

## V. Fact Sheet: Community-Based Interventions

Community-based interventions are steps that are taken to help limit contact between people. When several steps are taken together, they will slow the spread of illness even more.

Some community-based interventions that may be effective in reducing contact between people in the event of a flu pandemic include the following:

- Dismissing students from schools and closing day-care centers
- Arranging alternate work options, such as working from home and staggered work schedules
- Canceling public gatherings (e.g., faith-based and community events)
- Avoiding public transportation
- Avoiding crowded places (e.g., concerts, sporting events, open markets, shopping malls).

### When Community-Based Interventions May Be Necessary

There is no way to know when a pandemic will emerge. However, CDC and other leading public health experts say the threat of a pandemic is real. It is not a question of IF a pandemic will occur, but WHEN it will occur. Experts are concerned that the H5N1 virus (bird flu) is changing and could cause a human flu pandemic.

When a flu pandemic occurs, community-based interventions will be the best way individuals can reduce their exposure to the virus. In the event of a pandemic, Federal, state, and local agencies will provide guidance on the need for community-based interventions— but it is up to individuals to understand the role of these interventions.

### Why Community-Based Interventions May Be Necessary

Some illnesses, including colds and flu, are easily spread from person to person. Community-based interventions may be necessary to keep your germs away from others or vice versa.

### How Pandemic Flu Spreads

The virus will spread easily from person to person, mostly through coughing and sneezing. Because the virus is new to people, everyone will be at risk of getting it.

### Preparing for Community-Based Interventions

- Store a 2-week supply of essential supplies at home – water, nonperishable foods, and other necessities.
- Improve your health habits now, such as washing your hands often and covering your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve when you sneeze or cough.
- Find out what your elected officials, workplace, school, congregation, and other community groups are doing to prepare for a flu pandemic.

