

From: [Steve Elliot](#)
To: selliot@gmail.com;
CC:
Subject: Business Survival Tips from Elliot Consulting Services
Date: Tuesday, January 02, 2007 7:05:14 AM
Attachments:



Elliot Consulting Services - Business Survival Tips

Pandemic Flu Threat and Business Continuity

January 2007

Greetings!

Health experts say it is not a matter of if, but when, the next major health hazard will impact us. In the event of a pandemic or severe flu outbreak many places of public gathering may face the risk of quarantine, including retail stores, supermarkets, transportation terminals, and businesses such as restaurants, theaters, nightclubs, financial institutions, manufacturing facilities, call centers and general offices for an extended period of time. Travel could grind to a halt and the impact to the workforce could be staggering. In addition, closures to schools, day care centers, and after-school cared facilities would significantly impact any of your employees with children. Business interruptions would cut across all sizes of organizations, types of industries, and geographic locations of your facilities. The intense media interest (bringing with it the possibility of exaggeration and misinformation) coupled with an increasingly anxious and fearful public would further complicate any efforts to restore calm and order.

In this Issue

- [Pandemic Flu Threat and Business Continuity](#)
- [Useful Links](#)
- [About Elliot Consulting](#)

How should your organization prepare for work outages caused by healthcare issues? What steps can you implement now to minimize the impact to your organization during this upcoming flu season? What should you know about pandemic planning?

This month's newsletter features an article written by two experts from one of Elliot Consulting's newest professional partners – [Center for Healthcare Emergency Readiness \(CHCER\)](#) in Nashville, TN. We sincerely thank [James Blair](#), President and CEO, and [Pauline Scanlon](#), COO, of the Center for Healthcare Emergency Readiness for their permission to present this important information to our readers.

[Steve Elliot](#), CBRM
President and CEO



Pandemic Flu Threat and Business Continuity



Written by:

James "Jim" D. Blair, DPA, MHA, FACHE, DABCHS,
MCAS, CHS-V, President and CEO
Pauline A. Scanlon, PhD, Chief Operating Officer

Center for Healthcare Emergency Readiness
Nashville, TN

There are a number of explanations which account for the current "Hot Topic" focus on *Pandemic Avian Flu* and conditions which present flu-like symptoms. First, is the intense interest from the White House in a timely implementation of the November, 2005 guidance on the nation's strategy for *Pandemic Flu Protection*. Second, it is Flu season and each Flu season we are reminded by the media that we are not properly prepared to deal with current "wimpy strain" of the virus, let alone a worldwide pandemic. Third, the recent SARS experience and the graphic tales of its impact on our Canadian neighbors hovers in the background. Fourth, public trust in the nation's capacity to protect it from all-hazards threats is waning. Fifth, the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) reports on healthcare acquired infections raise the specter that the Nation's Healthcare System may not be able to deal with emerging infections or virulent man made agents since it is unable to control unintended infections.

And Sixth, it will happen. By April 27, 2006, the World Health Organization had tracked 205 non-US cases of bird flu that led to 113 deaths. On April 28, 2006, a mild form of bird flu was found at a live-bird market in New Jersey. According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, a severe bird flu pandemic would make 30 percent of the US population, or 90 million people, ill and result in 2 million deaths. Companies would have absentee rates of about 40 percent.

While preparations are fluid, there is one bright side: We have some time. An avian flu pandemic most probably will not occur tomorrow, but this nation's annual flu epidemic is currently in its first wave and now is the time to plan. Even though various federal agencies, such as the CDC, state health departments, and the majority of business Trade Associations have published guidance materials and "check-lists" for pandemic flu preparation, many companies are not paying any attention at all or are extremely reticent to discuss their preparation processes, although many have noted the risks. As of the fiscal year ending April 2006, avian flu was mentioned 388 times in the quarterly and annual regulatory filings with the Security and Exchange Commission. Similarly, many public companies view responses to a pandemic or severe epidemic scenario as extensions of their current Business Continuity Plans rather than as a risk management strategy to avoid a Sarbanes-Oxley disclosure of an operational failure or vulnerability (safety, environmental, or property) that may "significantly impact" the organization's financial soundness.

The Center for HealthCare Emergency Readiness (CHCER) has evolved from assessing healthcare facilities for Homeland Security Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive (CBRNE) readiness to assessing All-Hazards readiness. We would like to share with you what we have observed over time in the healthcare sector to be Continuity of Entity Readiness Imperatives that can be generalized to all businesses in their pandemic or

epidemic flu planning efforts. These observations represent a limited set of actions which are far from comprehensive but are those we find most important.

What will it take for your organization to be ready?

1. Perform a Hazard Vulnerability Analysis (HVA) to include:

- Self-identified Internal and External Hazards
- External hazards identified by the your community and geographic region

2. Provide strong leadership from Board and Executive levels to include:

- High profile advocacy and oversight
- Identified and documented resources for short and long range planning
- Selection of a competent and respected planning task coordinator
- Selection of a planning committee and meeting protocol enforcement
- Appropriate input from labor representatives
- Dissemination of the emergency response and business continuity plans throughout the organization
- Establishment of an emergency operations center to direct and coordinate the organization's response

3. Implement and maintain ongoing Planning Processes which include and address:

- Preparedness-Identification of resources needed to sustain operations
- Establishment of a policy on workforce safety and survival
- Actions designed to maximize worker availability
- Actions designed to increase flexibility of approaches for continuity

4. Establish Mutual Support Agreements (MSAs) based on:

- Assessments of projected personnel supplementation needs
- Assessments of demand for raw materials and supplies in advance
- Assurances that the provider/contractor has not oversubscribed its capacity to respond
- Identified back-up providers/contactors in different geographic areas

5. Know your State Laws and Regulations on Emergency Health Powers, e.g., Quarantine, Seizure of Property, Limits and Use of Police Powers

6. Address Human Resources Issues:

- Personnel Policies on Extended Leave and Extended Work Hours
- Fitness for Duty Standards and Symptom Assessment Processes
- Reassignment of staff, e.g., to other positions if recovered or other locations if high-risk
- Workers Compensation
- Employee Insurance coverage
- Tracking of infected and recovering staff
- International Exposure Issues (SARS, Avian Flu, etc,) and Return to Country/Work Policies, to the extent applicable

7. Provide Work Force Training and Competency, and Communications
8. Plan for Physical Security and Protection
9. Conduct Exercises and Drills to evaluate organizational proficiency

Realization of a successful Pandemic and or "Severe" Flu readiness status requires strong leadership and executive management buy in for the need to be prepared and a belief that the effort will produce the desired protection. Paradoxically, the organization's corporate vision must include a sense of partnership with local county, State, and Federal authorities, including National Preparedness Goals (outlined by the Department of Homeland Security) and the discrete uniqueness of the organization's "Part," adapted to the nature of its operation and local conditions. Your company's role needs to focus on the immediate environment and the scope of your organization's operation. In order for your organization to be a viable part of the solution and not of the problem, it must have a plan for business survival.

For more information about pandemic planning and a full text of the above report and its recommendations, click [HERE](#)

About the Center for Healthcare Emergency Readiness

[Center for Healthcare Emergency Readiness, LLC \(CHCER\)](#) assists health care facilities in their efforts to comply with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the National Response Plan (NRP) and with the disaster preparedness requirements of the Medicare Conditions of Participation and national accrediting bodies. CHCER provides assessments to determine a facility's current state of readiness and with recommendations related to its preparation for, response to and recovery from future natural disasters, pandemics, and acts of terrorism. CHCER combines the expertise of a diverse group of subject matter experts in the areas of hospital management and security, risk management, government regulation and oversight, vigilance skills and CBRNE training, law enforcement and counter-terrorism.

[James "Jim" D. Blair](#), DPA, MHA, FACHE, DABCHS, MCAS, CHS-V is a domestic and international healthcare consultant and career retired Army Colonel. His assignments include service as Chief of Staff of the 7th Medical Command in Heidelberg, Germany and as Chief Executive Officer for medical facilities (i.e. combat field, evacuation hospitals, medical centers) and healthcare systems. He also served as USAREUR Deputy Chief Surgeon for Medical Support Services, Safety and Security Readiness during the "Red Brigade Euro-Terrorism" period. As a consultant to the Army Surgeon General for Health Care Administration, he guided the JCAHO re-accreditation of the 7th MEDCOM medical treatment facilities. His Pentagon assignments include: Chief of Education and Training, Office of the Army Surgeon General, and the Surgeon General's principle representative to the Comptroller of the U.S. Army's study of reorganization of the Army Medical Department's CONUS healthcare system. In the private sector, Jim served as Vice President for the Hospital Corporation of America, MIDEAST limited; Project Manager for the Saudi Arabia National Guard Medical Services Project in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; and Senior Consultant to the Pacific Healthcare Management Corporation.

[Pauline Scanlon](#) is a nationally recognized healthcare consultant who has over 36 years of experience in both the public and private health care sectors. Her experience includes

federal and state employment as a regulator and compliance officer with oversight responsibility for research, development and policy planning for state and regionalized healthcare delivery systems. For the last 16 years she has served as President and CEO of American Healthcare Resources, a consulting company specializing in risk management, compliance monitoring and auditing, medico-legal consultation, grant development and implementation of targeted healthcare intervention initiatives.

Useful Links

- [Dept of Homeland Security / FEMA](#)
- [IBHS - "Open For Business"](#)
- [Florida Division of Emergency Management](#)
- [National Hurricane Center](#)
- [Tampa Bay Hurricane Guide](#)

About Elliot Consulting



Elliot Consulting Services (ECS) is a 4 year old consulting firm based in the Tampa Bay, Florida area which specializes in business survival solutions. ECS functions as a third party advocate and facilitator to help companies create, develop, and implement business continuity plans which are designed to protect their vital business resources and operational processes. ECS will review, audit, and help modify a company's existing disaster recovery model to ensure that the essential components of the organization will continue to function in the event of an unplanned disruptive incident. The team from Elliot Consulting will also assist with disaster recovery training exercises to test the thoroughness of a company's preparedness model. At the conclusion of a consulting engagement ECS will award a Certificate of Business Resilience for the development of a Business Continuity Plan in accordance with industry-standards best practices established by DRI International, NAFP 1600, and other firms specializing in business continuity, emergency preparedness, and business resilience standards. The ECS consultants are certified business continuity planners and business resiliency specialists with Fortune 500 experience.

Elliot Consulting is part of the Department of Homeland Security's national vendor list of organizations providing business continuity planning services that have met the DHS/FEMA standards. In addition Elliot Consulting was one of roughly 1200 national, regional, state and local organizations which cross-marketed DHS's National Preparedness Month (NPM) efforts and continues to utilize that information within their educational seminars.

Additional information can be found on the [ECS website](#).

Previous Newsletters

- [Previous Newsletters](#)

Email: info@elliott-consulting.com

Phone: 813-792-8833

Website: <http://www.elliott-consulting.com>

[Forward this newsletter](#)

SafeUnsubscribe®

This email was sent to selliott@gmail.com, by info@elliott-consulting.com

[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Powered by



Elliot Consulting Services, Inc. | 10238 Woodford Bridge Street | Tampa | FL | 33626