THE WORKPLACE GUIDE FOR MANAGERS:
AVIAN INFLUENZA
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Prepared for the USAID Avian Influenza Program
by the Academy for Educational Development

For a complete copy of this Guide, or for more information on Avian Influenza Preparedness and Education in the Workplace, please contact Tula Michaelides at tmichaelides@aed.org.
Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................................................... 1
   About this Guide
   The SMARTWork Model

MODULE 1: MAKING THE CASE FOR A WORKSITE AVIAN INFLUENZA PROGRAM ..................................... 1.1
   Corporate Preparedness
   Global Implications
   Reducing the Impact of Avian Influenza in the Workplace and Beyond
   Conclusions

MODULE 2: GETTING STARTED: PROGRAM PLANNING USING A TEAM MODEL ........................................ 2.1
   Organize a Workplace Planning Committee
   Address Key Questions to Help Prioritize and Plan Activities
   Develop a Checklist to Guide Development of Your Program
   Set a Timetable

MODULE 3: THE NEXT STEP: DEVELOPING AN AVIAN INFLUENZA PREVENTION EDUCATION AND CONTROL PROGRAM ........................................................................................................... 3.1
   Program Components
   Program Development
   Develop a Checklist to Guide Development of Your Program
   Conclusion

WORKSITE AVIAN INFLUENZA TRAINING PROGRAM .................................................................................. W.1
   Workplace wide lectures
   A training of trainers (ToT)
   Interactive small group training for workers
   Training of peer educators
   Ongoing training through one-on-one peer education
   Support materials
   Sample Trainer Notes

APPENDIX A: ............................................................................................................................................... A.1
   Frequently Asked Questions

APPENDIX B: ............................................................................................................................................. A.7
   Guidelines for Travel to Avian Influenza-Affected Areas

APPENDIX C: ............................................................................................................................................. A.9
   Other Resources

APPENDIX D: ............................................................................................................................................... A.11
   Avian Influenza Glossary

THE WORKPLACE GUIDE FOR MANAGERS: AVIAN INFLUENZA
INTRODUCTION

With increasing urgency over the past year, a variety of governments, nongovernmental organizations and industry groups have underscored the potential dangers of avian influenza. Much of this concern stems from the fear that an influenza pandemic along the lines of the 1918 Spanish Flu will emerge.

Thus far, the spread of the avian virus to humans has largely been accomplished through contact with infected birds. A few cases of human-to-human transmission have been confirmed, and additional cases continue to be investigated. These cases mostly involved families where prolonged daily contact and exposure existed. Although unlikely at this point, the possibility that the virus will mutate to allow sustained human-to-human transmission is a consideration for both health authorities and businesses around the world.

Regardless of whether avian influenza remains largely a bird-to-bird problem or becomes a bird-to-human illness, it is important for international businesses to educate their employees on the risks of avian influenza, as well as ensure that their emergency-response and business-continuity plans include specific planning for addressing the possibility of a pandemic.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Due to the complexity of the avian influenza situation, The Workplace Guide for Managers: Avian Influenza provides guidance and resources on three distinct yet overlapping areas: 1) how to address and control avian influenza in the animal population; 2) how to address possible “breakout transmission” of avian influenza to humans; and 3) how to address the possibility of an influenza pandemic. To accomplish this, the Guide provides a systematic approach to developing workplace preparedness plans, as well as workplace avian influenza prevention and support programs.

Although the order of the Guide provides a logical progression for workplace action, each Module may be used independently, and Modules can be implemented in varying orders. (The Guide includes three Modules plus detailed appendices.) Workplace teams can use the Guide as a reference tool, to be consulted both for better understanding of avian influenza’s influence on the workplace, and for its detailed guidelines on how to address specific needs.
This document can assist both individual employers and members of collaborations involving government, labor, employers, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Specifically, it is intended for managers and others who have responsibility for employee productivity and health. This typically includes the managing director, chief financial officer, human resources and benefits coordinator, risk manager, medical director (if the employer provides health care), and labor representatives such as union shop stewards, health and safety representatives, and union presidents.

The Guide may be used to support workplace avian influenza efforts in a broad array of formal workplace settings, including, but not limited to: government agencies and facilities, such as schools, hospitals, and public services; nongovernmental organizations; state-owned or -sponsored enterprises; and joint public–private ventures.

Moreover, enterprises of any size should find the Guide helpful, although they are likely to choose avian influenza activities of different scopes and components. For example, smaller employers may depend on collaborative efforts or outside relationships with NGOs, while mid- to large-size employers (those with more than 250 employees) are more likely to have medical and human resources personnel to develop and manage a comprehensive avian influenza education and support program. We encourage users to adapt these materials as appropriate for their organizations and networks—and to share them widely.

In the end, the goals are to:
- Promote employee and family well-being
- Protect company assets and infrastructure
- Ensure business continuity
- Answer the questions of all stakeholders, including employees, contractors, vendors, suppliers, shareholders, the media, and the surrounding community

THE SMARTWork MODEL

This Guide builds on the success of the SMARTWork Workplace Guide for Managers and Labor Leaders: HIV/AIDS Policies and Programs. Developed by the Academy for Educational Development, this program provides a thorough, step-by-step approach to help workplaces respond to the risks of HIV/AIDS through policies, prevention education, care, and support programs. Offering examples, best practices, and references from diverse employers and trade unions all over the world, the guide is designed to jointly engage employers and managers, labor unions and workers, and government representatives in forming and
implementing workplace HIV/AIDS programs and policies. A SMARTWork process for developing workplace HIV/AIDS programs and policies has been successfully used in countries including the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Ukraine and Vietnam.

We hope that this Guide for Avian Influenza will be as useful to the international business community.