



**For public distribution**  
Monday, April 27, 2009

**EOC SITUATION REPORT #4  
SWINE INFLUENZA IN THE AMERICAS  
(MEXICO, THE UNITED STATES, CANADA)**

**Summary**

- The International Health Regulations (IHR) Emergency Committee met today and recommended the change of the Pandemic Influenza phase from phase 3 to phase 4.
- This means that the probability of a pandemic is more likely but not inevitable.
- Given the widespread presence of the virus, containment of the virus is not feasible at this stage. The current focus should be on mitigation measures (protection of people).
- It is not recommended to close borders nor restrict international travels, as it will have little or no impact on the spread of the virus, and will cause major disruptions to countries.
- The use of seasonal influenza vaccine should continue as previously recommended. The production of seasonal vaccine will continue and this will be subject to re-evaluation as the situation evolves.
- In Mexico, there are 26 laboratory confirmed cases of H1N1 swine influenza with 7 deaths. There are 1840 suspected cases of which 104 have died.
- In the US, there are 40 laboratory confirmed cases (7 in California, 2 in Kansas, 28 in New York, 1 in Ohio, 2 in Texas).
- In Canada, there are 6 confirmed cases (4 in Nova Scotia, 2 British Columbia).
- In the European Union there are 3 confirmed cases (2 in Scotland, 1 in Spain).

**WHO Phase Change**

- The International Health Regulations (IHR) Emergency Committee is comprised of 15 independent expert advisors to the WHO Director-General, and recommended the phase change.
- Changing the phase level sends a strong signal to countries to strengthen disease surveillance, to look at pandemic preparedness plans, and to determine what steps should be taken in the event the outbreak becomes a pandemic.
- Phase 4 means countries should activate their national contingency plans. All the countries of LAC are already on high alert.

### Overall Recommendations

- Personal protection recommendations are: frequent hand-washing, covering coughs, and staying at home if you have a fever.
- In healthcare settings PAHO/WHO recommends enhanced infection control and surveillance and personal protection.
- It is not recommended to close to border nor restrict international travels. However it is recommended that travel is postponed if the person is sick, and medical advice should be sought if the person becomes sick after travel.
- For more information on the different phase levels please check Annex 1 below.

### At Risk Area see Map



Figure 1<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Summary of locations with reported deaths (red triangles) and confirmed cases (blue icons).

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.who.int/entity/mediacentre/news/statements/2009/h1n1\\_20090427/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/entity/mediacentre/news/statements/2009/h1n1_20090427/en/index.html)

## WHO and PAHO Response

- PAHO is constantly briefing its partners by various media and has prepared guidelines and information documents on the topic. There will be a briefing for Ministers of Health and country officers on Tuesday, April 28 (3.30pm, Washington DC time).
- Mobilization of a multidisciplinary team of technical experts, including epidemiologists, disasters experts, logisticians, communicators, etc to Mexico.
- The WHO SHOC room and PAHO Emergency Operations Center (EOC) remain activated.

## Conclusions

- Ongoing investigations will help characterize the transmission of the virus within communities as well as better document how disease severity varies from country to country and region to region.
- The information confirms that the virus is transmitted between humans. Note that you cannot get swine flu from consuming pork products.
- All cases reported worldwide are mild cases or not confirmed; to date only Mexico has reported some fatal cases.
- The Director-General of WHO has raised the pandemic phase level from 3 to 4.

## For more information

- [Director-General's statement on swine influenza outbreak](#)<sup>4</sup>.
- [PAHO Influenza website](#)<sup>5</sup>.
- [Alerta preventiva por brote de influenza](#)<sup>6</sup>, Secretaría de Salud de México.
- [CDC Human Swine Influenza Investigation](#)<sup>7</sup>.
- [World Health Organization](#)<sup>8</sup>.

---

<sup>5</sup> [http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=blogcategory&id=805&Itemid=569](http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=805&Itemid=569)

<sup>6</sup> [http://portal.salud.gob.mx/contenidos/noticias/influenza/alerta\\_influenza.html](http://portal.salud.gob.mx/contenidos/noticias/influenza/alerta_influenza.html)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/investigation.htm>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.who.int>

**Annex 1: WHO PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE GUIDANCE 2009**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>WHO Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response Guidance, 2009</b>
<i>Phase 1</i>	No animal influenza virus circulating among animals has been reported to cause infection in humans.
<i>Phase 2</i>	An animal influenza virus circulating in domesticated or wild animals is known to have caused infection in humans and is therefore considered a specific potential pandemic threat.
<i>Phase 3</i>	An animal or human-animal influenza reassortant virus has caused sporadic cases or small clusters of disease in people, but has not resulted in human-to-human transmission sufficient to sustain community-level outbreaks.
<i>Phase 4</i>	Human-to-human transmission (H2H) of an animal or human-animal influenza reassortant virus able to sustain community-level outbreaks has been verified.
<i>Phase 5</i>	The same identified virus has caused sustained community level outbreaks in two or more countries in one WHO region.
<i>Phase 6</i>	In addition to the criteria defined in Phase 5, the same virus has caused sustained community level outbreaks in at least one other country in another WHO region.
<i>Post-peak period</i>	Levels of pandemic influenza in most countries with adequate surveillance have dropped below peak levels.
<i>Possible new wave</i>	Level of pandemic influenza activity in most countries with adequate surveillance rising again.
<i>Post-pandemic period</i>	Levels of influenza activity have returned to the levels seen for seasonal influenza in most countries with adequate surveillance.

The PAHO EOC can be contacted at +1 202 974 3399 or [eoc@paho.org](mailto:eoc@paho.org)