Provision of pandemic information by health sciences librarians: a multisite comparative case series

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APPENDIX C

Instructions for reporting H1N1 flu updates

Emailed reports sent to:
▪ Integrated vice president of information management at _____
▪ Incident manager of the pandemic management team at _____
▪ Chief executive officer of _____
Note: emails are sent as text emails not HTML, use default font: Tahoma size 8 (so that it is readable on a BlackBerry)

Subject link of emails: H1N1 Flu Update – Date [ex: Thursday, April 30, 2009]

The report consists of two sections:
Section 1: current statistics for confirmed cases and deaths of H1N1
Section 2: "Updates" containing narrative information from government agencies and reputable new sources.

Section 1: Confirmed cases

Content: Information is found from:

Canada: Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC): http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ alert-alerte/swine-porcine/surveillance-eng.php; posted daily in the afternoon so these numbers are almost a day old by the time the email is sent.

United States: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): http://www.cdc.gov/ h1n1flu/ and http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/update.htm#statetable; posted around 11 a.m. each day, can take up to 11:45 a.m.

Worldwide: World Health Organization (WHO): http://www.who.int/csr/disease/ swineflu/en/; see most recent of the "Situation Updates" and European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC): http://www.ecdc.europa.eu; under "Latest Updates," find the most recent ECDC situation report on outbreak of influenza A (Reporting times can be irregular).

This information can and should be a composite of the above resources and media sources (which are sometimes faster than government reporting). If PHAC, CDC, WHO, and ECDC numbers are supplemented with media numbers to reflect the most recent numbers, make sure

it is from a reputable media source, for example, minister of health reporting new case of swine flu in Ottawa in breaking news of CNN website. Good media sources to check include CNN, CBC, etc.

To calculate past 24 hours (or past 72 hours after a 2-day weekend), subtract the number of confirmed cases in the previous email update from the number of new confirmed cases being reported.

Presentation:

Canada table presented first, followed by United States, and then worldwide table.

Table titles are in uppercase (i.e., CANADA, U.S., and WORLDWIDE)

Abbreviations of provinces/states/countries with confirmed cases from the "Past 24 hrs" are to appear in bold (see daily updates folder for example). Table reports stats for "Past 24 hrs," "Total," and "Deaths." (These columns have been narrowed for the tabular reporting as much as possible so that it should fit on a BlackBerry screen without wrapping, so try and keep the numbers under the proper headings without expanding the columns if possible.)

All information source websites can be found on the _____ resource website: ____

Section 2: Updates

Updates, if available, will appear from the following sources, in order:

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC): http://www.health.gov.on.ca; look for "H1N1 Flu Virus Update." Include highlights. Also look for "New Confirmed Cases of H1N1 Flu Virus (Human Swine Flu) in Ontario"; if any new cases have been reported in the past 24 hours, the MOHLTC will have a table of cases in Ontario by region, include these numbers and any other highlights. Do not mention new guidelines from the MOHLTC website (as listed under Important Health Notices (IHN) for Healthcare Professionals). The pandemic team receives these automatically from the ministry anyway.

Health Canada/PHAC: http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/alert-alerte/swine_200904-eng.php; look at latest updates for any highlights to include (keeping in mind number of cases are already reported in section one). http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/alert-alerte/swine-porcine/hp-index -eng.php; keep an eye open for new guidelines or items from the past 24 hours (some say "new" so you might want to see if this has been mentioned in a previous email already in case it has been "new" for a few days).

CDC: http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/; most of the information on this "updates" web page stays the same and usually it is just the numbers that are updated daily. If new information is reported, it would be useful to include it in the email. Scroll down to "More on the situation" and click on "Guidance." Look for guidelines from the past 24 hours and include the guideline title, date, as well as a link to the information.

WHO: http://www.who.int/en/; look at the most recent situation report and include the first two paragraphs of total countries with confirmed cases, cases in Mexico and United States and any other new highlights (again some of the travel info, etc., does not change). From the main page, look for any other new items from the past 24 hours worth mentioning.

Media sources:
Example: CNN, CBC, other reliable sources (not too many, just enough to cover the major/main new hot topics). Include the title of the news item, a brief excerpt or highlights.

Presentation:

Source name/acronyms are to appear in bold.

Include dates and time (if available) for new information. Note: Greenwich mean time (GMT) is 4 hours ahead of eastern time (ET) (e.g., 1600 GMT (4:00 p.m.) is 1200 ET (12:00 p.m.)). The ECDC site gives times in central European standard time (CEST), which is 6 hours ahead of ET (e.g., 1600 CEST (4:00 p.m.) is 1000 (ET 10:00 a.m.)).

Include links to news items and updates (HTML preferred over PDF).

Spreadsheet of daily confirmed cases:

Numbers should be entered into the spreadsheet of daily confirmed cases at the end of each day. This includes the United States and worldwide numbers in the email update *but* uses the recent Canadian numbers on the PHAC posted in the afternoon.

The spreadsheet should be emailed to the incident manager's assistant, who is keeping track of the information over time.