

## **EIU Health Services H1N1 Update - September 21, 2009**

On August 31, 2009, Vice President Nadler sent a message about H1N1 flu to the campus. Since that time, Eastern has seen cases of H1N1 flu among students on campus. To date the number has been modest and the cases of the illness have been relatively mild.

It is known, however, that this H1N1 flu is highly contagious and seems to affect those younger than 50, especially 24 and younger, at greater rates than those who are older. We continue to follow the education standards promulgated by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other health organizations in a continuing effort to manage this risk most effectively. Current information and recommendations regarding both seasonal and H1N1 flu are available on Health Service's Web site at <http://www.eiu.edu/~health/clinic/info/swineflu.php>. We continue to encourage all members of the Eastern community to visit this site regularly and become familiar with the recommendations and precautions stated.

Because absences due to H1N1 flu and other illnesses may become more numerous as the semester progresses, the following guidelines for faculty, staff and students are offered to help manage this potentially significant health issue. The CDC recommends that persons with flu-like symptoms stay at home until they have been fever free for 24 hours without the assistance of fever reducing medications.

### ***Student Absences:***

For the duration of this outbreak, students missing class on the EIU-Charleston campus as a result of displaying flu-like symptoms or being diagnosed with possible H1N1 flu must notify the Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA) by contacting the Health Service as soon as possible (telephone 217-581-3013). The VPSA will request the student's instructors be notified.

When faculty members receive notice that a student will miss class due to displaying flu-like symptoms or a possible H1N1 flu diagnosis, they will allow the student to make up any missed assignments and exams or provide one of the other alternatives for an "excused" absence as provided by IGP #43 (<http://www.eiu.edu/~auditing/IGP/policy43.html>). Because of the highly contagious nature of H1N1 flu, it is important that students not fear being able to make up class assignments. We do not want to deter students from staying home if exhibiting flu-like symptoms or receiving an H1N1 flu diagnosis.

Documentation of student illness may not be available as medical facilities may engage in "phone triage" and may not be able to supply an absolute documentation of H1N1 flu infection in any event. Because of the high level of concern about H1N1 flu, we must err on the side of caution should there be any question of the seriousness of a student's illness.

Visit [www.eiu.edu/~health/info/swineflu.php](http://www.eiu.edu/~health/info/swineflu.php) for more information.

***Employee Absences:***

Employees missing work as a result of displaying flu-like symptoms or being diagnosed with H1N1 flu need to contact their supervisor as soon as possible. Employees should stay home if exhibiting flu-like symptoms or receiving an H1N1 flu diagnosis. If departments or offices have significant absences, they should contact their respective Vice President for staffing assistance.

Documentation of employee illness may not be available as medical facilities may engage in "phone triage" or may not be able to supply absolute documentation of H1N1 flu infection. For the period of the pandemic, we must err on the side of caution should there be any question of the seriousness of an employee's illness.

Sincerely,  
Sheila D. Baker, MD  
Medical Director Eastern Illinois University