

## Psychosocial Considerations - Appendix 6

### DESCRIPTION OF WEB BASED AND TELE CRISIS OPTIONS AND HOW TO ACCESS THEM

#### Web-based Resources for Managing the Psychosocial Impact of an Influenza Pandemic

##### Overview

The Department of Human Services-Division of Mental Health Services-Disaster & Terrorism Branch, in cooperation with the Department of Health & Senior Services, will develop web-based resources to prevent undesirable psychological, emotional, and behavioral responses to an influenza pandemic. The target audiences for such resources are the general public and providers of health care, mental health care and related human services; and first responders. In a phase-specific these resources are psycho-educational in nature, addressing the impact (i.e., typical emotional and behavioral reactions, etc.) and intervention (i.e., strategies and techniques for coping), as well as introducing appropriate resources (i.e., downloadable printed materials, links to helpful websites, organizations, etc.).

The goal objectives of web-based resources developed for the public include:

- Provide accurate information and education regarding the emotional and behavioral response to the various phases of a pandemic;
- Increase health protective behaviors and response behaviors (i.e., individuals under extreme stress will need reminders to take care of their own health and limit potentially harmful behaviors);
- Reduce a potential surge in demand for health care services by mitigating stress-related responses to the outbreak;
- Reduce social isolation;
- Reduce stigma and discrimination that may further complicate response and recovery;
- Maximize the individual's ability to care for self and family;
- Facilitate connectedness to family and other social supports via virtual or electronic means;
- Maintain a sense of community;
- Foster hope and optimism while appropriately addressing risk.

The format of such web-based programs includes, but is not limited to:

- Asynchronous distance learning programs (PowerPoint slides with voice-over narration and/or video of narrator converted to Flash to compress file size and increase ease of use on all types of computers);
- Creation/ facilitation of synchronous and/or asynchronous virtual support communities to foster a sense of community cohesion (i.e., web-based forums using text, voice and/or web-cams; telephone, etc.);
- Development of other web-based resources such as downloadable publications addressing the psychosocial aspects of the outbreak.

Such web-content may be hosted on multiple servers, including those of the Department of Human Services, the Division of Mental Health Services, and potentially by partner agencies, such as the NJ Learns learning management system hosted by the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness and the Department of Health and Senior Services to extend their reach.