

Avian Flu: information provided by means of an audiovisual training programme in Italy

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AIM AND METHODS: An audiovisual training programme on avian flu has been prepared by sanofi-aventis Italy in order to create a model to inform and to train internal employees to protect themselves and in the meantime to guarantee the sanofi-aventis commitment to manufacture and deliver drugs and vaccines, in case of pandemia.

For this reason a special crisis team named VIGIFLU (Vigilance Flu) has been created in order to watch against avian flu and to set up a crisis reaction plan.

Italian VIGIFLU Crisis Team's challenge was to examine both the origin, and causes of the spreading of the avian flu virus, and the currently available tools required to contain its diffusion, starting with a practical example in our everyday working environment.

The audiovisual training programme is a complete training aid made available not only to sanofi-aventis employees but additionally to the scientific community (University). Its goal is to outline the general biological aspects of the H5N1 virus, its high pathogenic potential linked to the virus mutations and the methodology used by the workgroup to adapt the World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations to our everyday practice within an Italian pharmaceutical industry.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: The various phases of the audiovisual project realization, consisted of five basic stages:

- 1) the establishment of a multidisciplinary group and the appointment of a Coordinator;
- 2) the critical analysis of the national and international scientific literature, databases, websites, journals, newspapers, videos on the avian flu subject ;
- 3) the integration of the six pandemic phases, as defined by WHO, in our strategic plan;
- 4) the definition of the intervention plan, and its critical evaluation;
- 5) the simulation/exercise within the Company and its validation.

The constitution of a multidisciplinary team has been a crucial element, not only during the start-up stage of learning, selection and elaboration of the scientific texts, but also at the practical stage of the implementation of the optimal intervention model.

Other professional figures specialized in virology, education and documentation from The Italian National Health Institute (Istituto Superiore di Sanità - ISS) were involved, together with the Company's Representatives from the Communication and the Medical Management of VIGIFLU. Later on, the group was joined by the sanofi-aventis HSE (Health, Safety & Environment

Executive) and the intervention team representative, followed by other participants dealing with the business continuity plan.

The audiovisual material consists of interactive menu-driven itineraries within a tour guided by a “virtual character” that is mobile and highlights the training and organization aspects in all the relative situations, encouraging the user to explore, and improve his/her understanding of the hazards of avian flu, and the VIGIFLU response to the WHO appeal.

The tour consists of seven main chapters, each with its video introduction:

1. introduction and table of contents;
2. the avian flu issue;
3. the medical and scientific aspect of the avian flu, an interview with an Italian health expert;
4. the worst-case scenario;
5. the VIGIFLU Project;
6. organisational measures.
7. a practical exercise

Each chapter contains:

hyperlinks and detail screens which help users to develop a deeper understanding of the subjects of interest, such as the ISS slides, press reviews, the WHO texts, experts’ interviews, bibliography, health practice posters, VIGIFLU brochures.

The user can navigate among information, and pass to the following chapter after having achieved the satisfactory level of knowledge.

The accompanying information should contain specific subjects, elaboration methods, and circulation, in order to be able to changeover between chapters.

Figure 1



The “virtual character”, a young searcher, welcomes all users inviting them to learn of the Avian flu hazards and the VIGIFLU response to the WHO appeal.

Figure 2



Chapter after chapter users are invited to watch different videos with scientific experts and Vigiflu Team representatives. Link to extra info and medical advice help users to better understand the subject.

CONCLUSIONS: The contents of this audiovisual and the methods of intervention here described are a challenge model not only for sanofi-aventis and for pandemic flu environment but they are also a tool for other Companies devoted to production and delivery of essential services and goods for the community.

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