**Communicable Disease Emergency Planning Tabletop Exercise for Indigenous Communities**

***Exercise Organizer Guide***

**November 2020**

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**What is a Communicable Disease Emergency?**

Communicable diseases spread from one person to another. They can also spread from an animal to a human. Small germs cause communicable disease. Communicable diseases can spread many ways. They may spread by:

* Contact with:
  + Coughing, sneezing, and saliva (for example, flu, chicken pox, TB)
  + Body fluids like blood, semen, vomit, and diarrhea (for example, food poisoning, HIV)
* Indirectly by:
  + Unwashed hands
  + Unclean surfaces
  + Unclean food or water
  + Bites from insects or animals

Some communicable diseases spread easily between people. This can become an emergency when many people get the disease.

A *Communicable Disease Emergency (CDE)* is a current and serious situation. It affects a community for a short time. They may not have the resources to care for everyone. A community may need to ask for help from other levels of government.

**What is a Tabletop Exercise?**

A tabletop exercise is a safe place to practice an emergency plan. During the exercise, the Facilitator shares a scenario. The scenario describes a pretend emergency from start to end. Participants discuss how they would respond to the scenario. This exercise also helps to identify all of the local resources that the community may ask to assist them when working through a CDE i.e. local public health, provincial government, emergency medical services (fire, police and ambulance).

**Why should we do this exercise?**

This exercise helps test and update communicable disease emergency plans. It can help communities create a plan if no plan exists. It identifies gaps in existing plans and a plan to fix the gaps.

Goals of the CDE Planning Tabletop Exercise

* Build community capacity and leadership for emergencies.
* Point out the most important activities to manage emergency response.
* Explain roles and specific duties.
* Identifies the internal and external resources that are available to assist the community.
* Build connections with partners.

**How do we do the exercise?**

1. **Plan the communicable disease emergency tabletop exercise.**

* Discuss with the appropriate authorities within the community to see if and when a tabletop exercise can be held.
* Start organizing logistics. Please see the “Who is involved? What are their duties?” Chart for more details around the logistics.

1. **Run the exercise (Day 1).**
   * Review the scenario. Answer the questions.
2. **Run a review meeting (Day 2).**
   * Review your answers against the ideal responses in the *Response Sheet*. This will assist in identifying strengths and areas to improve the existing plan. If there is no plan, you may use the CDE Plan Template and decide what to include.
3. **Create an improvement plan.**
   * The organizer identifies action items, timelines, and leads using the *Improvement Plan* document. This plan is brought to Chief and Council for approval.
4. **Follow-up on action items.**
   * The organizer follows-up on the action items outlined in the *Improvement Plan* document.
   * The organiser completes the Communicable Disease Emergency Plan Template if none already exists, or may use it to revise the existing one.

**What does the toolkit include?**

1. **Exercise Organizer Guide.** This document helps you plan and run a tabletop exercise. It explains every document and everyone’s roles and responsibilities.
2. **Exercise Organizer Guide for Virtual Meeting Guidelines (Appendix A)** This document outlines the best practices and guidelines on how to run a virtual meeting. It also includes tips and tricks on how to facilitate the process.
3. **Facilitators Guide (Appendix B)**

This document provides the Facilitator with guidelines on how to facilitate the tabletop exercise.

1. **Scenario and Questions (Appendix C)**

This document describes a pretend communicable disease emergency scenario from beginning to end. The Facilitator uses this document to guide the discussion during the tabletop exercise. All exercise participants receive this document.

1. **Response Sheet (Appendix D)**

This document provides the ideal responses to the questions in the *Scenario and Questions* document. During the review meeting, the participants can review their answers against these ideal responses to help identify strengths and areas of improvement in the community’s processes when dealing with a CDE, and within their CDE plan. The facilitator may use the ideal responses to guide the discussion during the review meeting.

1. **Improvement Plan (Appendix E).**

This document can be used to develop an action plan by identifying specific activities, timelines, and leads to improve the CDE plan, or to assist in drafting a plan.

1. **CDE Planning Tabletop Exercise Presentation (Appendix F)**

This PowerPoint can be presented to the participants at the beginning of the tabletop exercise. It explains the purpose of the exercise and how the day will unfold. This presentation can be modified to better meet the needs of the community.

1. **Participant Feedback Form (Appendix G)**

All participants complete this form at the end of the exercise.

1. **Communicable Disease Emergency Plan Template (Appendix H)**

This template can be used to create a plan, or to guide the revisions of your existing plan.

1. **Communicable Disease Emergency Plan Checklist (Appendix I)**

This document can be used to help determine the needs of your community in regards to CDE planning. This checklist exercise will help to identify strengths and areas of improvement of the CDE plan, which will in turn assist in determining which questions within the Scenario & Questions document, should be prioritized and discussed during the tabletop exercise.

1. **Community Post Action Review (Appendix J)**

The purpose of this template is to facilitate the process of completing an after-action review within your community. Processes, activities, and decisions made during the communicable disease emergency (CDE) response should be documented here for future reference. This template helps ensure that lessons learned from the real-life event are captured and remain available to inform CDE plan revisions and future CDE responses.

**Who is involved? What are their duties?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Exercise Organizer**  **(i.e. Health Director, Nurse In Charge, Councillor)** | * Plans meetings * Identifies the right participants * Organises logistics (for example, book a room and send invitations) * Supports the Facilitator during the exercise * Completes the Improvement Plan and presents to the Chief and Council for approval * Updates or drafts the communicable disease emergency plan |
| **Facilitator** | * Present the PowerPoint presentation to the group at the beginning of the exercise. * Give information to participants during the exercise * Manage discussions during the exercise and the review meeting * Encourages participation * Help the team meet the meeting objectives during the time given |
| **Note takers**  (2 or 3 people) | * Write down key talking points including Parking Lot items during the exercise and review meetings. * During the exercise, one of the note takers should take notes on a flipchart for everyone to see and another on the response sheet or their own paper pad. |
| **Participants** | * Participants read the scenario and answer questions.   Participants may include:   * Band/ Tribal/ Community Council members * Emergency management * Health system decision makers (including clinical care and public health) * Health Facility Health Director * Nurse In-Charge * Law enforcement * First Responders * Community leaders (for example, teachers, social services, Elders) * Other stakeholders. This might include local, provincial or federal government. It might be Indigenous or regional groups. * First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Regional CDE Manager or Regional Health Emergency Management Coordinator |

**How do you plan for the exercise?**

1. **Review existing plans.**
   * All-hazards emergency plan (community/provincial level).
   * Communicable disease emergency plan (community level).
   * Any other local, provincial, or federal emergency plans that affect the community.
2. **Organize the Communicable Disease Emergency Tabletop Exercise and Review Meeting.** 
   * Identify people that can assist you in preparing for the CDE Planning Tabletop Exercise.
   * Identify key people to attend. Tell them why the exercise is important and what will happen.
   * Decide the place, date, and time of the exercise and review meeting.
   * Organize logistics. This includes booking room and inviting participants (See sample invitation below).
   * Identify one facilitator and two to three note takers.
   * Review all documents of the tabletop exercise, and adapt them to meet the needs of your community.
   * Choose questions from the *Scenario and Questions* document that are most important/relevant to your community. You may engage with your community’s health facility authorities to do this. Try and choose questions from each main topic.
3. **Meet with the facilitator, note takers, and any other decision makers before the exercise.**
   * Review the agenda, roles & responsibilities.
   * Review the PowerPoint presentation and modify as needed.
   * Review the scenario and chosen questions.
   * Familiarize yourselves with the *Response Sheet* and *Improvement Plan.*
4. **Run the tabletop exercise.**
   * Prepare logistics. This could include chairs, tables, paper, pens, flipchart, markers, computer, projector, and printing.
   * The facilitator shares the PowerPoint presentation with the group.
   * The facilitator walks through the scenario and pre-determined questions, and manages the discussion.
   * The facilitator may use the Response Sheet to guide the discussion.
   * The note takers take notes in the Response Sheet or a paper pad and on a flipchart so everyone can see.
5. **Run the review meeting.**
   * The review meeting is ideally held the day after the exercise meeting.
   * The Facilitator reviews the previous day’s points of discussion against the ideal responses in the *Response Sheet.*
   * The Facilitator guides the discussion to help participants identify gaps, areas of improvement, and concrete actions/activities.
6. **Complete the improvement plan.**
   * The exercise organiser, and others if required, uses the notes and flipchart to fill in the action items/timelines/leads in the *Improvement Plan*.
7. **Obtain approvals from Chief & Council**

* The *Improvement Plan* is presented to Chief & Council for approval.

1. **Create or revise communicable disease emergency plan**
   * The organiser, or whoever has the authority, revises the community’s Communicable Disease Emergency plan based on the notes taken and the *Improvement Plan*, or drafts a new plan using the *Communicable Disease Emergency Plan Template*.
2. **Share the improvement plan and communicable disease emergency plan.**
   * You may want to share the documents with relevant leaders, neighboring communities, public health authorities, etc.
3. **Follow-up on Improvement Plan.**

* The Exercise Organiser follows-up on the progress and completion of the identified action items in the Improvement Plan.

**Sample Invitation Letter (adapt as needed)**

*Dear XXXX,*

*Our community will hold a tabletop exercise on communicable disease emergency planning. The exercise will be on (date) at (location).*

*Indigenous Services Canada created a tool to help plan for communicable disease emergencies. This tool lets us practice our response to an emergency. It will help participants understand their duties during an emergency. The results will improve/create our Communicable Disease Emergency Plan.*

*Please join us in this two day activity. Day 1 will be the tabletop exercise. Day 2 will be a review meeting.*

*XXXX will reimburse travel expenses.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **DATE AND TIME** | **DURATION** | **LOCATION** |
| XXXX | 2 days | XXXX |

*All the people who would respond to an emergency should attend. Please identify a replacement if you are unable to come. We look forward to welcoming you!*

**Sample agenda for the tabletop exercise – DAY 1 (adapt as needed)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Time** | **Activity** | **Who** |
| **08:30** | Participants gather | All |
| **08:45** | Welcoming remarks | Facilitator/Organiser |
| **09:00** | Opening prayer/ceremony/protocol | Elder |
| **09:15** | Roundtable introductions | All |
| **09:30** | PowerPoint presentation – *Exercise to Assess or Draft your Communicable Disease Emergency Plan* | Facilitator |
| **10:00** | Presentation and discussion of Scenario and Questions | All |
| **12:00** | Lunch | |
| **13:00** | Continue presentation and discussion of Scenario and Questions | All |
| **15:00** | Roundtable | All |
| **15:30** | Fill in Participant Feedback Form | All |
| **15:45** | Closing prayer/ceremony/protocol | Elder |
| **16:00** | End of tabletop exercise | |

**DAY 2 Sample agenda for the review meeting – DAY 2 (adapt as needed)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Time** | **Activity** | **Who** |
| **08:30** | Participants gather | All |
| **08:45** | Welcoming remarks | Facilitator/Organiser |
| **09:00** | Opening prayer/ceremony/protocol | Elder |
| **09:30** | Review Responses   * Review Response Sheet * Review flipchart notes * Identify main points of discussion * Decide on actions to improve or draft communicable disease emergency plan | All |
| **12:00** | Lunch | |
| **13:00** | Continue:   * Review Response Sheet * Review flipchart notes * Identify main points of discussion * Decide on actions to improve or draft communicable disease emergency plan | All |
| **15:00** | Roundtable | All |
| **15:30** | Fill in Participant Feedback Form | All |
| **15:45** | Closing prayer/ceremony/protocol | Elder |
| **16:00** | End of review | |

**Glossary**

These words are found in the toolkit resources.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Term** | **Definition** |
| **Communicable Disease** | Infections that spread from one person to another. They can also spread from an animal to a human. Small germs cause communicable disease. The germs might be bacteria, viruses, parasites, or fungi. Communicable diseases can spread many ways.  They may spread by:   * Contact with:   + Coughing, sneezing, and saliva (for example, flu, chicken pox, TB)   + Body fluids like blood, semen, vomit, and diarrhea (for example, food poisoning, HIV) * Indirectly by:   + Unwashed hands   + Unclean surfaces   + Unclean food or water   + Bites from insects or animals |
| **Communicable Disease Emergency** | Some communicable diseases spread easily between people. This can become an emergency when many people get the disease. A community may not have the resources to care for everyone. They may need to ask for help from other levels of government. It is a current and serious situation. It affects a community for a short time. |
| **Communicable Disease Emergency Plan Template** | This template can be used to create a plan, or it can be used to guide the revisions of an existing plan. |
| **Communicable Disease Emergency Tabletop Exercise Toolkit** | A package of resources needed to run the Communicable Disease Emergency Tabletop Exercise. |
| **Community leader** | A person who knows the community well. They respond to the exercise for the community and social services systems. For example, social worker, teacher, Community Health Representative, community member. |
| **Exercise** | See “Tabletop Exercise” |
| **Exercise Organizer** | Plans the exercise. May be an employee who normally prepares for emergency situations. The Band/ Tribal/ Community Council may assign someone. |
| **Exercise Organiser Guide** | This guide tells you how to plan and run a tabletop exercise. It tells you how to prepare and who should do the work. It tells you about the different documents that support each task. |
| **Facilitator** | Runs the exercise. Presents the scenario, asks questions, and encourages discussion. |
| **Health Professional** | Someone who works in the medical profession, for example, a doctor or nurse. |
| **Health system decision makers or representatives** | A person who can respond to the scenario for the community’s health system. For example, a health director, nurse-in-charge, doctor. |
| **Ideal response** | The preferred answer to a question in a specific emergency scenario. |
| **Improvement Plan** | A document that lists corrective actions to improve a communicable disease emergency plan. The plan gives timelines for completion. |
| **Note taker** | Writes down key discussion points during the exercise. |
| **Pandemic** | When a communicable disease affects a large area. For example, a country or the entire world. |
| **Parking Lot** | A parking lot records items that aren’t relevant to the discussion. The items might be questions, concerns, or things to consider, and to be discussed at a different time. |
| **Participants** | Participant may include:   * Band/ Tribal/ Community Council members * Emergency management * Health system decision makers (including clinical care and public health) * Law enforcement * First Responders * Community leaders (for example, teachers, social services, Elders) * Other stakeholders. This might include local, provincial or federal government. It might be Indigenous or regional groups. |
| **Public Health Agencies** | Protect the health of people and their communities. |
| **Response Sheet** | A document to organize notes from the tabletop exercise. Compares a community’s responses to ideal responses. This helps assess the plan’s strengths and areas for improvement. |
| **Scenario** | A pretend situation that could be real. A description of the hazard and events during the emergency. |
| **Tabletop exercise** | A discussion-based activity in a relaxed environment. Participants discuss their community’s response to a pretend scenario. The goal is to learn how prepared a community is to respond to an emergency. |

**References**

Government of Canada Pandemic Influenza Plan for the Health Sector

[http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cpip-pclcpi/index-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cpip-pclcpi/index-eng.php%20)

Highlights from the Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan for the Health Sector

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/flu-influenza/canadian-pandemic-influenza-preparedness-planning-guidance-health-sector.html>

Annex B – Influenza Pandemic Planning Considerations in On-Reserve First Nation Communities – of the CPIP

[http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cpip-pclcpi/ann-b-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cpip-pclcpi/ann-b-eng.php%20)

PHAC – Considerations in the use of homemade masks to protect against COVID-19 (English)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/about-non-medical-masks-face-coverings.html>

PHAC – Considerations in the use of homemade masks to protect against COVID-19 (French)

<https://www.canada.ca/fr/sante-publique/services/maladies/2019-nouveau-coronavirus/prevention-risques/a-propos-masques-couvre-visage-non-medicaux.html>

Personal protective equipment against potential Ebola virus exposure: lower risk – video (English)

<http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/video/ppe-low-risk-epi-risque-faible-eng.php>

Personal protective equipment against potential Ebola virus exposure: lower risk – video (French)

<http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/video/ppe-low-risk-epi-risque-faible-fra.php>

Personal protective equipment against potential Ebola virus exposure: higher risk – video (English)

<http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/video/ppe-high-risk-epi-risque-eleve-eng.php>

Personal protective equipment against potential Ebola virus exposure: higher risk – video (French)

<http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/video/ppe-high-risk-epi-risque-eleve-fra.php>

Health related video gallery (English)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/health/video.html>

Health related video gallery (French)

<http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/video/index-fra.php>

Public Health Agency of Canada - Provincial and territorial resources (English)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/symptoms/provincial-territorial-resources-covid-19.html>

Public Health Agency of Canada - Provincial and territorial resources (French)

<https://www.canada.ca/fr/sante-publique/services/maladies/2019-nouveau-coronavirus/symptomes/ressources-provinces-territoires-covid-19.html>

Alberta’s CD Emergency Plan Template and Appendices

<https://www.onehealth.ca/ab/ABCovid-19>

BC Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/pandemic-influenza>

Alberta’s Plan for Pandemic Influenza

<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/alberta-s-pandemic-influenza-plan>

Saskatchewan Health – Public Pandemic Influenza Plan

<https://www.kelseytrailhealth.ca/Publications/Plans/Documents/Saskatchewan%20Health%20Public%20Pandemic%20Influenza%20Plan%20March%202006.pdf>

Preparing for Pandemic Influenza in Manitoba

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/pandemic.html>

Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/emb/pan_flu/pan_flu_plan.aspx>

Québec Pandemic Influenza Plan – Health Mission

<https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/fichiers/2005/05-235-05a.pdf>

New Brunswick Pandemic Influenza Plan – For the Health Sector

<https://www.welcomenb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ps-sp/pdf/emo/Pandemic_Planning-e.pdf>

Nova Scotia Health System Pandemic Influenza Plan

<https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/hheb1hmt.pdf>

Prince Edward Island Pandemic Influenza Contingency Plan for the Health Sector

<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/pandemic_influenza_contingency_plan.pdf>

Newfoundland and Labrador Pandemic Influenza Plan

<https://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publichealth/pandemic/influenza.html>

Justice Institute of British Columbia - Aboriginal Disaster Resilience Planning

<https://adrp.jibc.ca/>

Yukon Government Pandemic Co-ordination Plan

<https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/cs/cs-yg-pandemic-coordination-plan.pdf>

Government of the NWT Pandemic Influenza Contingency Plan

<http://pubs.aina.ucalgary.ca/health/62197.pdf>

WHO Hand washing steps

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IisgnbMfKvI>

Le lavage des mains selon l’OMS

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FjRZbbnZaI>

Health Care Waste Management – Public Health Benefits, and the Need for Effective Environmental Regulatory Surveillance in Federal Republic of Nigeria

<https://www.intechopen.com/books/current-topics-in-public-health/health-care-waste-management-public-health-benefits-and-the-need-for-effective-environmental-regulat>

# WHO Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) advice for the public: When and how to use masks (English)

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>

# WHO Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) advice for the public: When and how to use masks (French)

<https://www.who.int/fr/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>

World Health Organisation health-care waste

<https://www.who.int/topics/medical_waste/en/>

# 9 best practices for engagement in virtual meetings

<https://www.nten.org/article/9-best-practices-engagement-virtual-meetings/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIkZXHx8zy6gIVFqSzCh2bLA_tEAAYAiAAEgK5ZfD_BwE>

**19 November 2020**