

THE H1N1 VIRUS CRISIS IS A WAKEUP CALL FOR BUSINESSES TO ASK THEMSELVES “ARE WE PREPARED?”

On the one hand, there is a sense that this is all an overreaction. The effect of the virus itself turned out to not be as severe as was feared. For many businesses, dealing with the financial challenges of the current recession is a higher priority. As a result, the urgency and media coverage seems to have dissipated.

Yet it is by no means over: H1N1 spread rapidly to over 30 countries in less than a month and it is currently out of control – that’s why the WHO has raised its alert level to 6 or full pandemic status. As well, there is a widespread concern that the virus will change to a more virulent form during the fall 2009 flu season.

Your normal state operation won’t and shouldn’t be enough to handle a recurring and more severe pandemic outbreak. Here are some clear risks to your operations and, especially in a recession, your company’s viability: 30-40% reduction in your staff, from top to bottom; a faltering supply chain, since this affects all other businesses as well; breakdown of communication and information to and from staff, customers, and suppliers. In the face of these kinds of challenges, retrovirals, handcleaner and facemasks are not sufficient solutions.

So if you are still asking yourself, “are we prepared?”, why not get some advice? Cenera’s experts are ready to meet and provide an initial assessment your business continuity planning needs this summer. Check out our methodology and our expertise on **Cenera’s website - Pandemic Planning**. Let us know if you want to attend an upcoming Crisis and Continuity Planning workshop this September. In the meantime, we offer the following sample of recent articles to consider:

- **Pandemic planning not priority for business: Private sector more concerned about economy than H1N1 virus**
By Mohammed Adam, The Ottawa Citizen June 28, 2009
- **Actuaries Urge Need for Risk Management and Continuity Planning With H1N1 Pandemic**
SOURCE The Society of Actuaries
- **FACTBOX-Worldwide spread of H1N1 flu**
REUTERS Thu Jul 2, 2009 5:38am EDT

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