



Establishing Collaboratories

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is launching a national pandemic preparedness campaign to encourage as many Americans as possible to understand that the threat of a pandemic influenza is real and to actively engage in personal preparedness. This campaign is called *“Take the Lead – Working Together to Prepare Now.”*

Pandemics don’t strike just one area. They strike everywhere. Areas hit first can’t depend on relief from elsewhere because the entire country will be affected, and areas that haven’t been hit yet will be preparing their own defenses.

Government alone can’t prepare the nation for a pandemic; there needs to be preparedness at every level. There is a part for everyone in preparing for a pandemic — from stockpiling necessities to adopting good public health habits. Every county, every business, every school, every church, and every household needs a plan.

As part of this campaign, HHS has engaged nine communities across the country to serve as preparedness learning opportunities for the entire nation. These activities will provide real life and real time stories about how people can prepare for a pandemic. These communities will showcase what people are doing to prepare, what preparation means and looks like, and tell the story about how people and communities can be transformed through the experience.

During a four-month timeframe—mid-March through mid-July 2008—HHS will engage influential leaders from the business, faith-based, civic and health care sectors in each of the participating communities and provide information, tools, and support to help them confidently spread the word about the critical need for individual preparedness.

The nine communities engaged in this effort include:

- Seattle, Washington
- San Diego, California
- Cache County, Utah
- Ft. Yates/Sisseton, North Dakota/South Dakota
- Burlington, Vermont
- St. Louis, Missouri
- Tuscarawas County, Ohio
- Savannah, Georgia
- Wilmington, Delaware

The purpose is to identify best practices that can be used in other communities across the United States, with the ultimate goal of more prepared individuals and communities.

For more information on the campaign and how to get involved, visit www.pandemicflu.gov/takethelead.