
Emergency Preparedness Week, which runs from May 7 - 13, 2006, is held annually to promote the importance of personal preparedness in reducing the risks and lessening the consequences of a disaster. Emergency preparedness is a shared responsibility, and it is up to each and every Ontarian to learn what to do before, during, and after an emergency situation. Personal preparedness takes on a special significance for healthcare providers; by ensuring their family is as safe as possible, healthcare providers can comfortably come to work and meet their clients' needs during an emergency.

The Emergency Management Unit (EMU) at the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care strongly supports personal and health care system emergency preparedness throughout the province. By visiting the EMU Health Care Provider's website at health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/emu/emu_mn.html, you will have access to the following tools and information:

- Personal emergency planning brochures on creating a family disaster plan and assembling an emergency kit;
- Important Health Notices, used to update health care providers on health emergency issues;
- Infection control and disease information, such as infection control standards for febrile respiratory illness and guidelines on the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- Ontario's Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic, the framework for the province's response to an influenza pandemic; and,
- Pandemic planning guidelines for specific segments of the health care sector, such as long-term care homes and small clinical-practice physician offices.

If you are a healthcare provider looking for more information on Ontario's emergency health readiness, contact the EMU's Healthcare Provider Hotline by phone at 1-866-212-2272 or by email at emergencymanagement@moh.gov.on.ca.

***Take the time to protect yourself, your family, and your community -
emergency preparedness starts with you!***