



FEDERAL PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLANS

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The vast majority of federal pandemic response plans focus solely on planning for pandemic influenza (eg, the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza, the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan, and the Pandemic Influenza Plan). However, a few federal response plans take a broader, all-hazards approach, including the National Health Security Strategy and the National Response Framework. Notably, none of the response plans outline how to respond to an infectious disease outbreak that has been deliberately caused. Also, the federal government lacks a publicly available plan for how to identify, characterize, and develop medical countermeasures against a novel pathogen.

FEDERAL RESPONSE PLANS—PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

In 2005 and 2006, the White House Homeland Security Council issued the [National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza](#) and the [National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan](#) to help improve preparedness and response to influenza pandemics. These plans “aimed to stop, slow or otherwise limit the spread of a pandemic to the United States; limiting domestic spread, mitigating disease, suffering and death; and sustaining infrastructure and lessening the effects on the economy and society as a whole.”¹ Additionally, in 2005, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued its own [Pandemic Influenza Plan](#). While the National Strategy and Implementation Plan have not been updated since 2005-06, the Pandemic Influenza Plan was updated in 2009 and, more recently, in 2017.

HHS Pandemic Influenza Plan

HHS initially developed the Pandemic Influenza Plan in 2005 to “prevent, control, and mitigate the effects of influenza viruses that pose high risk to humans.”² It was last updated in 2017 and identifies 7 key domains that will be focused on during the next 10 years:²

1. Surveillance, Epidemiology, and Laboratory Activities
2. Community Mitigation Measures
3. Medical Countermeasures
4. Healthcare System Preparedness and Response Activities
5. Communications and Public Outreach
6. Scientific Infrastructure and Preparedness
7. Domestic and International Response Policy, Incident Management, and Global Partnerships and Capacity Building



FEDERAL RESPONSE PLANS—ALL HAZARDS

National Response Framework

The National Response Framework acts as a guide to how the United States will respond to disasters and emergencies.³ The framework is in its third edition, last updated in June 2016.

The National Response Framework is composed of 3 sections that help operationalize the framework: a base document, Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes, and Support Annexes.³

Emergency support functions are “the primary, but not exclusive, Federal coordinating structures for building, sustaining, and delivering the response core capabilities.”³

- ESF #8 supports public health and medical services and is coordinated by HHS.³ Functions include public health, medical surge support, behavioral health services, and mass fatality management.³

National Health Security Strategy and Implementation Plan 2015-2018

The National Health Security Strategy (NHSS) was released in 2009 by HHS with the goal of “galvaniz[ing] efforts to minimize the health consequences of large-scale emergencies.”⁴ This goal is supported by 5 strategic objectives:⁴

1. Build and sustain healthy, resilient communities.
2. Enhance the national capability to produce and effectively use both medical countermeasures and nonpharmaceutical interventions.
3. Ensure comprehensive health situational awareness to support decision making before incidents and during response and recovery operations.
4. Enhance the integration and effectiveness of the public health, healthcare, and emergency management systems.
5. Strengthen global health security.

REFERENCES

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