

## Pandemic Readiness

**Lyle Moore:**

Some of the different cots that we've had.

**Nancy Lyons:**

Trailers full of medical supplies and beds dot spots around the Colorado landscape. It's not part of a ski-resort rescue. These trailers are part of a nationwide effort to fight a possible flu pandemic. Super strains of the influenza virus break out every few decades: three in the last century.

**Nancy Lyons:**

The worst case to hit the U.S. was the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic. More than fifty million people died worldwide, more than five hundred thousand in the U.S.

**Nancy Lyons:**

The federal government wants states to be ready if a flu outbreak happens again. The first official state readiness assessment is scheduled to begin in a few weeks. Until then, states are fine-tuning their tactics.

**Nancy Lyons:**

These are "surge" vehicles. They hold enough supplies for a makeshift triage center.

**Lyle Moore:**

If something were to happen, um, whether it be a mass casualty incident or a pandemic influenza: anything that caused a surge upon a hospital, we can actually take this and set up an extra kind of like a field triage kind of hospital, and, um, we have the capacity for five hundred.

**Nancy Lyons:**

For months, state health authorities have been tackling heady questions such as how to ration the flu vaccine. Or who will receive the vaccine first: the ill, the elderly? Emergency responders or truck drivers who will take supplies to the states?

**Nancy Lyons:**

In Bloomfield Township, New Jersey, first responders wanted a chance to see how things would work in an emergency.

**Trevor Wiegel:**

The urgency is they know that they're gonna be, uh, they're gonna be called, they're gonna be first responders, they're gonna have to react. And they wanna, they wanna know that they're doing it right and that we as a-as a health department can-can fulfill whatever public health need there is at the time.

**Nancy Lyons:**

A firehouse turned into a vaccine center. Three different areas were set up to serve the public. The state has created a phone system with trained staff to give out information to the public. But the reality is that if the state is hit with a flu pandemic, state officials estimate more than eight thousand people will die.

**Nancy Lyons:**

William Sardo, Junior knows something about pandemics. He lived in Washington, D.C. during the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic, and he was the only one in his family to catch the disease. He was just six years old, but he survived.

**William Sardo:**

The crisis came so rapidly. The crisis came within the first two to three hours of your sickness. You either survived, or you were dead.

**Nancy Lyons:**

Now ninety-four years old, talk of another pandemic scares Sardo, who says he's gotten a flu shot every year he could.

**Nancy Lyons:**

Nancy Lyons, The Associated Press.

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