

Influenza A (H1N1) Update

Lessons Learned and Preparedness for the Future"
Cancún, Quintana Roo, México
July 1 to 3, 2009



HIGH LEVEL MEETING
PUBLIC HEALTH
INTERVENTIONS

Mauricio Hernández-Avila, MD.,
MPH., PhD
Vice-Minister for Prevention and
Health Promotion
Ministry of Health, Mexico



GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Initial Actions

- Actions to reduce the impact of the epidemic with the objective of:
 - Reducing the overall number of people affected;
 - Reducing transmission;
 - Ensuring healthcare for those who may be infected;
 - Maximizing care for those with disease;
 - Protecting the most vulnerable





GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Initial Support for Actions

Preparation, based on WHO framework

- **Plan designed, tested and drilled, which included:**
 - Pre-pandemic and pandemic phase
 - Interventions in pandemic phase
- **Information**
 - Decrease of transmission by infected people (including closure of school, bars, cinemas, stadiums, etcetera)
 - Decrease of transmission from contacts (including home confinement)
 - Social distancing (school closures massive meetings)
 - Shortening of periods between first symptoms to diagnosis, treatment and isolation
 - Travel advisories



GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Initial Support for Actions

Preparation

- **Processes not determined in the original plan**
 - Re-Opening
 - Definition of risk group
 - Methods for targeting interventions
 - Intersectorial guidelines
 - Identification of intervention team





GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Actions

Legal basis

- **Political Constitution**
 - Art 4, on Health Protection
 - Art 73, on the Authority of the General Health Council
- **Presidential Executive Order**
- **General Health Law**
 - Art 183, on Extraordinary action
- **Support basis for interventions on**
 - Schools
 - Labor conditions
 - Non essential industries and services
 - Operation continuity





GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Building the Process for Re-Opening

- **Purpose**
 - Certainty for the population (e.g., parents sending children to school)
 - Economy reactivation
- **Principles**
 - **Health protection and life preservation**
 - **Continuation of social, cultural, economic and political activities**
 - Preventive (due to uncertainty)
 - Transparency
 - Supported on the state of knowledge and epidemiology (morbidity)
- **Challenge of how to develop, under great pressure, “rational decisions” that really...**
 - Focus on the right targets?
 - Offer credibility? Offer reassurance to de population / families?
 - Providing evidence from interventions?
 - Provide evidence to special interest groups?



GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Building the Process for Re-Opening

- **Criteria publications (Rapid Risk Assessment)**
 - Based on international and national knowledge
 - Small advisory team (university and research institutes)
 - Criteria on exposure assessment, pregnancy, population stratification
- **Guidelines**
 - By settings (built environment)
 - By specific activities (political activities)
 - Cleanliness, access to hygiene and physical interventions
 - Working conditions for pregnant women, safe distance distribution within theaters, restaurants and others
 - School procedures for patient referral and others



GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Specific Experiences: Mid-Term Election Process

- Political campaigns scheduled to begin 7 days after National Emergency Alert
- Suspension of non-essential services in industrial activities and others from May 1 to 5
- Election process in Mexico is autonomous
- Election authorities asked for advice
- Sanitary authority enacted four initial guidelines
 - For reunions, offices, councilors meeting, house to house visits and training for booth managers
- Guideline on the election journey is now focused by stratified alert level



GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Specific Experiences: Closure of School System

Closures

- April 24, only in Mexico City and State of Mexico, followed by San Luis Potosi
- April 27, national closure of 235,000 elementary schools, high school and universities

Re-Opening

- May 7, junior and high schools, universities
- May 11, elementary schools
- Toolbox and guidelines hygiene and cleaning method (with Ministry of Education)
- Families and teachers organize cleaning and entrance filters
- Definition of case referral procedure



GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Specific Experiences: Closure of Schools

Real life implementation

- More than 235,000 schools that suspended activities implemented the guidelines
- After two weeks, school filters were relaxed
- Emerging process to identify school outbreaks
- Epidemiologic renovation of surveillance specific for schools (still in process)
- School calendar moved for completion of statutory 200 days school year

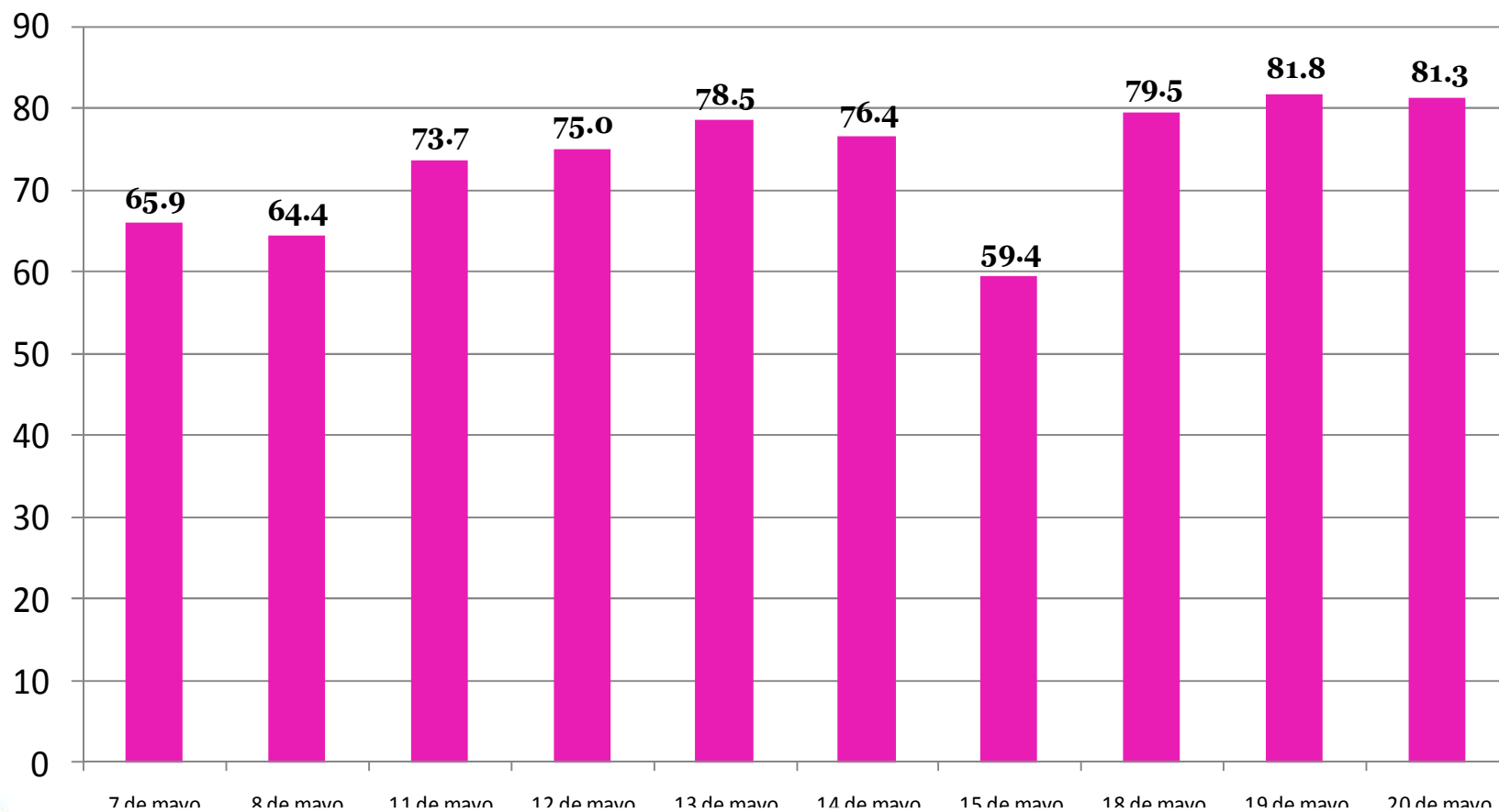


GOBIERNO FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Students % attendance



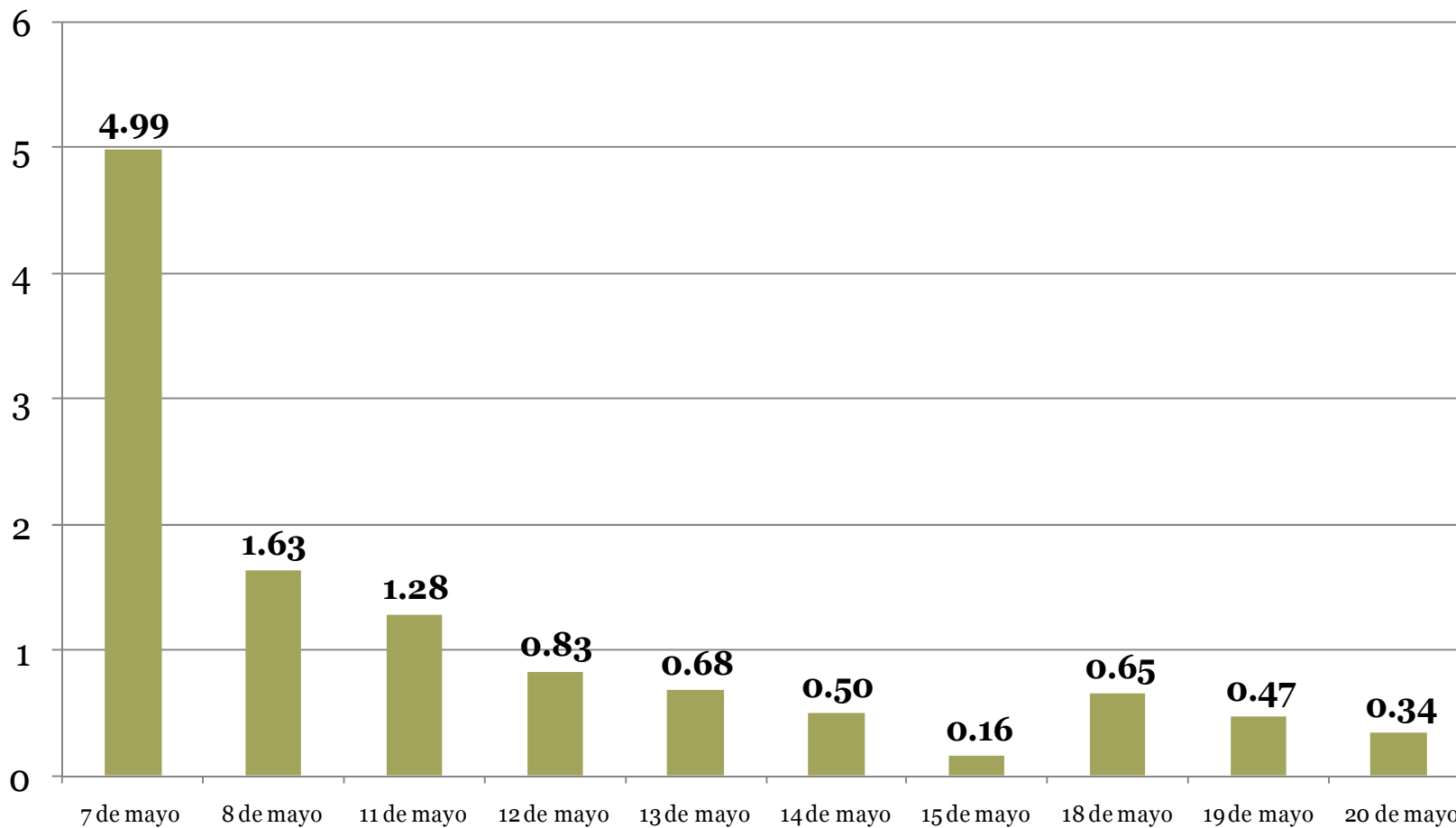


GOBIERNO FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Number of persons identified in the filters (mean per school)





GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Specific Experiences: Labor – Industry Agreement

- **The Labor Ministry decided to stick to WHO Pandemic Phases, establishing more stringent interventions as evolved phases**
- **Specific conditions established on April 24**
 - Adoption of MoH hygiene guidelines
 - Definition of exposure and vulnerable groups
 - Special consideration for pregnant women
 - Uncertainty still exists on the right risk and management
- **Legal framework clearly defined and Agreement between parts**



GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Specific Experiences: Addressing Special Interest Groups

Affected national sectors and groups

- Entertainment business: cinemas, theaters, stadiums
- Restaurants
- Clothing industry, due to temporary elimination of use of ties
- Affected international sectors and groups
 - Information for Embassies and Consulates
 - Travel counseling by neighboring countries, European Union and Asian countries
 - Restrictions for Mexican travelers
 - Discrimination because of nationality



GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Adjusting the Process

- Economic Impact (as estimated so far by Ministry of Finances)
 - Aggregated demand was the most affected, world financial crisis + mitigation actions
 - % Attributable due to international advisories is yet to be estimated about 10% contraction labor
 - Small commerce and services with immediate recovery, including 0.1% of annual GNP
 - Tourism is the most affected sector because of international recession, affects 0.14% annual GNP; national tourism 0.1%
 - No contraction of industry and commerce
 - Most effects will be recovering substantially during the third term
 - Total impact estimation is 0.334% annual GNP
 - Large investment on temporary employment plans



GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Adjusting the Process

Targeting interventions

- Levels of action
 - 32 states
 - 234 health districts
 - Eventually up to municipal authority (MoH has no authority at that level)
- Criteria
 - None in the beginning
 - Currently, a Stratified Population Index
 - Past three weeks of incidence, past two weeks trend, population density and weather
 - Currently 25 health districts highly profiled



GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Lessons Learned

- **The strength of the right foundation**
 - Legal
 - Planning
 - But should be developed into tested programs
- **Effectiveness evidence**
 - Not enough evidence of these practical everyday interventions
 - Scarce international knowledge
 - What about Mexico ?
- **Population's reassurance and empowerment**
 - Being cared for, and capable of self care, and care for others (***success factor***)



GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Lessons Learned

- **Health in all sectors: essential to address non pharmaceutical public health interventions**
 - Health actions in all sectors
 - Health policies in all sectors
- **Tolerate dynamics of a changing scenario**
 - In epidemiologic data
 - In severity
 - In interventions changes
 - In guideline adjustments
 - Established dated versions, being adjusted - version 3.0





GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Lessons Learned

Debatable general measures

- **In favor**

- No exceptions allowed
- Clear messages for all population and interest sectors

- **Against**

- Mid term sustainability
- Enforcement, hard to maintain, takes capabilities beyond its strengths





GOBIERNO
FEDERAL

SALUD

SRE

Preparing for the Immediate Future

- **Establishment of an expedite intersectorial consultative mechanism**
- **Strengthening local responsibility**
 - Municipal authorities
 - Health District public health functions
- **Targeted interventions, always**
- **International communication**
- **Relevant public health knowledge**