



New Hampshire Health Alert Network

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TO: Post-Secondary Educational Institutions, AHHR, ICC, Outbreak Team, DPHS Investigation Team, DPHS Sr. Management Team

FROM: José T. Montero, MD, Director of the NH Division of Public Health Services

SUBJECT: Guidance for Colleges, Universities and Post-Secondary Education Institutions in Response to H1N1 Influenza Virus

**New Hampshire Department of Education and
Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health Services**

**Guidance for Colleges, Universities and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions
In Response to H1N1 Influenza Virus**

This document provides interim guidance specific for colleges, universities, and post-secondary educational institutions during the outbreak of influenza A H1N1 (swine flu) virus on suggested means to reduce the spread of influenza in these institutions and their communities. These recommendations are based on the recognition of sustained human to human transmission of this new virus, spread across much of the United States, and information which suggests that most cases of illness from this virus are similar in severity to seasonal influenza. However, recommendations may need to be revised as more information becomes available.

General Information:

- Maintain general health and hygiene activities in your institute. Remind all students and staff of the importance of regular hand-washing and use of >60% alcohol hand gels, not sharing drinking containers, and coughing/sneezing into the elbow. Ideally, opportunities for hand hygiene should be made available in areas where people congregate.
- Each morning, all students, faculty, and staff should assess themselves for symptoms of influenza-like illness (which may include symptoms of fever, cough, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, body aches, vomiting/diarrhea). Those who are ill should self-isolate (e.g., stay away from others), and based on symptom severity, should consider contacting their healthcare provider who will decide on the need for testing or treatment for influenza. Recommendations for healthcare providers within the institution are available at <http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/CDCS/han.htm> (5/4/09, revision 3).

- Institutions of higher education should remain vigilant for students and staff with visible signs of possible influenza like illness upon arrival at the institute. Those who appear ill should be advised to promptly self-isolate themselves in their dorm room or sent home.
- Persons with influenza-like illness who seek medical care should contact their health care provider or university health services to report illness by telephone or other remote means before seeking care. Universities should assure that all students, faculty and staff receive messages about what they should do if they become ill with influenza-like illness, including reporting to university health services.
- An individual with influenza-like illness should stay isolated in their dorm room or home until free of symptoms for at least 24 hours. If H1N1 influenza has been diagnosis, the isolation period should be at least 7 days or until or 24 hours after symptoms resolution, whichever is longer.
- Ideally, the ill person who does not return home should be housed in a single room during their infectious period, rather than risk transmission to roommates. Roommates and household contacts who elect to care for the ill individual may refer to CDC guidelines regarding care of a sick person at home (http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare.htm).
- Institutions of higher education will not be routinely recommended to close by DPHS on the basis of a diagnosis of suspected, probable, or confirmed cases of H1N1 influenza (swine flu). As is our practice with seasonal influenza, any closing of an institution will be handled on a case by case basis.
- As always, school healthcare personnel should report higher than normal absenteeism to NH DHHS Communicable Disease Section 603-271-4496.

Large Gathering

Large gatherings are gatherings where close contact is likely between a large number of attendees (e.g., graduations and commencement activities, concerts, sporting events, see [CDC Guidance for Public Gatherings](#).) We do not recommend canceling any such events at this time. On the basis of what is currently known about the ongoing spread of H1N1 influenza and, as a means to prevent the further spread of disease on and off campus, institutions of higher education should encourage persons with influenza-like illness to stay home and away from large gatherings. Persons who are sick should be instructed to limit their contact with other people as much as possible and to stay home as detailed above and use appropriate respiratory and hand hygiene (See [H1N1 Flu and You](#)).

Large university and other public gatherings offer a good opportunity for officials and event organizers to deliver key educational messages about measures attendees can take to help protect themselves and their family members from H1N1 influenza infection, including active promotion of good respiratory and hand hygiene practices.

For more information, see [H1N1 Flu Guidance](#) or for questions regarding the contents of this message, please contact NHDHHS Communicable Disease Control and Surveillance Section at 603-271-4496 (after hours 1-800-852-3345 ext. 5300).

Please also refer to the CDC website for daily updates on the outbreak and publication of interim guidance at: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>.

For any questions regarding the contents of this message, please contact NH DHHS Communicable Disease Control and Surveillance Section at 603-271-4496 (after hours 1-800-852-3345 ext.5300).

DEFINITION OF TERMS AND ALERTING VOCABULARY

Message Type

- Alert: Indicates an original alert
Update: Indicates prior alert has been updated and superseded
Cancel: Indicates prior alert has been cancelled
Error: Indicates prior alert has been retracted

Status

- Actual: Communication or alert refers to a live event
Exercise: Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert
Test: Communication or alert is related to a technical, system test and should be disregarded

Severity

- Extreme: Extraordinary threat to life or property
Severe: Significant threat to life or property
Moderate: Possible threat to life or property
Minor: Minimal threat to life or property
Unknown: Unknown threat to life or property

Sensitive

- Sensitive: Indicates the alert contains sensitive content
Not Sensitive: Indicates non-sensitive content

Message Identifier: A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation.

Delivery Time: Indicates the timeframe for delivery of the alert.

Acknowledgement: Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the timeframe in which a response is required.

Originating Agency: A guaranteed unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.

Alerting Program: The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.

You have received this message based upon the information contained within our emergency notification database.

If you have a different or additional e-mail or fax address that you would prefer to be used please contact:

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