travel restrictions. 	<p>community to provide information on any changes to Councils service delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a communication strategy to inform the public of public health control measures in conjunction with the Department of Health. • Provide resources as available and needed by the community and response agencies 	
Control	<p>Customized pandemic vaccine widely available and is beginning to bring the pandemic under control.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source and distribute vaccine. • Identify priority groups for vaccination. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish mass vaccination clinics for identified priority groups. • Provide information to the community on immunization sessions and groups being vaccinated. • Continue to provide community support. • Inform staff of counselling and other available support services. 	<p>Immunisation – Chapter 7 Community Information Strategy – Chapter 11 Staff Support – Chapter 4</p>
Recover	<p>Pandemic controlled in Australia but further waves may occur if the virus drifts and/or is re-imported into Australia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate actions to date • Undertake stock inventory and re-supply. • Document and collate financial issues. • Debrief staff. • Provide assistance to Local Government as required. • Revise state plan and amend where necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore Council services as quickly as possible and return to alert phase. • Conduct staff debriefs. • Check supplies used and restock. • Continue community recovery support and implement any community development initiatives. • Document any financial expenditure and seek advice from the Department of Health regarding the availability of financial support packages. • Evaluate actions to date; review plan and amend where necessary, maintain vigilance for a subsequent wave. 	<p>Business Continuity – Chapter 10 Staff Support – Chapter 4</p>



Chapter 3: Indigo Community

3.1 Community profile

The shire of Indigo is located in the north east of Victoria and is named after the Indigo Valley and Indigo Creek. Our setting is bounded by the Murray River in the north/west, the city of Wodonga to the north, Towong Shire to the north and east, and Alpine shire to the south. To the south and south/west is the rural city of Wangaratta and the shire of Moira. The shire encompasses a total land area of 2,044km². Out of our total resident population of 15,480 people, over 50 per cent of our people choose to live in the major centres of Beechworth (3437 people), Yackandandah (1727 people), Rutherglen (2318 people) and Chiltern (1564 people). Other smaller centres in the shire include Wahgunyah, Barnawartha, Stanley, Kiewa, Tangambalanga and Kergunyah (see Figure 3). Our projected population for 2016 is 16,326.



Figure 3: Map of the Indigo Shire

3.2 Vulnerable communities

Indigo Shire Councils' community support and recovery responsibilities focus on providing direct and indirect support to both the identified and emerging vulnerable groups within our community. It is impossible to specifically predict who will be most affected by an influenza pandemic; however, the following communities have been identified as potentially being the most vulnerable.

- Older people: Nearly 20 per cent (3, 027 people) of Indigo's residents are over 65 years of age. This percentage is expected to rise to 23 per cent by 2016. There are three aged care facilities within the shire located in Rutherglen, Beechworth and Yackandandah. Council maintains a record of their elderly clients through their services and funded programs.



- Children/young people: Over one quarter of Indigo’s population is comprised of young people under the age of 17 years. There is a wide range of pre-schools, childcare centres, primary and secondary schools within the shire.
- People with special needs: ABS figures suggest that over 18% of Indigo’s population experience some form of disability.
- People with chronic illness: Local health care providers have an understanding of the needs of these groups and the best methods for information dissemination.
- Hospital patients sent home earlier than usual to free up beds in the local hospital.
- Low socio economic groups: While the Indigo Shire has, when compared to the state average, a lower number of people living in disadvantage, there are still pockets of low socio economic status around the shire.
- Isolated communities: There are approximately 2,100 rural rated properties in the Indigo Shire. Many of these farming communities are situated in isolated geographic locations away from services and supports.

Note that other groups within the community may emerge as being vulnerable depending on the severity and nature of the pandemic. Examples of these groups are as include:

- People confined to their homes as a direct result of illness or quarantine;
- Families with no external support where they experience illness or bereavement;
- People whose caregiver is sick;
- People who become unemployed;
- The worried well;
- Small business owners; and
- Health care workers.

3.3 Industry

The Indigo Shire offers a unique mix of attractive rural surroundings, welcoming villages, four distinct seasons and a thriving diverse economy. Our economy relies on its rural and tourism base and its regional association with Albury-Wodonga and Wangaratta. Specifically, the economy is based on farming (beef, sheep, dairy, fruit and viticulture), the processing of local primary produce and the provision of services to people, including health, social and tourism services. Uncle Toby’s, the Murray Goulburn Cooperative and the local wine industry are the largest employers in the region. Over 15 per cent of our people are employed in the manufacturing industry followed by nearly 13 per cent in health care and social assistance and 11 per cent in agriculture and forestry. The Indigo Shire enjoys one of the lowest unemployment rates in rural Australia.



3.4 Events

The Indigo Shire is a key tourism destination with thousands of visitors each year. Rutherglen is a key wine region and Beechworth, Yackandandah and Chiltern have a significant heritage value.

Key events which attract locals and visitors alike include:

- Rutherglen Farmers' Markets – Second Sunday of every month; Rutherglen
- Opera in the Alps - January; Beechworth
- A Day on the Green – January; Rutherglen
- Tastes of Rutherglen – March; Rutherglen
- Yackandandah Folk Festival – March; Yackandandah
- Chiltern Pro Rodeo – March; Chiltern
- Golden Horseshoes Festival – April; Beechworth
- Beechworth Harvest Celebration – May; Beechworth
- Rutherglen Winery Walkabout – June; Rutherglen
- Rutherglen Country Fair – June; Rutherglen
- Ned Kelly Weekend – August; Beechworth
- Kerferd Oration – August; Beechworth
- Chiltern Antique Fair – August; Chiltern
- Spring Migration Festival – August/September; Yackandandah, Beechworth, Wodonga
- Chiltern Ironbark Festival – October; Chiltern
- Tour de Rutherglen – October; Rutherglen
- Beechworth Oktoberfest – October; Beechworth
- Rutherglen Agricultural Show – October; Rutherglen
- Beechworth Celtic Festival – November; Beechworth

3.5 Municipal facilities

In the event of a pandemic, Council may require venues for immunisation sessions or may need to establish community influenza clinics. Facilities that are available within Indigo Shire are contained within the Indigo Shire Council *MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN*.



3.6 Communication systems

Good communication facilities and structures are available throughout the shire and can be used to relay messages to the community in the event of a pandemic (see Figure 4).

Communication systems	Contacts
Newspapers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Border Mail • Ovens and Murray Advertiser • Albury Wodonga News Weekly • Midweek Xpress • Wangaratta Chronicle 	newsroom@bordermail.com.au; 02 6024 0555 zrudder@nenews.com.au; 0418 903 201 editor@awnw.com.au david_johnston@bordermail.com.au; 02 6024 0555 jzeuschner@nenews.com.au; 03 5723 0100
Television <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Win TV • Prime TV 	albnews@winvic.com.au albury.news@primetv.com.au
Radio <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABC radio • Radio 2AY • River / Star FM 	jess.allison@abc.net.au; bedford.kathy@abc.net.au mailbox@radio2ay.com.au southernnews@macsc.com.au
Community Newsletters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chiltern Grapevine • Kiewa River Gazette • Tangambalanga Newsletter • Yackity Yak Newsletter 	lions_grapevine@iprimus.com.au; 02 6026 7557 kiewa.river.gazette@kiewavlyps.vic.edu.au; 02 6027 3275 lindsevjarvis@bigpond.com yackity_yak@myaccess.com.au
Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigo Shire Council website • Indigo Shire Council email database 	www.indigoshire.vic.gov.au

Figure 4: Communication systems in the Indigo Shire

3.7 Health services

There is a wide range of health services that meet the health needs of the shire (see Figure 5).

Facility	Function	Capacity	Contact details
Albury Wodonga Health Wodonga Campus	Acute allied health Day procedure Emergency Medical Obstetrics Palliative care Rehabilitation Surgery	250 beds	Tel: 02 6058 4444 Fax: 02 6058 4500 Email: enquiries@awh.org.au
Beechworth Health Service	Hospital Aged care Allied health Mental health Health promotion	Acute 13 beds Blackwood Cottage 15 beds The Willows 19 beds The Acacias 30 beds Stringybark Lodge 30 beds	Tel: 03 5728 0200 Fax: 03 5728 2288 Email: beechworth.health.service@hume.org.au
Indigo North Health Service	Aged care District nursing Meals on wheels	40 beds	Tel: 02 6033 6200 Fax: 02 6032 9133 Email: inh@inh.org.au



	Counselling Health promotion		
Gateway Community Health Service	Health and wellbeing services	NA	Tel: 02 6022 8888 Fax: 02 6024 5792
Ovens and King Community Health Service	Health and wellbeing services	NA	Tel: 03 5723 2000, Fax: 03 5722 2313 Email: adminok@ovensandking.org.au
Yackandandah Bush Nursing Hospital	Hospital Hostel	82 beds	Tel: 02 6027 1208 Fax: 02 6027 1725 Email: hosp@ybnh.com.au
Beechworth Surgery	Medical practitioners	N/A	03 5728 1566
Yackandandah Central Medical Group	Medical practitioners	N/A	02 6027 1404
Rutherglen Medical Clinic	Medical practitioners	N/A	02 6033 6280
Chiltern Medical Clinic	Medical practitioners	N/A	03 5726 1690

Figure 5: Health services in the Indigo Shire



CHAPTER 4: STAFF SUPPORT

Staff support involves identifying and documenting policies and procedures that aim to support staff in maintaining their own health and wellbeing during a pandemic. The effectiveness of staff support procedures will have a direct impact on Indigo Shire Council’s ability to provide and maintain services throughout a pandemic. Indigo Shire Council staff has access to the Department of Health and Ageing’s DVD *Prepared and Protected* which has assisted them with their influenza pandemic planning. In an effort to further ensure the safety of staff, a number of actions have been taken which will reduce the potential of the spread of infection of the influenza virus (see Figure 6).

Procedure	Available		Action
	Yes	No	
Provide annual flu vaccinations for staff	✓		All staff encouraged to take advantage of this option
Facilities for people to wash their hands frequently	✓		Facilities available in bathrooms and kitchenettes
Promotion of basic hygiene practices including good hand washing and cough etiquette (refer or link to our posters)	✓		Department of Health produced posters displayed in all bathrooms and staff areas
Tissues and no-touch receptacles for used tissue disposal	✓		Tissues available for office based staff
Conveniently located dispensers of alcohol-based hand rub	✓		Have supplied bactericidal wipes – esp. in customer service areas. Dispensers available in Customer Service areas in Yackandandah and Beechworth.
Soap and disposable towels for hand washing where sinks are available	✓		Department of Health produced posters displayed in all bathrooms and staff areas.
Provision of disposable surgical masks for use by persons who are coughing/sneezing—persons displaying these symptoms will need to be sent home	✓		Available in customer service areas and for home care staff
Provision of protective barriers such as glass or perspex to protect staff who have frequent face-to-face contact with the public		X	Needs to be investigated Customer service staff have been provided with wipes. Masks available to give to infected members of public as required
Staff travel management plans in place			Not applicable
Restricting entry to the workplace by staff and visitors with influenza symptoms	✓		
Increased cleaning regimes	✓		Customer service staff encouraged to wipe down counter and public phones regularly. Need to negotiate with cleaning contractor
Ensure cleaning contractors use a neutral detergent			Need to negotiate with cleaning contractor
Illness reporting scheme	✓		

Figure 6: Procedures to support Indigo Shire Council staff

Note: Indigo Shire Council will be advised by the Department of Health, as per the antiviral policy in the *Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza*, concerning which groups will be provided with antiviral medicines.



Staff personal protective equipment will be stored at Council offices and the Deputy Pandemic Coordinator will monitor and maintain the stock (see Figure 7). Guidelines for the safe storage and use of personal protective equipment are contained with the *Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza – Interim Infection Control Guidelines for Pandemic Influenza in Healthcare and Community Settings*.

Protective material description	Location	Quantity	Distributed by
Surgical masks	Shire offices MCH clinics After school care	250	Pandemic Coordinator
Clear plastic goggles	Yackandandah Shire Office	70	Pandemic Coordinator
Disposable aprons	Chiltern WAW Credit Union Rutherglen Shire Office Beechworth Shire Office Yackandandah Shire Office Barnawartha MCH Office	465	Community Care
DEB hand wash foam	Shire offices Customer service counters MCH clinics After school care	30 x 700ml	Pandemic Coordinator
Alcohol wipes	Shire offices Customer service counters MCH clinics After school care	10 containers	Pandemic Coordinator
Gloves	Chiltern WAW Credit Union Rutherglen Shire Office Beechworth Shire Office Yackandandah Shire Office Barnawartha MCH Office	400	Community Care
Shoe protectors	Chiltern WAW Credit Union Rutherglen Shire Office Beechworth Shire Office Yackandandah Shire Office Barnawartha MCH Office	170	Community Care

Figure 7: Personal protective equipment for Indigo Shire Council staff



CHAPTER 5: HEALTH SERVICES

Planning for managing affected individuals

5.1 Influenza streams

Patients with suspected pandemic influenza may present to any health service in a variety of ways. To prevent cross-infection, health services need to develop a process for separating, triaging and admitting people with influenza-like illnesses. This may involve setting up a separate area such as an influenza triage or influenza clinic.

5.2 Designated hospitals (Flu clinics)

To prevent the spread of pandemic influenza infection within hospitals, the Department of Health will implement a Designated Hospital Model. This model implements influenza clinics as patient numbers increase to minimise impacts on hospital emergency departments and GP clinics. The Department of Health has identified 16 designated hospitals in Victoria. They have been designated based on location, isolation facilities (for example, negative pressure rooms) and infectious diseases expertise.

The decision to transfer suspected cases in the Indigo Shire to the designated hospital at Wangaratta will be made by the Department of Health in consultation with the health service. Clinical or other considerations may preclude patient transfer.

Figure 8: Designated hospital for Indigo Shire influenza patients

Designated hospital	Address	Facility details	Contact
North East Health Wangaratta	Green St Wangaratta	Size: 228 beds Signage: Good Parking: Two hour free parking Access: Two entrances, Green St and Docker St	03 5722 0111



Designated hospitals, Victoria wide, include those shown below.

Bayside Health	The Alfred	<i>Commercial Rd Prahran VIC</i>
Austin Health	Austin Hospital	<i>Studley Rd Heidelberg VIC</i>
Ballarat Health Services	Base Hospital	<i>Drummond St North Ballarat VIC</i>
Bendigo Health	Bendigo Hospital Campus	<i>Lucan St Bendigo VIC</i>
Eastern Health	Box Hill Hospital	<i>Nelson Rd Box Hill VIC</i>
Peninsula Health	Frankston Hospital	<i>Hastings Rd Frankston VIC</i>
Barwon Health	Geelong Hospital	<i>Ryrie St Geelong VIC</i>
	Goulburn Valley Health	<i>Graham St Shepparton VIC</i>
	Latrobe Regional Hospital	<i>Princess Highway Traralgon West VIC</i>
Southern Health	Monash Medical Centre, Clayton Campus	<i>Clayton Rd Clayton VIC</i>
	Northeast Health Wangaratta	<i>Green Street Wangaratta VIC</i>
Northern Health	The Northern Hospital	<i>Cooper St Epping VIC</i>
	The Royal Children's Hospital	<i>Flemington Rd Parkville VIC</i>
Melbourne Health	The Royal Melbourne Hospital	<i>Grattan St Parkville VIC</i>
St. Vincent's Health	St. Vincent's Hospital	<i>Princes St Fitzroy VIC</i>
Western Health	Western Hospital	<i>Gordon St Footscray VIC</i>

Figure 9: Designated hospitals in Victoria for influenza pandemic



CHAPTER 6: PUBLIC HEALTH CONTROL MEASURES

6.1 Control agency

The control agency in the event of a pandemic influenza is the Department of Health. Indigo Shire Council will implement public health control measures within its municipality in line with information it receives from the Department of Health during an influenza pandemic. These measures aim to limit or slow the spread of an influenza virus throughout the community in order to minimise infection rates and disruption to social and economic activity.

Public health control measures to be implemented during a pandemic include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Provision of a community education strategy to be delivered in conjunction with the *Strategy for Community Information Provision*. Council will:
 - Distribute and make available any fact sheets produced by the Department of Health, available from www.health.vic.gov.au, on the current pandemic situation;
 - Provide information to the community on cough/sneeze etiquette and hand hygiene through the distribution of posters available from the Department of Health website: www.health.vic.gov.au. A supply of posters will be maintained by Environmental Health. These posters can be distributed to businesses and community organisations within the municipality and available for collection from the Council offices;
 - Encourage community members to stay at home and seek medical advice if unwell and experiencing flu-like symptoms;
 - Encourage community members to stay away from mass gatherings of people if unwell and experiencing flu-like symptoms. People should minimise social contact if unwell;
 - Provide specific education to people involved in the food industry on the importance of hand hygiene and the protection of food from contamination by any mucosal secretions to assist in the maintenance of a safe food supply to the community;
 - Encourage community members to be responsible for increased cleaning regimes of surfaces within their businesses that are commonly and frequently touched by the public; and
 - Continue to encourage routine influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations to at risk groups within the municipality.
- Provision of community support to be delivered in conjunction with *Community Support and Recovery Procedures*. Council will:
 - Develop and provide education material to the community to encourage the development of their capacity to cope in the event of an influenza pandemic. Capacity building involves ensuring individuals can provide food and medicine for themselves if isolated due to infection and to create networks of family and friends for mutual support; and



- Establish a community support service consisting of a Municipal Recovery Centre in a virtual environment. The role of the support service will be to provide information and linkages to support services for the public to alleviate anxiety, fear, uncertainty, vulnerability and isolation. Telephone/ email will be the means of communication.
- Maintenance of routine environmental health services, as far as practicable, to maintain public health standards and prevent infectious diseases transmission through food safety surveillance and infectious disease outbreaks investigation.

In the event of a pandemic it may be necessary for some people to be isolated or quarantined from other members of the community. **Isolation** means the state of separation between persons or groups. **Quarantine** means the period of isolation decreed to control the spread of disease. Isolation or quarantine may be voluntary or mandatory and take place in the person's home, hospital or at a designated facility. The main issues around isolating or quarantining persons include supply of food, personal support and medical support.

6.2 Measures to increase social distancing

Social distancing is a strategy that protects staff and the public from potential infection by minimising direct contact with others. Social distancing measures are based on the premise that the influenza virus can travel up to one metre when someone coughs or sneezes. Visiting or other contact with un-well people should be avoided, wherever practicable.

In the event of a pandemic, measures to increase social distancing will need to be considered by Indigo Shire Council. These could include the closure of schools, higher education facilities and/or Council buildings, discouraging mass gatherings along with the pausing of Council customer service and non essential face to face work. The decision to close any of these services would be made after discussions with the Department of Health, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Education, the Indigo Shire Council's *MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN* coordinator and Council's corporate management group.

Other social distancing measures Council would consider for its staff could include:

- Avoid meeting people face to face within one metre of each other – use the telephone, video conferencing and the internet to conduct business as much as possible, even when participants are in the same building;
- Avoid any unnecessary travel and cancel or defer non-essential meetings/gatherings/workshops/training sessions;
- Avoid crowding at the workplace by arranging for staff to work from home or work variable hours;
- Bring lunch and eat it at your desk or away from others. Introduce staggered lunchtimes so numbers of people in the lunch room are reduced to ensure one metre spacing is achieved between people;
- Do not congregate in tearooms or other areas where people socialise. Do what needs to be done and then leave the area and stagger access to these areas;



- If a face-to-face meeting with people is unavoidable, minimise the meeting time, choose a large meeting room and sit at least one metre away from each other if possible. Avoid shaking hands or hugging and consider holding meetings in the open air; and
- Avoid large gatherings where staff might come into contact with infectious people.

6.3 Protective measures for Council staff

Council staff will have access to the following equipment and services to help protect them from being exposed to the virus.

- Use of surgical masks
- Educational/awareness programs
- Minimisation of face to face contact
- Maintenance of cooling towers and air conditioning units
- Where possible work from home arrangements
- Adequate disposal of contaminated items
- Increased cleaning
- Closure of certain locations
- Hygiene education and reinforcement e.g. posters



CHAPTER 7: IMMUNISATION

7.1 Mass vaccination/immunisation

Advice on the process of mass vaccination is provided in the Mass Vaccination Guide in the *Victorian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza*. The guide was developed to provide advice to all organisations undertaking vaccination during a pandemic, as well as those setting up mass vaccination centres. It details the:

- National medical stockpile;
- Vaccination strategy (priority groups);
- Routine vaccination in the inter-pandemic periods;
- Mass vaccination centres—session structure and management (administration, documentation, consent etc.);
- Logistics; and
- Various pro forma documents (immunisation consent form, record of administration and report of suspected adverse events).

In the event of an influenza pandemic, vaccinations packs, sourced from the national medical stockpile, will be given to affected municipalities by the Department of Health. These packs will include syringes and needles, alcohol swabs, sharps containers, disposable dishes and disposable gloves, hazardous waste bags and bandaids.

7.2 Vaccination of priority groups

The *Victorian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza* states that the vaccine will be made available first to people at high risk of exposure to the virus – frontline staff, workers and people most vulnerable to illness or infection. Upon direction, it will then be rolled out to the rest of the community. All frontline staff would need to be identified and immunised first. These would include:

- Nurses/doctors immunising – it is intended that GPs will vaccinate staff within their own practices; and
- Administration/council staff involved in mass immunisation - local government immunisation teams will vaccinate the identified priority group(s).

A list of possible Council employee groups that may be targeted for immunisation includes:

- Maternal and Child Health nurses;
- Frontline/ customer service staff;
- Environmental Health Officers and support staff;



- Essential communications staff e.g. IT;
- Members of Council’s Emergency Management Team;
- Employees involved in critical services;
- Transfer station/waste staff;
- Meals on Wheels volunteers;
- Home Care staff;
- Payroll staff; and
- Others to be identified.

Qualified and practising nurses will be used first to immunise Council staff. However, in the event of a pandemic, it is predicted that there will be a shortage of available staff and other nurses, and non practising nurses may need to be used. Where possible, a qualified immunisation nurse should be paired with an inexperienced immunisation nurse. Council Environmental Health Officers and support staff will be required to man information desks and answer enquiries related to pandemic influenza. Other members of staff, and even well members of the public, may be called upon to assist, where appropriate.

Residents in nursing homes, correctional centres and immobile patients who receive care at home through community health care service providers will be provided with vaccine via existing health care providers.

7.3 Vaccine supply

The Department of Health and Ageing has arrangements in place with two pharmaceutical companies, CSL and Sanofi Pasteur Pty Ltd. These companies supply the seasonal influenza vaccine and are able to increase productivity to produce pandemic vaccine, if needed. The vaccine to fight a pandemic originating from the H5N1 influenza is yet to be developed, and once cases are reported may take some time to develop. In the event of a pandemic, the Department of Health will distribute vaccine and required equipment from the National Medical Stockpile (NMS) by the Chief Health Officer after obtaining approval from the Department of Health and Ageing’s Chief Medical Officer.

Supply timeframes are documented as:

- Deployment – within six hours of request; and
- Delivery – within 24 hours of request from the State Health Department.

7.3.1 Vaccine security, storage and distribution

The *Victorian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza* states that arrangements for storage and distribution are currently being negotiated. It is envisioned that Wodonga Council will need to have a system in place for security of stock and persons at mass immunisation sessions. These arrangements are to be developed in conjunction with the Victorian Police.



Vaccines will be regularly delivered in batches rather than in bulk. Storage of the vaccine will occur via regular council secured vaccine fridges. If this storage is not adequate, other refrigeration options will be sought – such as cold storage warehouses or mobile cool rooms. Vaccine will be taken to sessions via the regular method of eskies and ice. Should this be insufficient, alternative options such as portable cool rooms may need to be sourced.

The Department of Health has existing processes in place for storing, delivering and ordering vaccines. These existing processes will be implemented during a pandemic. Enquiries regarding ordering are to be referred to the Department of Health on **1300 882 008**. These enquiries are to be made by Council's Public Health Emergency Coordinator or designated Immunisation provider.



7.4 Council responsibilities

Once a vaccine has been developed against a pandemic influenza virus, Indigo Shire Council would have responsibility for coordinating mass immunisation of well and at risk persons followed by the rest of the community. The *Victorian Health Management Plan* states that the most effective way to deliver this mass vaccination is through existing local government programs, with GPs offering support. Using GPs as a support service would see them able to carry out ordinary functioning roles and also tend to the ill.

Currently, Indigo Shire Council provides immunisation to all members of the public, eligible on the National Immunisation Schedule. It currently provides immunisation services to the zero to seven year cohort through its Maternal and Child Health program. All secondary school students are immunised at school. This service is provided by Wodonga Council on a contractual basis and is done via the mobile immunisation van servicing Rutherglen, Beechworth, Yackandandah and Chiltern on a monthly basis. All other immunisations are provided by general practitioners through individual appointments. If required, and on the direction of the Department of Health, Wodonga Council could be contracted to provide extra immunisation sessions for Indigo Shire Council.

In the event that Wodonga Council is unable to provide immunisation services or Indigo Shire Council determines that there are adequate resources available to conduct a session internally during an influenza pandemic, then the following arrangements will be put into place.

- The mass vaccination process will be coordinated by the Department of Health in accordance with the Mass Vaccination Guide – Appendix 8 of the *Victorian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza*.
- Priority groups for vaccination will be identified by the Department of Health and it will be essential that all staff working at a mass vaccination session be vaccinated first.
- The Communication Strategy will be used to inform the public of mass vaccination session times and locations, priority groups being immunised, identification required and public health information to ensure that unwell people do not attend the sessions. It may be necessary to provide session information directly to target groups.
- A memorandum of understanding will be developed with the Victoria Police to provide security for a vaccination session, if required, to ensure the safety of staff and ensure that vaccine is only administered to priority groups.
- A venue will be determined utilising the list of facilities contained below (see Figure 10). The location and size of the venues selected will be dependent on the priority groups to be immunised and the nature and severity of the pandemic. Note that adequate parking, toilet and hand washing facilities should be available.



Figure 10: Mass vaccination/immunisation venues in the Indigo Shire

Venue name	Address	Facility details	Contact
Beechworth Memorial Hall	Ford Street, Beechworth	Car parking (limited during business hours) Hand washing facilities Toilets	Terry Walsh 03 5728 2351 03 5728 2674 beechworthmemorialhall@gmail.com
Yackandandah Hall CofM	High Street, Yackandandah	Car parking (limited during business hours) Hand washing facilities Toilets	Frances Dryden 02 6027 0877 fdryden@bigpond.com
Rutherglen Memorial hall	C/- Rutherglen Rural Transaction Centre, Rutherglen	Car parking Hand washing facilities Toilets	02 6032 8206 indigoshire@indigoshire.vic.gov.au
Chiltern Memorial Hall CofM	Chiltern	Car parking Hand washing facilities Toilets	Charles Thomas Summerfield 03 5726 1771
Tangambalanga Community Centre	25 Kiewa East Road, Tangambalanga	Car parking Hand washing facilities Toilets	Coulston Park Committee of Management 02 6027 3281
Wodonga Council – Mobile Immunisation Van	Hovell Street, Wodonga	Mobile Truck - one entry and exit point. Ability to limit the amount of persons entering the facility.	Lauren Verbaken 1800 655 360
Rutherglen Maternal and Health Care Centre	153 High Street, Rutherglen	Car parking Hand washing facilities Toilets	02 6032 8371 indigoshire@indigoshire.vic.gov.au
Beechworth Maternal and Health Care Centre	101 Ford Street, Beechworth	Car parking on street Hand washing facilities Toilets	03 5728 1031 indigoshire@indigoshire.vic.gov.au
Chiltern Maternal and Health Care Centre	Main Street, Chiltern	Car parking Hand washing facilities Toilets	03 5726 1699 indigoshire@indigoshire.vic.gov.au
Yackandandah Maternal and Health Care Centre	High Street, Yackandandah	Car parking on street Hand washing facilities Toilets	0407 305 921 indigoshire@indigoshire.vic.gov.au
Tangambalanga Maternal and Health Care Centre	41 Kiewa East Road, Tangambalanga	Car parking on street Hand washing facilities Toilets	02 6027 3369 indigoshire@indigoshire.vic.gov.au

- Key Council staff will be contacted to conduct the mass vaccination session consisting of:
 - Contracted Immunisation Service;
 - 1 administrator; and
 - 1 Environmental Health Officer.



- Staff numbers may need to be increased depending on the arrangement of the session and predicted numbers of vaccinations to be administered. Staff with skills able to be utilised in a mass immunisation are listed below (see Figure 11).

Name	Organisation	Role/Skill	Primary contact
City of Wodonga Immunisation Service	City of Wodonga		(02) 6022 9300
Melissa Murfitt	North East Victorian Division of General Practice	* Immunisation Program Manager	03 5760 2444
Kim Felton	Indigo Shire Council	Environmental Health Officer	0418 228 170
Natalie Keaveney	Indigo Shire Council	Administration Officer	02 6028 1154
David Koren Mark Florence	Indigo Shire Council	Additional staff to manage clients as necessary	02 6028 1100
Sergeant Geoff Still Sergeant Curran	Victoria Police Beechworth Victoria Police Rutherglen	Security personnel	03 5728 1032 03 5726 1222

Figure 11: Staff emergency list for mass immunisations/vaccinations Indigo Shire

- Staff members will follow the set administration procedures outlined below.
 - Provide fluorescent tabards to all staff members involved in administering the mass vaccination session for ease of identification.
 - Provide clear signage at the immunisation venue to advise people entering the venue of the process for immunisation, the criteria for the receipt of vaccinations and the procedure for people who may have flu-like symptoms. It is essential that anyone with flu-like symptoms entering the venue be identified immediately, provided with a surgical mask and referred to a Health Care Provider for assessment.
 - Obtain administrative resources from the Department of Health or download from www.health.vic.gov.au as advised. Resources include immunisation consent forms, pre immunisation checklists, record of treatments, report of suspected adverse reaction Proforma, posters, lists of common reactions and facts sheets on risk and benefits and vaccine content – available in various languages.
 - Set the vaccination centre up to ensure a smooth one-way operational flow. Provide areas for: **Information:** Provide fact sheets and pre-immunisation checklists, assess any sick people, maintain order – use a numbering system and if appropriate implement social distancing measures; **Registration:** Complete consent forms and record details of vaccine administered including batch numbers; **Vaccination:** Remain on premises for 15mins after vaccination; be mindful of any social distancing measures; and, **Exit review:** Inform time and date of second dose, record mobile phone numbers for SMS reminder and supply information on common reactions.



- Maintain social distancing by ensuring that there is a minimum distance of one metre between community members and staff. All staff working at the session must utilise appropriate Personal Protective Equipment. Children must stay with parents at all times and not get closer than one metre from other children or adults.



CHAPTER 8: MASS FATALITY PLAN

8.1 Funeral considerations

Public health considerations must take priority in the organisation and carrying out of any funeral services and burials/cremations in the event of a mass fatality. There are six funeral homes that directly service the Indigo Shire; however, numerous other services are also accessed from around the region especially from Wodonga and Wangaratta.

Funeral business	Address	Capacity/ Plans for increased capacity	Contact
Chiltern and District Funerals	Chiltern	Capacity to store x 6 bodies Capacity to conduct x 3 funerals a day Plans for increased capacity? No	02 6032 8881
John Hossack Ovens Valley Funerals	53 High Street Beechworth	Capacity to store x 20 bodies Capacity to conduct x 8 funerals a day Capacity to conduct x 8-10 cremations a day Plans for increased capacity? No	03 5728 1052
Tate Funeral Services	63 Greta Road Wangaratta	Capacity to store x 15 bodies Capacity to conduct x 3-5 funerals a day Plans for increased capacity? No	03 5722 2525
Christopher Tate Funeral Services	166 Myrtle Street Myrtleford	Capacity to store x 4 bodies Capacity to conduct x 2 funerals a day Plans for increased capacity? No	03 5752 2995
Howard Funeral Directors	11 Sanger St Corowa	Capacity to store x 10 bodies Capacity to conduct x 4 funerals a day Plans for increased capacity? Yes	02 6033 4255
Conway Family Funeral Home	20 South Street Wodonga	Capacity to store x 8-16 bodies Capacity to conduct x 4 funerals a day Plans for increased capacity? No	02 6024 1093

Figure 12: Indigo Shire's funeral capacity

In the event that local funeral directors are unable to handle the increased number of deceased persons and funerals, it will be the responsibility of the Department of Health, with the support from the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine, to make appropriate arrangements for the ongoing storage of bodies prior to burial/cremation, through the use of temporary refrigerated containers. Assistance may also be sought from other funeral directors within neighbouring municipalities.

8.2 Cemetery considerations

When examining the availability of spaces in the case of a mass fatality, it is critical to ensure that there are adequate plots available to our residents. There are eight cemeteries in the Indigo Shire. All cremations are carried out in Albury, either at the public crematorium operated by Albury City Council or privately by John Hossack Funeral Home. Information regarding the current plots available and the burial capacities of the operating cemeteries is below.



Figure 13: Indigo Shire’s cemetery capacity

Cemetery	Address	Burial capacity	Contact
Barnawartha Cemetery Trust	Avonlea	Approx 2000 plots currently available	02 6026 7296
Beechworth Cemetery Trust	Beechworth	420 plots currently available 200 capacity for ashes 26 burials a year; 1 burial a fortnight	03 5728 1556
Carlyle Public Cemetery	Distillery Rd Wahgunyah	Lots of plots available in lawn cemetery Capacity for ashes 15-20 burials a year	02 6032 8206
Chiltern New Cemetery Trust	2 Park St Chiltern	7,000 – 8,000 plots available 10-15 burials a year	03 5726 1552
Kiewa Cemetery Trust	Gundowring Road Kiewa	Lots of plots – capacity for more 12 burials a year	02 6027 5111
Sandy Creek Cemetery Trust	613 Lockharts Gap Road Charleroi	2,500 plots available 2 burials a year	02 6071 8568
Stanley Cemetery Trust	Stanley	Lots of plots available 4-5 burials	03 5728 6664
Yackandandah Cemetery Trust	Yackandandah	Lots of plots available across whole cemetery Capacity for ashes in rose garden 16 burials a year	02 6027 1358

8.3 Religious and social considerations

Data from the 2006 Census identifies the religious and cultural diversity of the Indigo Shire population as:

Religion

Christian	9614 (65%)
Buddhism	81 (0.5%)
Other religion	39 (0.3%)
No religion	3352 (22.7%)

Cultural Diversity

Overseas born	7.8%
NESB born	3%
Limited fluency in English	0.5%

It is possible that religious considerations may not be able to be fully met during a pandemic due to overriding public health considerations; however, advice will be sought from local religious leaders in relation to funeral management, bereavement, counselling and communication.

Figure 14: Indigo Shire’s religious communities

Name	Location	Contact details
All Souls Anglican Church	Barnawartha 3688	02 6032 9617
Allans Flat Community Church	Osbornes Flat Community Centre Allans Flat 3749	02 6027 1640
Anglican Parish of Rutherglen and Chiltern	Rutherglen 3685	02 6032 9617
Australian Buddhist Hermitage	Law Track; Stanley 3747	03 5728 6610
Barnawartha Catholic Church	High Street; Barnawartha 3688	02 6032 9468
Barnawartha Uniting Church	Barnawartha 3688	02 6026 7242 or 02 6024 3225



Beechworth Christian Assembly	Wooragee 3747	03 5728 7229
Beechworth Community Church	Beechworth Neighbourhood Centre Beechworth 3747	03 5728 1817
Beechworth Uniting Church	115 Ford Street; Beechworth 3747	03 5728 1473
Brown's Plains Anglican Chapel	Murray Valley Hwy; Browns Plains 3688	02 6032 9617
Chiltern Catholic Church	North Road; Chiltern 3683	02 6032 9468
Chiltern Uniting Church	C/- 88 Ready Street; Rutherglen 3685	02 6032 9910
Christ Church Beechworth	25 Ford Street; Beechworth 3747	03 5728 1472
Christ the King Anglican Church	Foord Street; Wahgunyah 3687	02 6032 9617
Christadelphian Ecclesia	PO Box 162; Beechworth 3747	03 5728 1556
Cookinburra Church	Oates Gap Road; Barnawartha 3688	02 6026 7357
Holy Trinity Anglican Church	8 Church Street; Yackandandah 3749	02 6027 1216
Kergunyah Uniting Church	Kergunyah 3691	02 6027 5330
Kiewa Valley Christian Centre	Coral Bank 3691	03 5754 5202
Riverlife Country Church	Rutherglen 3685	02 6032 7678
Rutherglen Community Presbyterian Church	Community Centre, Rutherglen High School; Rutherglen 3685	
Rutherglen Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses	PO Box 18; Wahgunyah 3687	02 6033 1835
Rutherglen Presbyterian Church	Rutherglen 3685	02 6056 0680
Rutherglen Uniting Church	88 Ready Street; Rutherglen 3685	02 6032 9910
St Andrews Uniting Church	70 High Street Chiltern; Chiltern 3683	03 5726 1781
St Joseph's Church	7 Church Street; Beechworth 3747	03 5728 1043
St Jude's Anglican Church	Eldorado	03 5728 1472
St Mark's Anglican Church	Huon Road, Tangambalanga Tangambalanga 3691	02 6027 3521
St Mary's Catholic Church	Osbornes Flat 3749	03 5728 1043
St Mary's Catholic Church	82 High Street; Rutherglen 3685	02 6032 9468
St Mathew's Catholic Church	Wyndham Street; Yackandandah 3749	03 5728 1043
St Paul's Anglican Church	Chiltern 3683	02 6032 9617
St Stephen's Anglican Church	High Street; Rutherglen 3685	02 6032 9617
Victory Family Church	"Oregon Building" Neighbourhood House, Ford Street; Beechworth 3747	03 5728 2734
Yackandandah Lutheran Church	Yackandandah 3749	02 6027 1873
Yackandandah Presbyterian Church	Yackandandah 3749	02 6056 0680



CHAPTER 9: DELIVERY OF LOCAL FOOD SERVICES

In the Indigo Shire, Meals on Wheels is provided by Indigo Shire Council in partnership with local health services. Nutritionally balanced meals are delivered to elderly residents up to seven days a week, 365 days a year in Beechworth, Chiltern, Rutherglen, Tangambalanga, Wahgunyah and Yackandandah. Meals can be supplied to other areas by arrangement.

Indigo Shire Council HACC assessment officers currently assess people as being in need of meals on wheels by set criteria under the HACC program. During one month, Indigo Shire Council provides an average of 668 meals across the six community based settings shire-wide. Details are provided below.

Figure 15: Meals on Wheels in the Indigo Shire

Organisation	Meals	Delivery details	Contact details
Beechworth Health Service	Fresh cooked and frozen meals	308 meals per month delivered 7 days per week by volunteers	1300 365 003
Indigo North Health Service	Fresh cooked meals	332 meals per month delivered 7 days per week by volunteers	1300 365 003
Yackandandah Bush Nursing Hospital	Fresh cooked meals	28 meals per month delivered 7 days per week by volunteers	1300 365 003

There is a capacity for the health services to increase staffing levels to achieve an increase in meals output on a needs basis. Volunteers can also be recruited by the hospital to assist. Possibility exists to provide meals as required over several shifts during a day.



CHAPTER 10: BUSINESS CONTINUITY

The *Business Continuity Plan* for Indigo Shire should be referred to in the event of an influenza pandemic in conjunction with the following information.

The table below lists Council services and identifies the level of service that is predicted to be required in the event of a pandemic.

Figure 16: Essential business functions provided-by and operating-within the Indigo Shire

Business Unit	Operational element/ function	Critical support systems/ groups	How critical support systems will be maintained
Information technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT infrastructure (i.e. servers, network, PC's, phone systems, applications and data) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT services and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Emergency Management Plan Business Continuity Plan
Waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of infectious disease materials Refuse collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanaway and Waste Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Emergency Management Plan Business Continuity Plan
Maternal and child health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for children with disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MCH Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Emergency Management Plan Business Continuity Plan
Aged services: Home and Community Care (HACC)/ Home Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain care for elderly who have no other means of support Meals on Wheels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aged Care Staff BHS – Meals INH – Meals YBNH – Meals Grey Army – Property Maintenance Volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Emergency Management Plan Business Continuity Plan
Essential traffic management services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic co-ordination Barricades/Cordon's where required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local laws staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Emergency Management Plan Business Continuity Plan
Legislative functions (e.g. environmental health services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Health services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All areas of Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Emergency Management Plan Business Continuity Plan
Emergency management functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to declared emergencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency Management Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Emergency Management Plan Business Continuity Plan
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates clear messages to residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Emergency Management Plan Business Continuity Plan



The core people required to keep essential parts of the shire operating are listed below.

Business Unit	Name	Role	Contact details
Information technology	Jason Musil	IT Systems Administrator	0488 995 920
Waste management	Mark Greene	Civil Works and Waste Management	0419 434 404
Maternal and child health services	Glenys Clark	Community Services Coordinator	0407 091 541
Aged services	Glenys Clark	Community Services Coordinator	0407 091 541
Essential traffic management services	Nick McDonald	Enforcement Services Coordinator	0407 553 575
Legislative functions	Katie Rizzuto Glenn Colwell Kim Felton	Manager Sustainable Development Building surveyor Environmental Health Officer	0428 176 186 0417 256 739 0418 228 170
Emergency management	David Koren	Manager Community Planning	0418 678 540
Communications	Roberta Baker	Communications Advisor	0418 962 131

Figure 17: Indigo Shire Council's core business units

In the event of a high level of staff absence, the following replacement staff will assume these roles.

Business Unit	Identified staff	Back up staff	Contact details
Information technology	Jason Musil	Chris Rootsey	0448 995 920
Waste management	Mark Greene	Adele Earl	0427 821 908
Maternal and child health services	Glenys Clark	David Koren	0418 678 540
Aged services	Glenys Clark	David Koren	0418 678 540
Essential traffic management services	Nick McDonald	Greg Doughty	0407 201 002
Legislative functions	Katie Rizzuto Glenn Colwell Kim Felton	Travis Basham Bruce Howie Kim Warne	0419 108 477 0418 396 633 02 6026 1111
Emergency management	David Koren	Mark Florence	0407 529 770
Communications	Roberta Baker	Nell Showers	0448 276 973

Figure 18: Indigo Shire Council's replacement staff



Staff shortages will have a large impact on all business areas within Council. In some instances a business area can be shut down for a short period; however, our essential business functions will have to be maintained by recruiting staff from non-essential areas.

Business Unit	Number of essential staff	Estimated impact of staff shortage
Information technology	1.5 staff	Low impact short to mid term
Waste management	2 staff	Closure of Beechworth and Rutherglen waste transfer stations
Maternal and child health services	1.4 staff	Would have to prioritise appointments to only 0-6 mths
Aged services	1.8 staff	No assessments done; just personal care and meals
Essential traffic management services	1 staff	Livestock would remain on the road causing risk to road users
Legislative functions	4 staff	Major risk of weed infestation if spraying is not done within timelines Moderate risk of planning delays which could result in loss of reputation to Council and associated costs
Emergency management	1 staff	Recruit back up staff
Communications	1 staff	Could work from home

Figure 19: Indigo Shire Council's staff shortage plan

There may be a need for Indigo Shire Council to access other resources, such as volunteers, in the event of an influenza pandemic to assist in the delivery of essential services. Council will:

- Advertise locally for skilled volunteers via local media outlets;
- Contact the Volunteer Resource Bureau for assistance - 02 6021 0990; and
- Contact neighbouring councils to provide professional staff if required and able.
 - Wodonga City Council - 02 6022 9300
 - Wangaratta City Council - 03 5722 0888
 - Towong Shire Council - 02 6071 5100
 - Alpine Shire Council - 03 5755 0555

It may also be necessary to coordinate and operate staff business tasks remotely using telephone, fax and email systems. In this way, the risk of infection to staff is reduced as they do not need to enter the workplace. In the event that social distancing measures are introduced and essential staff are required to stay at home, Council will:

- Redirect enquiries to staff mobile phones; and



- Communicate with essential staff using the central register of staff home email addresses.

Some systems within Council require periodic physical intervention by key staff to maintain minimum function. During an influenza pandemic, these systems may still need to be manned.

Council system	Person responsible to maintain minimum function	Estimated length of time system can function for without attention
Customer service	Diane Hempel	Short term: could divert phones to back office staff
Communications	Roberta Baker	Short term but could work from home
Emergency management	David Koren	Essential position: would use back up staff
Meals on Wheels	Glenys Clark	Essential service; must continue

Figure 20: Key Council systems requiring physical operation

To support any changes in business operation during an influenza pandemic, key infrastructure is required. This includes:

- Internet access – remote log in facilities for staff working from home;
- Mobile phone service – staff require mobile service at their home addresses; and
- Transportation – key staff require reliable transport to and from work if needed to maintain minimum Council functions.

Some contractor services may also be impacted upon in the event of an influenza pandemic. These are summarised in the table below.

Contractor	Function	Capacity to sustain service delivery	Contact details
Beechworth Health Service Indigo North Health Service Yackandandah Bush Nursing Hospital	Meals on Wheels	Very good: all essential service providers	03 5728 0340 02 6033 6205 02 6027 1208
Cleanaway	Waste collection	Good: can use back up staff	02 6025 2433
Wodonga Council	Immunisation	Limited: normal immunisations may be postponed for mass vaccinations	02 6022 9300
Wayne's Cleaning	Office cleaning	Limited but non essential service	0405 241 533

Figure 21: Indigo Shire Council's contractor services – implications of an influenza pandemic



CHAPTER 11: COMMUNITY INFORMATION STRATEGY

The Victorian Government has developed a communication strategy to strengthen pandemic preparedness at state, regional and local level and ensure that timely, informative and consistent messages are provided to the wider community. The strategy supports the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing Communication Strategy, while accommodating Victorian circumstances. At a shire level, Indigo Council is responsible for developing its own communications plan in line with the whole of Victorian Government communication strategy.

Indigo Shire Council will develop media and communication messages to inform the community and staff of any changes to normal municipal service delivery prior to an influenza pandemic occurring. General messages will include:

- What the shire is going to do about influenza pandemic planning;
- Accurate information about hygiene and pandemic awareness; and
- Any changes in arrangements for service delivery during an influenza pandemic.

Objectives of the plan are to:

- Clarify Council's operational responsibilities;
- Equip and encourage the shire to prepare; and
- Ensure communication channels are clear and two-way.

Specific messages will include:

- There is a Victorian Influenza Pandemic Plan;
- You are crucial;
- You should do your business continuity planning now;
- Scenario plan for 30 per cent employees absent;
- We will support you; here's how; and
- Tell us now what else you need.

Council's approach will involve:

- Partnering with Local Government Victoria (LGV) and Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV);
- Where possible, ensuring that a single source in the Department of Health is communicating with our CEO;



- Holding operational and communication dry-runs to ensure channels are open and seriousness is clear;
- Providing tools to disseminate to local groups and individuals; and
- Providing information that stresses the importance of hand hygiene and cough etiquette.

Further details are provided in the table following.

Target Audience	Communication systems	Key messages	Information resources
Key agencies and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fax - Direct mail - Email - Direct discussion (meetings) - Council website link to health unit - Direct health unit telephone line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant information on the pandemic response and current status of the pandemic (surveillance information) - Notice of all public communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As determined by the Pandemic Influenza Management Committee
Health care providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fax - Direct mail - Email - Direct discussions (meetings) - Council website link to health unit - Communiqués 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant information on the status of the pandemic (surveillance information) - Notice of all public communications - Vaccination and antiviral priorities and rationale - Recommended control measures - Recommended monitoring of adverse vaccine events and mechanisms for reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As determined by the Pandemic Influenza Management Committee - Fact sheets for patients on influenza, vaccine, antiviral, schedules for community clinics, protective measures and contact numbers
Residents and affected populations within the shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Media releases and alerts - 1-800 # hot line, extended hours - 1-800 # recorded message - Shire website - Public presentations, community forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant information on the status of the pandemic - General information on influenza, protective measures, vaccine and antiviral - Announcements regarding public health measures being taken (school closures, travel restrictions, etc) - Rationale for priority groups for vaccine and antiviral - Schedules for mass vaccination clinics - Announcements regarding changes in provision of health care/emergency services - Actions people can take to cope with the effects of influenza - Food Spoilage as a result of a power outage – Fact Sheet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fact sheets relevant to groups in the municipality including: high risk groups (based on epidemiology data), children, health care workers and emergency service providers - General fact sheets on influenza, vaccine, antiviral, protective measures and contact numbers

Figure 22: Indigo Shire Council’s community information messages



CHAPTER 12: COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND RECOVERY

For information about community support and recovery, Indigo Shire Council will refer to the *Victorian Human Influenza Pandemic Plan: Community Support and Recovery Sub Plan* and Part 4 of the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria—State Recovery Arrangements*. Council acknowledges the general potential social and economic impacts of an influenza pandemic as:

- Increased levels of uncertainty, fear and anxiety;
- Breakdown of community support mechanisms;
- Increased numbers of vulnerable people and emergence of new groups;
- High workforce absenteeism; and
- Widespread economic disruption.

Specifically, in the Indigo Shire, these impacts may have the following effects on the local community.

Impacts of an influenza pandemic	Consequences for the community
High workforce absenteeism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced ability to deliver basic services e.g. HACC • Business with very few staff may reduce the range of products available to the general public or in worst case will shut doors and nothing will be available
Increased levels of uncertainty, fear and anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without an effective communication strategy, the communities level of anxiety will be increased • People may stay home, not volunteer, not visit anyone due to fear of contracting the influenza virus; health issues will become predominate with people
Breakdown of community support mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of personal contact causing problems (i.e. health conditions) may go unnoticed
Increased numbers of vulnerable people and emergence of new groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness of pandemic through discussions with the community support agencies • Need to encourage community support agencies to develop their own business continuity plans (including surge capacity).
Widespread economic disruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to increase awareness of effects of pandemic through discussions with the Chambers of Commerce/ progress associations etc

Figure 23: Impacts and consequences of an influenza pandemic

A range of services may be called upon to support our community in recovering from an influenza pandemic. These could include:



Recovery service	Organisation	Contact details	Role
Health	Beechworth Health Service Indigo North Health Service Gateway Community Health Ovens and King Community Health Department of Health Department of Veteran Affairs	03 5728 0200 02 6033 6200 02 6022 8888 03 5723 2000 02 6055 7725 02 6056 1341	Community care and education Data gathering and analysis Counselling and support Medical care Staff education Health promotion
Emergency	St John Ambulance Victoria Police: Beechworth; Chiltern: Yackandandah	03 5728 3243 03 5728 1032 03 5726 1222 02 6027 1205	Recovery management Community education
Food	Red Cross: Beechworth, Rutherglen, Yackandandah, Chiltern Salvation Army Beechworth	02 6027 1212	Food banks
Finances	Centrelink Red Cross: Beechworth, Rutherglen, Yackandandah, Chiltern Salvation Army Beechworth	02 6027 1212	Financial counselling Financial assistance
Business	Beechworth and District Chamber of Commerce Beechworth Mens Probus Club Rutherglen Probus Club	03 5728 1830 03 5728 2892 02 6033 3161	Business recovery
Home care	Indigo Shire Council	1300 365 003	Personal and home care services
Communications	Local media	See Figure 4	Recovery updates and messages
General support	Apex Club Rutherglen Beechworth Lions Club Beechworth Rotary Club Chiltern Lions Club Kiewa/Tangambalanga Lions Club Rutherglen Apex Club Rutherglen Lions Club Yackandandah Lions Club	 03 5728 2855 03 5728 2990 03 5726 1321 02 6027 3444 02 6032 9948 02 6033 2612 02 6027 1233	General community support

Figure 24: Recovery services and their roles



Contact list

For an updated list, please refer to Council's *Municipal Emergency Management Plan*.

Reviewing the plan

To be adequately prepared for an influenza pandemic, it is important for Council to regularly review and exercise this plan (as part of the *Municipal Emergency Management Plan*) and make amendments as required.

To evaluate its effectiveness, Indigo Shire Council will exercise the plan every two years as directed by the CEO. The exercise format will be a full review with any amendments being used to inform an updated Influenza Pandemic Plan every four years.

The exercise will be carried out by Indigo Council staff in collaboration with the health agencies and key stakeholders highlighted in this plan.