

# U.S. Midwest braces for possibility of 'historic flooding' in coming weeks

**BRIAN K. SULLIVAN**  
BLOOMBERG NEWS

One-third of the U.S. faces the possibility of "historic flooding" in coming weeks, especially the upper Midwest states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa, government forecasters said.

"Once again we are delivering an urgent message to get ready," John Hayes, director of the National Weather Ser-

vice, said in a conference call yesterday. "The flood risk is above-average over one-third of the country."

The flood potential is driven in part by El Niño, a warming in the Pacific Ocean, which steered storms that have left the ground saturated from record rains and heavy snows. The area designated for above-average risk stretches from New Mexico in the west to Maine in the east.

"We are looking at potentially historic flooding in some parts of the country this spring," Jane Lubchenco, administrator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, said in the conference call.

Climate change is also being blamed for a long-term trend toward severe flooding, according to an Interagency Climate Change Task Force report issued yesterday.

"The task force has found that climate change is affecting, and will continue to affect, nearly every aspect of

our society and the environment," according to the report. Many areas of the eastern U.S. have received twice

the normal amount of rain in the past three months, said Tom Graziano, a weather service hydrologist.

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For the Hon. Arthur T. Porter, MUHC Director General and CEO, the link between a high-tech lifestyle solution such as Unani.ca and an innovative academic health centre such as the MUHC is a natural one. "The MUHC is committed to transforming health care, whether it is through our redevelopment at the Glen, Mountain and Lachine campuses or by bringing a new dimension of support to the general population. Unani.ca is a perfect example of how new ways of thinking leads to new ways of caring."

healthcare professionals. Moreover, Unani.ca is easy to navigate thanks to an interface that even the most novice of computer users would find straightforward, an integrated step-by-step tutorial, intuitive menus and shortcuts. Distinct from electronic health records being implemented by government or hospital medical records, Unani was designed from the ground up with the health needs of everyday people in mind. In fact, Unani.ca is the first consumer-minded PEHR in the Canadian marketplace that



Pierre Ducros, Chairman of the Advisory Board of Medical.MD and the Hon. Arthur T. Porter, Director General and CEO of the MUHC, present Unani.ca at its official launch.

Features, amongst others, include Medical Data where lists of health conditions, medications, allergies, intolerances, vaccinations, therapies, lifestyle choices and family history information can be compiled and cross-linked; Charting that offers a quick view of a person's vital signs over time, Document Storage to store lab results for example, and an Agenda to manage contacts and appointments. While available today in English and French, more languages will be added, as will new features.

Dr. Jeffrey Barkun, Director of General Surgery and Chief Clinical Officer of the Informatics Transition at the MUHC, knows how important prevention is in the current healthcare climate. "I believe that a more informed person is a healthier person. Historically, that information has come from sitting down with a physician, however, the times have changed. It's important for individuals to also take a leadership role and Unani.ca offers them that opportunity. Rather than telling their physician what's ailing them from memory, people can bring a digital snapshot of their health to the table and even make lifestyle changes before a physician's intervention is required. That's significant!"

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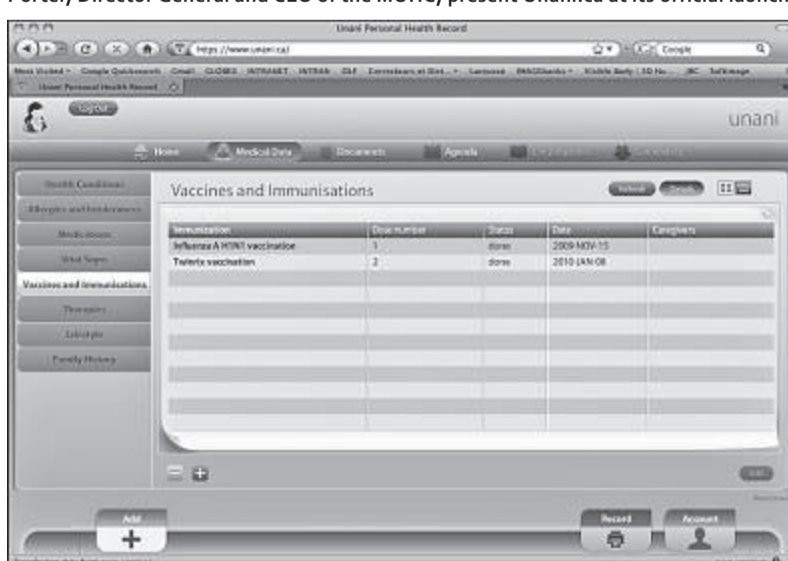
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— The Hon. Arthur T. Porter,  
Director General and CEO of the MUHC

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