

Pandemic influenza: Developing a model to enhance preparedness in the business sector. A pilot study to assess economic preparedness

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From both a professional and personal perspective, my six week placement with the AB-CRC was a dream come true and a fantastic experience. It was a privilege to be involved in the project, which investigated the issues associated with small business sector preparedness for pandemic influenza. Businesses are emerging as key partners in an effective multidimensional, multisectoral approach to pandemic preparedness, yet small businesses are a neglected area in pandemic planning. The project involved a literature review that gauged the main issues for small businesses preparing for a pandemic, outlined factors affecting preparedness response and gave examples of larger business responses that might be informative in a small business context. The article was meant to be informative for a public health professional audience, and has been written to be considered for publication. Knowing the importance of small businesses to economies worldwide, and realising that PI will potentially have devastating effects for small businesses was a driving force to ensure that the project outcomes would be beneficial and helpful to the population.

This placement has been the ultimate opportunity to be involved in something with meaningful population health outcomes. The project was also ideal to develop knowledge and skills across discipline areas- which perfectly aligned with the multidisciplinary course I study at UWA- Health Science and Commerce. Through my project and my exposure to all the work done at AB-CRC, I have gained a real sense of how powerful research can be when applied in a practical way for the benefit of the population. Being part of the office for six weeks was an absolute blast and a real privilege. We all enjoyed the opportunity to interact with the very inspiring and dynamic AB-CRC staff members on a daily basis at morning teas, and were afforded some fantastic professional development opportunities. The placement was an enriching, fun and once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and I can't thank everyone at AB-CRC enough for the fantastic time I had there!