



What is Flu on Call®?

Flu on Call® is an effort led by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in collaboration with United Way Worldwide, and other partners to establish a national network of telephone help lines, staffed by information specialists and medical professionals, designed to be used during a severe influenza pandemic.

Quick facts about Flu on Call®:

- **Flu on Call®** is a network of telephone information lines staffed by information specialists and medical professionals.
- People who contact **Flu on Call®** and need information about pandemic influenza will be guided to appropriate information and resources.
- People who contact **Flu on Call®** because they're sick (or caring for someone who is), will be able to talk to a medical professional for medical advice.
- If the symptoms of the ill person meet the guidelines of the protocol, medical professionals may be able to provide access to antiviral medications over the phone.
- **Flu on Call®** is not meant to serve as a replacement for medical clinics or practices and the relationships that providers have with their patients. The system would only be activated during a pandemic when the demand for care has an impact on the medical system's ability to provide it.

What are the Goals of Flu on Call®?

- Improve access to antiviral medications for sick people during a pandemic
- Direct sick people to the level of care they need
- Reduce the surge on medical facilities

How do we know Flu on Call® can work?

- **Flu on Call®** is modeled on successful statewide projects that were implemented during the 2009 H1N1 pandemic. For example, during the 2009-2010 H1N1 pandemic influenza response, the Minnesota Department of Health established the statewide Minnesota FluLine (MN FluLine).
- The MN FluLine fielded more than 27,000 calls between Oct. 2009, and March 2010 and reported high levels of caller satisfaction and no untoward events. This system reached many rural and uninsured Minnesotans, and may have reduced surge on medical facilities by averting nearly 11,000 in-person health-care encounters. [1]
- From 2013-2016, CDC, in collaboration with its partners, conducted six exercises of the **Flu on Call®** system, making more than 3,000 simulated calls to test system functionality. These exercises were carried out successfully and indicated the feasibility of **Flu on Call®**.
- In 2016, CDC, United Way Worldwide, two United Way 2-1-1 centers, and other partners, conducted the **Flu on Call®** Demonstration Project in Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, and Dodge, Saunders, and Washington counties in rural Nebraska, to assess the systems' functionality. This Demonstration was successful and indicated the feasibility of activating and operating **Flu on Call®** during an emergency.

[1] Spaulding, A.B., et al., *Satisfaction and public health cost of a statewide influenza nurse triage line in response to pandemic H1N1 influenza*. PLoS One, 2013. 8(1): p. e50492.