

16 June 2009

This supplement has been prepared to present scientific and technical news items that may be of more interest to technical personnel at RDT&E activities and the labs, or the medics rather than the broader readership of the basic CB Daily. Due to the nature of the material, the articles, if available online, are usually only available through subscription services thus making specific links generally unavailable. Thus, usually only the bibliographic citation is available for use by an activity's technical library.

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Chem-Bio News – Pandemic Influenza Edition #65

1. FLU ONSET EXPOSED SUPPLY PROBLEMS: *“The arrival of swine flu in the United States exposed gaps in the supply chain that delivers medication, masks, and even testing swabs to hospitals and doctors' offices - shortcomings that could prove vastly more worrisome if a deadlier strain returns in the fall, officials say.”*

2. [AU] - DWINDLING SUPPLIES MEANS TAMI FLU ONLY FOR EMERGENCIES - NICOLA ROXON: *“As infectious patients struggle to gain the anti-viral drug at commercial pharmacies, Ms Roxon refused to open government stockpiles of the drug for those not deemed to be at high risk from the virus.”*

3. EMEA URGES USE OF MOCK-UP PANDEMIC FLU VACCINES: *“Companies that use one of the four European Medicines Agency (EMA)-approved mock-up influenza pandemic vaccines as a basis for developing an influenza A (H1N1) vaccine would have to provide significantly less data to gain approval, the EMA says.”*

4. [AU] - MEDICAL RESPONSE IN CHAOS IN SWINE FLU PANDEMIC: *“Angry GPs have slammed a “conspicuous lack of leadership” in Australia's response to the swine flu crisis, with some patients waiting eight days for test results or receiving anti-viral drugs too late to limit the infection.”*

5. BAXTER COULD HAVE PANDEMIC FLU VACCINE IN JULY: *“Baxter International Inc said on Friday that it is in full-scale production of an A/H1N1 flu pandemic vaccine that could be ready for commercial use next month.”*

6. [MY] - INFLUENZA COMMITTEE TO MEET ON FRIDAY: *“The Health Ministry is holding its first inter-ministry influenza committee meeting on Friday, as the country recorded five new cases of Influenza A(H1N1) Monday, the highest number recorded in a single day.”*

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

FLU ONSET EXPOSED SUPPLY PROBLEMS

By Stephen Smith

Boston.com

June 15, 2009

"The arrival of swine flu in the United States exposed gaps in the supply chain that delivers medication, masks, and even testing swabs to hospitals and doctors' offices - shortcomings that could prove vastly more worrisome if a deadlier strain returns in the fall, officials say.

In Massachusetts, where the state health agency had to tap its emergency cache of flu-relief pills to supplement dwindling private supplies, the administration of Governor Deval Patrick is asking the Legislature to spend \$1 million more to bolster the state stockpile, a request that is pending.

And across the nation, from sprawling federal agencies to small local health departments, disease trackers are urgently evaluating their response to swine flu, with eyes trained firmly on the autumn months."

"The supply shortages tended to be localized, Massachusetts health authorities said, but they reflected the vagaries of the fragile just-in-time economy that provides medical goods on a daily, as-needed basis." [emphasis added]

The full article can be found at: http://www.boston.com/news/health/articles/2009/06/15/swine_flu_arrival_overwhelmed_stockpile_of_medical_supplies/

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[AU] - DWINDLING SUPPLIES MEANS TAMIFLU ONLY FOR EMERGENCIES - NICOLA ROXON

By Grant McArthur and Stephen McMahon

HeraldSun.com.au

June 12, 2009

"SICK Aussies will have to overcome swine flu without the help of Tamiflu because of thinning supplies, Health Minister Nicola Roxon said.

As infectious patients struggle to gain the anti-viral drug at commercial pharmacies, Ms Roxon refused to open government stockpiles of the drug for those not deemed to be at high risk from the virus.

The dwindling public supplies come as four Victorians are treated in intensive care units for swine flu; the national tally sits at 1275.

Ms Roxon said the stockpile would be kept for the elderly, the morbidly obese and those with respiratory conditions or other complications, because swine flu was less severe than first thought and most people could get by without Tamiflu."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,21985,25622707-662,00.html>

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EMEA URGES USE OF MOCK-UP PANDEMIC FLU VACCINES

Drug Industry Daily

June 16, 2009

“Companies that use one of the four European Medicines Agency (EMA)-approved mock-up influenza pandemic vaccines as a basis for developing an influenza A (H1N1) vaccine would have to provide significantly less data to gain approval, the EMA says.

Mock-up vaccines are developed before a pandemic, with a strain of influenza virus chosen because the population has never been exposed to it, according to the EMA's website. Drugmakers conduct studies on the vaccine's adjuvants and dosing regimen before organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) identify the viral strain involved and make it available for vaccine development.

Current mock-up vaccines were approved by the agency ahead of the pandemic and will allow stakeholders to receive faster approval, the EMA says in a statement Monday. The agency also is planning to provide individual advice to each company developing an influenza A (H1N1) vaccine facilitate the earliest possible availability of the vaccines.

The plans are part of the EMA's pandemic crisis-management plan established after the WHO declared the influenza outbreak a pandemic last week (DID, June 12). The plan is designed to accelerate the assessment of influenza vaccines and antivirals and intensely monitor their use during a pandemic.”

Link not available.

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MEDICAL RESPONSE IN CHAOS IN SWINE FLU PANDEMIC

By Siobhain Ryan and Adam Cresswell

The Australian

June 13, 2009

“ANGRY GPs have slammed a "conspicuous lack of leadership" in Australia's response to the swine flu crisis, with some patients waiting eight days for test results or receiving anti-viral drugs too late to limit the infection.

The doctors have blamed delays and inconsistent responses at state and federal levels for undermining efforts to contain the disease in Australia, placing the nation on the front line of

the world's first flu pandemic in more than 40 years.”

“The number of Australians infected with the new H1N1 strain is, however, believed to be far higher than last night's official national tally of 1391 because Victoria has abandoned its daily caseload updates.

The state last Wednesday cut back its laboratory testing for the virus from about 500 to 1000 samples a day to 50 to 70 a day, after acknowledging it could no longer contain the disease.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25628852-601,00.html>

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BAXTER COULD HAVE PANDEMIC FLU VACCINE IN JULY

By Bill Berkrot

Reuters

Jun 12, 2009

“Baxter International Inc said on Friday that it is in full-scale production of an A/H1N1 flu pandemic vaccine that could be ready for commercial use next month.

The news comes a day after the World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared a pandemic and cautioned governments to prepare for a long-term battle against the new virus.

Baxter said it received an A/H1N1 strain from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in May and has been working to develop a pandemic vaccine for use as early as July.”

The full article can be found at: http://www.reuters.com/article/internal_ReutersNewsRoom_ExclusivesAndWins_MOLT/idUSTRE55B5O620090612

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[MY] - INFLUENZA COMMITTEE TO MEET ON FRIDAY

Bernamea.com

June 15, 2009

“The Health Ministry is holding its first inter-ministry influenza committee meeting on Friday, as the country recorded five new cases of Influenza A(H1N1) Monday, the highest number recorded in a single day.

The health authorities are now bracing for more imported H1N1 cases and struggling to

prevent local transmission of the virus.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said he would be chairing the meeting at the Health Ministry in Putrajaya to be attended by the relevant ministries and government agencies.

"The committee, which is part of the National Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Plan (NIPPP) will discuss and coordinate various measures, including the possibility of introducing new measures as recommended by the WHO (World Health Organisation)," he told Bernama here today."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsindex.php?id=418154>

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Steve Tesko: Steve.Tesko@anser.org

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