



# Business Continuity in Uncertain Times

Pandemic Planning 101

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May 2020

# Agenda

- What are pandemics?
- Why social distancing and “PPE”?
- What should I expect to happen?
- How can I continue my business?
  - Emergency management and business continuity
  - Pandemic specific strategies
  - Business continuity strategies
- Let’s get ready to re-open Muskoka!
- Q & A

## Who is Ann?

Ann Wyganowski, MBCP, MBCI, CBRM

- Project Manager in systems dev and implementation, Y2k, evolved to Business Continuity Management
- Global industry experience over 30 years
- Serial volunteer (DRIE, DRIC, GTIME, etc)
- Teach for DRIC, GBC, speak at many conferences
- Thriving consulting practice with many clients big and very small, all types of government and industry sectors in BCM, DR, Emergency Planning, Crisis and Incident Management, Pandemic Planning, plan updates, exercises
- Based in Township of Muskoka Lakes, Ontario
- Has a loud Westie named Hercules, a husband, two kids in 20's, an ancient Lhasa Apso named Lola that outlived both of my parents
- Easily located at [www.bcp-help.com](http://www.bcp-help.com)





# Business Continuity Planning & Emergency Management

- *Emergency Management - An ongoing process to prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from an incident that threatens life, property, operations, or the environment*
- *Business Continuity - An ongoing process supported and funded by senior management to ensure that the necessary steps are taken to identify the impact of potential losses, maintain viable recovery strategies, recovery plans, and continuity of services **and operations**.*

CSA z1600

# What does it really mean?

- Emergency Procedures and Crisis Communications
  - React to the incident and control it
  - Make sure people are safe
- Business Continuity Planning (BCP)
  - What you do next to keep business running

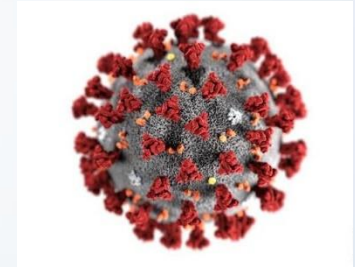


# What are Pandemics?

- Completely different ~~influenza~~ (prior knowledge!) virus subtype
  - COVID 19 first coronavirus pandemic
  - SARS and MERS also coronaviruses, but epidemics
  - SARS eradicated, too late on COVID 19 to replicate approach to SARS *but we have a lot of experience and knowledge in Ontario*
  - Influenza A pandemics have occurred 3 to 4 times per century
- Worldwide – high rates of illness and death
- New vaccine must be manufactured

# Viruses

- Smallest of all microbes
- Consist mainly of genetic material
- Many different structures
- Live in the cells of other species
- Need host cells to reproduce & survive
- Often take over host cell genetic material & host cell dies



***Change is good for Viruses!***

***Small changes = Annual Flu Season***

***Large change = No immunity in humans, pandemic***

# Pandemic conditions?

*Things have changed a bit since SARS!!*

Conditions required for ~~an influenza pandemic~~:

- ~~Novel influenza A virus emerges~~
- New virus efficiently spreads from human to human
- New virus causes serious illness and death
- Population has little/no immunity to the new virus

Source: The late Dr. Sheela Basrur

# Why is COVID 19 different?

- People can be infected but do not show symptoms at all and continue to spread COVID
- Lives on various surfaces for long periods of time
- **Easily killed with soap and water**
- Isolation will not be a total means of preventing spread
  - Virus has already spread widely and not under control
- Social distancing extremely important
  - COVID so small can travel up to 2 meters / 6 feet
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
  - Washable masks vs masks in first aid kit
  - Hand sanitizer where no soap and water available



# How does a virus enter the human body?

- Virus enters through
  - Nose
  - Mouth
  - Eyes
  - Skin
- Typically leaves the same way
  - Person coughs or sneezes



# What am I responsible for?

- Duty of care to employees and other stakeholders
  - Health and Safety
  - Human resource management policies
- Negligence
  - Risk management (knew there was a risk but didn't manage the risk)
- Regulatory compliance
- Will be as defined by the province to re-open (**TBD**)
  - Contact tracing
  - Other social distancing and sanitation requirement

***Important concept: Requirements and compliance will vary based on risk levels so there will be peaks and valleys***

# Pandemic Plan Objectives

- Duty of care to staff / volunteers / customers / general public
- Prevent & mitigate disruption to key processes/services to continue business
- Minimize spread of the disease
- Continue essential processes/services to support the community
- Calm and confidence



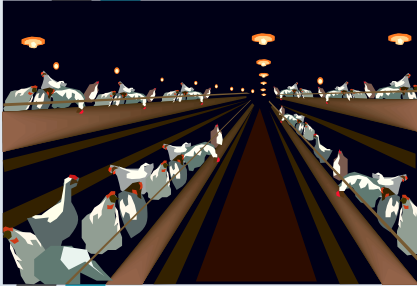
*Mitigate the  
fear factor*

# Pandemic Plan Scope

## Includes:

- Health & safety
- Human resources
- Communications
- Finance & Property Services
- Information & Technical Services
- Priority services & processes
- Clients
- Neighbors in shared facilities
- Local authorities
- Suppliers





# Pandemic Phases

- Pandemic is predicted event, not short term
- Exact timing uncertain of risk levels
- Gradual escalation was expected, not the case with H1N1 either, COVID came quickly out of Asia Pacific (as fast as we travel in airplanes)
- Actions change in each phase based on risk

*Lengthy & thought to be in waves*

## Phase 3

- Gather information
- Assess risks
- Communication plan
- Set strategy
- Action plan for BCP

## Phase 4

- Test strategy
- Employee messaging

## Phase 5

- Semi or fully activate BCP to protect critical resources & business

## Phase 6

- Focus on employees
- Delivery of key products & services

*Prevention / Mitigation* > *Response* > *Resumption & Recovery*

*Pandemic ends - - full business Restoration*



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# Hindsight is everything!

- Government pandemic plan activation rapid in response to severe risk to health and safety of Canadians
- Most small and medium business owners taken by surprise
  - Plans that could have been thought out in advance were not
  - Many SMB owners don't do BCPs unless regulated
- Time is now to do that planning
- Your actions will vary based on changing levels of risk and government response

# Government Guidelines indicate “ready to go”

- 3 Phases in approach
  1. Select workplaces that can meet guidelines
  2. More workplaces, significant mitigation plans
  3. All workplaces
- 2-4 weeks per phase
- Cases must consistently decrease or reversal to prior phase
- Must be able to contact trace 90% in one day



[Staged Plan at https://www.ontario.ca/page/reopening-ontario-after-covid-19](https://www.ontario.ca/page/reopening-ontario-after-covid-19)

[Industry Sector Guidelines at https://www.ontario.ca/page/resources-prevent-covid-19-workplace?\\_ga=2.112314564.1507595974.1588445635-1583552877.1588012273](https://www.ontario.ca/page/resources-prevent-covid-19-workplace?_ga=2.112314564.1507595974.1588445635-1583552877.1588012273)

# So what should I do right now?

- Differing levels of risk require different levels of protection
- Let's start at the beginning
  - What we needed to think about before we had the major shock wave
  - These are all legitimate actions for a business owner to think about now

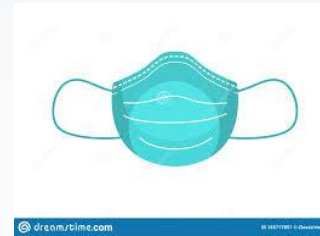


# People care considerations

- Plans to address situations where no next of kin or guardian is available
- Hand sanitizing stations
- Up to date contact points and lists
- Contact tracing methodology
- Routine safety and sanitation practices reviewed
- Potential additional responsibilities resulting from pandemic?



# Management of Human Resources



- Absenteeism
- Policies for leave & sick days
- Assess procedures/adequacy related to Benefits & Compensation
  - Guidance on other related policies and benefits programs
- Travel and social distancing policies
- Work from home *(more on this next)*
- Provide additional qualified resources to support missing personnel
  - Succession planning reviewed, recruitment procedures defined
- Review of legislative requirements (local, provincial & federal)
- Training
  - Assess & develop training for employees
  - Infectious disease outbreak protocols
  - Use of PPE

# Work from Home Policies

- What does the employer provide and fund?
  - Office supplies, phone, fax, internet data, printer, mail
  - Ergonomics
  - Virtual meeting facilities and training
- Hours of work, reporting to work, flex time
- Vacation and sick days
- Security (physical and cyber)
- Supervising remote employees



# Health & Safety on site

- Develop and follow procedures for incident handling and notification
- Establish isolation room
- Personal Emergency Preparedness information and training
- PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)
  - Vendor management
  - Stock (6-8 week)
  - Distribution process





# Communications

- Develop communications plan for pandemic scenario
- Review with Crisis Management Team, Board and Public Health, local authorities as necessary
- Establish an “intranet” site or hot line for notifications
- Promote ongoing education, awareness

# Purchasing

- Assess contracts for pandemic clauses, Force Majeur
- Consider process to adjust purchasing process during pandemic
- Develop critical vendor list, highlight alternate providers
- Assess delivery methods (direct ship to store vs pick up at vendor)





# Property Services

- Define infectious disease response plan
  - HVAC
  - Infected person on site
- Notification to tenants
- Develop procedures to increase and monitor maintenance and cleaning
- Installation/refilling of hand sanitizers
  - Janitorial closets
  - Entrances/exits
  - Frequently touched objects

When you work from home and you're still  
in your pajamas at 3pm



# Technical Services

- Meet remote work access requirements, test capacity
- Review backups, access to backups, capabilities
- Security measures for work at home
- Business prioritization
- Assess eligibility audio conferencing or other alternate communications

# Medium Risk Planning Elements

- Restrictions relax
- Greater freedom to conduct “business as unusual”
- Government guidelines
- Still some closures in place
- Expect supply chain disruptions





# HR & Communications

- Publicize Health & Safety activities
- Update and communicate pandemic related info to staff/volunteers
- Enact emergency hotline
- Verify audio conference capabilities
- Investigate any liability issues
- Discuss coverage with insurance broker
- Review essential services to support municipal response
- Review & update processes to handle complaints, investigations

# Property Services



- Review frequency of refills for hand sanitizing stations
- Arrange for increase cleaning of frequently touched surfaces
- Post Local Health authority/TeleHealth Ontario numbers by each phone
- Review facility safety and equipment, fire extinguishers, etc.

# People care considerations

- Review refill frequency for hand sanitizing stations
- Increase cleaning of frequently touched surfaces
- Obtain expanded list of alternate contact names for children
- Review games/toys, remove those that cannot be easily disinfected; prohibit use of wind instruments
- Reinforce food safety & sanitation practices
  - Reinforce hand washing guidelines
  - Stock piling of non-perishables
  - On line grocery ordering
  - Disposable cutlery
- Alternate delivery methods for training/programs have been evaluated, communicated, activation understood
- Review scheduled large gatherings, cancel or use “social distancing” techniques

my new social distancing outfit just arrived from amazon. ❤️



# HR, Health & Safety, Purchasing

- HR
  - Review & address outstanding pandemic mitigations
  - Communicate pandemic recruitment process
  - Review supporting benefits
- Health & Safety
  - On alert, PPE, workplace safety rollouts
  - Communicate pandemic process to organization
- Purchasing
  - Review & address outstanding pandemic mitigations



# High Risk Planning Elements

- This is where we are right now
- Curve is flattening
- Once restrictions relaxed we could find ourselves back here again
- Think ahead so we are better prepared
- Create checklists and notes about what you have done while actions taken are top of mind

# What can we do better?

- Daily meeting to review & prioritize
  - Evaluate sustainability of manual processing, workarounds
- Communications
  - Interrupted or suspended services notifications
  - Information on latest pandemic facts to staff/volunteers
- Property Services
  - Site access, safety, quarantine restrictions
  - Sanitation measures known, frequency reviewed
  - Review refill frequency for hand sanitizers
- Health & Safety
  - PPE for those on site
  - Additional steps for protection



# What can we do better?

- Child, elder & people care
  - Cleaning schedules reviewed
    - Shared washrooms
  - Disinfection of shared toys
  - Games not easily disinfected removed
  - Reinforce food safety/sanitation
  - Consider suspending programs/visits
  - Cancel wind instrument programs
  - Process for deaths on site



# What's going well in Muskoka

- Everyone doing a great job at social distancing
- Critical services and front line workers all helping us maintain health and safety
- Many pandemic plans activated written back in 2005 – 2008 considered worst case scenarios and running successfully



# Business Continuity Strategies

- Alternative workplaces
  - Safe distance, getting people there
  - Sustainability
  - Physical security
- Identifying critical employees
  - What should the non-critical ones be doing?
  - Special skills sets





# Types of strategies

- Do nothing / rely on insurance / government aid
- Defer the work
- Revert to manual procedures
- Reciprocal agreement / mutual aid
- Alternate site
- Alternate source of product / service
- 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor

*Consider costs and benefits – know your potential losses*

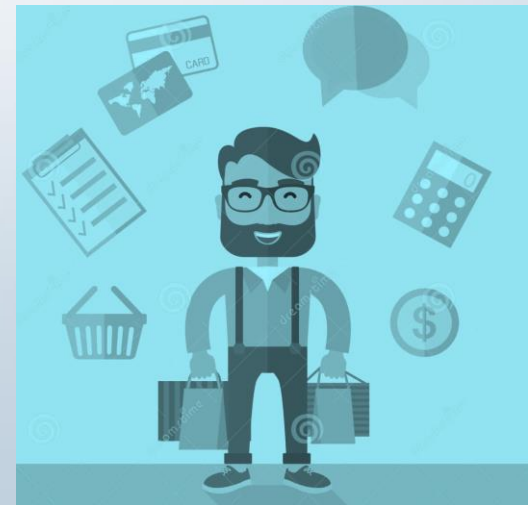
# Strategies for Communications

- Call answering service
- Use voice mail / redirect calls, faxes, emails
- Distribution lists
- Alternate means (email, text, Skype, cellular)
- Free internet café
- Alternate service provider



# Main products / services

- Revert to manual records, forms for taking orders, delivery scheduling, recording status
- Use alternate location to prepare materials
- Buy from competitor, reciprocal agreement
- Ensure vendors on contact list



# Deliveries



- Use courier services
- Redirect mail
- Arrange for alternate service / vendor
- Ship from alternate location
- Contact customer and arrange for pick up
- Negotiate delayed delivery

# Invoicing and Payment Collection

- Use Word templates on web
- Temporary accounting services
- Track manually in Excel
- Students from local community college or accounting association
- Office supply store for manual forms



# Cash, Banking

- Talk to Bank about how they can support you
- Ensure emergency cash flow in place
- Pre-arrange or know:
  - Lines of credit
  - Loans
  - What information they will need
- Make sure you have the right kinds of bank accounts set up



# Technology, Special Equipment

- How easy is it to get parts, replace special equipment
- Examine back up practices (data, software, licenses)
- Consider where the computers and special equipment are located
- How are they protected from power surges, brownouts?
- Special skills sets needed



# Security

- Web cams
- Locks
  - Release upon loss of electricity
  - Who has keys?
- External services
- Cyber security



# Work with your insurance broker

- Understand exactly what is covered
- Know what you are expected to cover for business interruption
- Ask for a reduction if you have a continuity plan and emergency procedures
- Make sure appropriate liability coverage is in place





# 10 Steps in the Right Direction

- 1) Assess the risks to your business, staff, others
- 2) Analyze potential impacts and prioritize
- 3) Understand government plans
- 4) Review health and safety procedures
- 5) Increase workplace hygiene and awareness
- 6) Decide on strategies for business continuity
- 7) Set guiding policies and principals
- 8) Prepare checklists for emergency procedures and business continuity
- 9) Communicate with and train employees
- 10) Test your plan

# Q&A

- Visit us at [bcphelp.com](http://bcphelp.com)