



**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Public Health**

1931 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1931

Michael F. Easley, Governor  
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Leah Devlin, DDS, MPH  
State Health Director

February 1, 2007

The world is overdue for the next influenza pandemic. The epidemiology and ecology of influenza A virus are such that, several times in a century, a new genetic variant is born, which is capable of causing severe deadly pneumonia in widespread global epidemics. The novel virus takes advantage of a naïve immune system, honing in on its human target with resultant severe disease and intense person-to-person transmission.

Despite the great advances of the 20<sup>th</sup> century—including the development of the yearly influenza vaccine and potent antiviral medications—the emergence of a pandemic virus could easily overwhelm countries across the world before a new vaccine is mass-produced, and could rapidly deplete stockpiles of antiviral medication.

The best strategy and early defense against an influenza pandemic is to have response plans in place that can best prepare for and respond to the potentially devastating consequences. The Division of Public Health of the Department of Health and Human Services presents here the third version of the NC Pandemic Influenza Plan.

Like all emergency preparedness plans, this is a constantly changing document as new scientific and social advances are made to contain and control a pandemic. Public Health will be in the lead in responding to a pandemic, but all aspects of society, from individuals and families to large businesses, should prepare for disasters. State and local public health agencies are available to guide others in their pandemic influenza preparedness plans.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leah Devlin, DDS, MPH".

Leah Devlin, DDS, MPH  
State Health Director



**North Carolina Public Health**  
Working for a healthier and safer North Carolina  
Everywhere. Everyday. Everybody.



Location: 5605 Six Forks Rd. • Raleigh, N.C. 27609-3811  
*An Equal Opportunity Employer*