

This is very important as it will determine the scale and sometimes detail of the response. Whether there should be a whole society response or a response confined to the health care sector as was the case in 2009.

WHO had a very simple scale in its 2009 guidance *Mild, Intermediate* and *Severe* thought eventually they referred to the 2009 pandemic as *Moderate* rather than *Intermediate* presumably as moderate communicated better. However there was no mechanical definition. A country that did have a formula for severity was the United States who produced a 1 to 5 scale based on Case Fatality Rate see United States Department of Health and Human Services and Centers for Disease Prevention and Control. Interim pre-pandemic planning guidance: Community strategy for pandemic influenza Mitigation in the United States. Dec 2006

<u>http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/community/community_mitigation.pdf</u> But that proved very hard to measure and certainly could not be mreasuers with any precision early on.

It is important to note that severity has <u>never</u> been part of the definition of a pandemic in WHO guidance.

There is an expectation that pandemics should be graded by severity

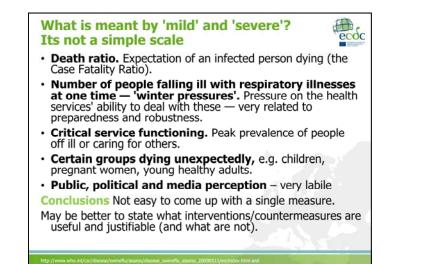


But there are difficulties:

- severity varies from country to country;
- it can change over time;
- some relevant information is not available initially;
- key health information includes medical and scientific information:
- epidemiological, clinical and virological characteristics.
- There are also social and societal aspects:
 - vulnerability of populations;
 - capacity for response;
 - available health care;
 - communication; and
 - the level of advance planning.

The best discussion on this area is at $\mbox{http://www.who.int/wer/2009/wer8422.pdf}$ and

 $http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/assess/disease_swineflu_assess_20090511/en/index.html.$



 $Source: \ http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/assess/disease_swineflu_assess_20090511/en/index.html and \ http://www.who.int/wer/2009/wer8422.pdf$