



# ECKERD COLLEGE

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: AUGUST 28, 2009  
TO: ALL ECKERD COLLEGE FACULTY AND STAFF  
FROM: LLOYD W. CHAPIN, VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS  
& DEAN OF FACULTY  
WHITNEY WALL, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF HEALTH PROMOTION  
RE: **PANDEMIC H1N1 FLU INFORMATION - UPDATE #1**

This memo, Update #1, highlights important information about College operations based on guidance that has been issued by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other federal agencies ([CDC Guidance for Responses to Influenza for Institutions of Higher Education during the 2009-2010 Academic Year](#) and [Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)) since we wrote to you on August 12, 2009. You will want to reinforce this information with students and use it to guide your own pandemic flu response.

CDC reports that individuals with confirmed, probable and suspected cases of H1N1 flu continue to experience symptoms similar to those of the seasonal flu. Like the seasonal flu, the H1N1 flu can be serious and even deadly for those who have certain risk factors, like asthma, diabetes, pregnancy, chronic heart and lung disease, and compromised immune systems. Therefore, Eckerd College will continue to comply with CDC and other federal agencies' guidelines on ways to promote the health of the College community and the continuity of College operations.

This update reports changes in College practice effective with the start of Fall Term 2009:

1. Eckerd College students and employees do not need to obtain doctors' notes for missed classes or missed work because of an influenza-like-illness.
2. Students should email their faculty AND the Flu Alias (flu@eckerd.edu) if they are missing class because of an influenza-like-illness.
3. Faculty should forward student emails to the Flu Alias (flu@eckerd.edu) if the students are missing class because of an influenza-like-illness.
4. Faculty need to inform their collegial chair AND Human Resources ([HumanResources@eckerd.edu](mailto:HumanResources@eckerd.edu)) if they are missing class because of an influenza-like-illness. Faculty may work from home.
5. Staff need to inform their supervisor AND Human Resources ([HumanResources@eckerd.edu](mailto:HumanResources@eckerd.edu)) if they are missing work because of an influenza-like-illness. Staff and supervisors may arrange for work to be performed from home.
6. Members of the College community are encouraged to receive the seasonal flu vaccination when it becomes available on campus in late September; the College is in communication with the Pinellas County Health Department regarding the dispensing of the H1N1 flu vaccine when it becomes available some time this Fall.

## **Information to Share with Students Regarding the Academic Program**

- 1. Let students know it is important to talk about influenza-like-illnesses, whether it is the H1N1 flu or seasonal flu. Flu can be spread easily from person to person, and it can cause complications in individuals who have certain risk factors. Therefore, we are taking steps to contain the spread of flu at Eckerd College, and we need your help to accomplish this.**
- 2. Influenza-like-illness is defined as a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) plus cough and/or sore throat. Some individuals may also experience body aches, nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea.**
- 3. Instructors should provide students at the beginning of each course with guidelines about how best to proceed with their course work in cases where they, the students or instructors, may be unable to meet the class for several days or more.**
- 4. Advise students who are experiencing an influenza-like-illness (ILI) to self-isolate (i.e., stay away from others as much as possible) in their dorm room or at home until 24 hours after resolution of fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) without the use of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen). Individuals who are ill should stay home even if they are using antiviral drugs. Individuals should be prepared to resume their responsibilities from home as their recovery permits. A mild, lingering cough may occur. Barring any other flu symptoms, this cough should not prevent students from returning to class.**
- 5. Advise students that, if they have any of the risk factors that may cause complications with the flu (e.g., asthma, diabetes, pregnancy or compromised immune system), they should seek immediate medical attention if they are experiencing an influenza-like-illness (ILI) and they should contact their healthcare provider if have been in close contact with someone with ILI. Their medical provider may prescribe an antiviral, which is most effective when administered within 48 hours of the onset of illness.**
- 6. Advise students that, if they are self-isolating in the residence hall, they might want to ask a friend to pick up meals and other necessities for them, as needed. If any student is having difficulty accessing medical supplies or food, they should email the Flu Alias (flu@eckerd.edu). Assistance will be provided.**
- 7. Advise students that, if they have any of the risk factors that may cause complications with the flu (e.g., asthma, diabetes, pregnancy or compromised immune system) and a roommate who is ill with an ILI, they may ask to temporarily relocate to another residential setting and, if necessary, self-isolate from classes and gatherings. They should send a message to the Flu Alias (flu@eckerd.edu) for more information.**

8. **According to the CDC, most individuals who experience influenza-like-illness do not need to seek medical attention. It is important to seek medical attention immediately if one experiences any of the following:**

Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath

Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen

Sudden dizziness

Confusion

Severe or persistent vomiting

**In the event of a medical emergency, please call 911 and campus safety (727-864-8260)**

9. **Advise students they do not need to obtain doctors' notes for missed classes because of an influenza-like-illness. They need to email their faculty members and the Flu Alias ([flu@eckerd.edu](mailto:flu@eckerd.edu)) if they are missing class due to an influenza-like-illness (ILI).** It is important that students obtain from their instructors information about how best to continue or resume their academic work so as not to fall too far behind in their courses. It is important that instructors maintain reasonable academic expectations while, at the same time, being reasonably flexible and understanding in responding to individual student circumstances.

**To be sure Student Affairs is aware of student absences related to influenza-like-illness, faculty should forward their students' emails to the Flu Alias ([flu@eckerd.edu](mailto:flu@eckerd.edu)).**

10. **Remind students of the ways they can help protect themselves and others from the H1N1 flu:**

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. [Alcohol-based hand cleaners\\*](#) are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

At the beginning of all large social gatherings, including large classes, remind attendees of the following: "Remember...the Surgeon General recommends that you use good cough etiquette at all times. Cough or sneeze into your sleeve or a tissue, not into your hands. And be sure to wash your hands often."

### **Faculty and Staff**

1. **Faculty should notify their collegial chairs and staff should notify their supervisors if they need to go home or stay home because they are experiencing an influenza-like-illness. Faculty and staff should also send an email to Human Resources ([HumanResources@eckerd.edu](mailto:HumanResources@eckerd.edu)) if they are home with an influenza-like-illness.** Faculty and staff who experience influenza-like-illness should also self-isolate until 24 hours after resolution of fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) without the use of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen). Individuals who are ill should stay home even if they are using antiviral drugs. (See [CDC](#)

**[Recommendations for the Amount of Time Persons with Influenza-Like Illness Should be Away from Others](#)**, August 5, 2009).

Epidemiologic data collected during spring 2009 found that most people with the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus who were not hospitalized had a fever that lasted 2 to 4 days; this would require an exclusion period of **3 to 5 days** in most cases. Individuals should be prepared to resume their responsibilities from home as their recovery permits. A mild, lingering cough may occur. Barring any other flu symptoms, this cough should not prevent employees from returning to work.

2. **According to the CDC, most individuals who experience influenza-like-illness do not need to seek medical attention. It is important to seek medical attention immediately if one experiences any of the following:**  
Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath  
Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen  
Sudden dizziness  
Confusion  
Severe or persistent vomiting  
**In the event of a medical emergency, please call 911 and campus safety (727-864-8260).**
3. **Faculty and staff at high risk for influenza complications who become ill with influenza-like illness should speak with a health care provider as soon as possible.** Early treatment with antiviral medications is very important for people at high risk because it can prevent hospitalizations and deaths. People at high risk include those who are pregnant or have asthma or diabetes, compromised immune systems, or neuromuscular diseases.
4. **Faculty and staff do not need to obtain doctors' notes for missed work because of an influenza-like-illness. They need to email their collegial chairs or supervisors and Human Resources (HumanResources@eckerd.edu) if they are missing class or work due to an influenza-like-illness (ILI).** Staff should familiarize themselves with the College's telecommuting policy and Family Medical Leave Act so they are aware of resources that are available to them.
5. **The effectiveness of UNICCO's pandemic flu plan depends on cooperation by all members of the Eckerd College community. Faculty and staff should remove unnecessary items from the surfaces of tables and desks in their offices to facilitate cleaning by UNICCO housekeepers.**

### **Care for Well and Sick Children**

Now that K-12 schools are in session, Pinellas County Schools are recording student absences because of flu. While the pandemic flu public emergency is in effect, faculty and staff should not bring their children, whether healthy or ill, to campus. Staff and faculty are expected to follow the College's human resource policies when caring for ill family members. (For helpful guidance, see [Interim Guidance for Novel H1N1 Flu \(Swine Flu\): Taking Care of a Sick Person in Your Home](#))

### **Seasonal Flu Vaccine and H1N1 Flu Vaccine**

The College's flu planning group and the College's Health Service are in communication with the Pinellas County Health Department regarding the dispensing of the seasonal flu vaccine on campus and the possibility of having Eckerd College serve as a site to dispense the H1N1 flu vaccine, when it becomes available, to members of the Eckerd College community. We will send you an email when we have more information. The seasonal flu vaccine may arrive in the College's Health Service by late September; the Federal government is projecting the H1N1 flu vaccine may begin to be available after mid-October.

### **Updates**

As the flu season and academic year evolve, updates about the College's response to the pandemic flu will be emailed to you and posted on the College's Health Promotion website.

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us. Dean Chapin will respond to faculty and staff concerns about academic and administrative functions; Whitney will respond to questions about health.

Thank you for what you will do to help promote a healthy campus learning environment.

Lloyd

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[Lloyd W. Chapin](#)

Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty  
Eckerd College

Whitney

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[Whitney Wall](#), MPH, CHES

Director, [Office of Health Promotion](#)

Eckerd College

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P.S. The following additional information may be helpful to you.

Eckerd College's Emergency Management Flu Planning Group has been dedicated to emergency response planning and implementation. Over the summer, the Group has worked to successfully update the College's Pandemic Flu Emergency Operations Plan, which can be accessed through the College's Health Promotion website: [www.eckerd.edu/health](http://www.eckerd.edu/health).

Questions or comments regarding the College's Pandemic Flu Emergency Operations Plan can be directed to Lisa Mets, Ph.D., Executive Assistant to the President, Vice President for Communications and Chair of the Pandemic Flu Planning Group at (727) 864-8221 or email to [metsla@eckerd.edu](mailto:metsla@eckerd.edu). Please direct all other health questions or comments to Whitney Wall, MPH, CHES, Director, Office of Health Promotion at (727) 864-8031 or email to [wallwa@eckerd.edu](mailto:wallwa@eckerd.edu).

## KNOW THE SYMPTOMS OF THE H1N1 FLU

Fever  
Body aches  
Runny nose  
Sore throat  
Nausea  
Vomiting  
Diarrhea

## SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING

Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath  
Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen  
Sudden dizziness  
Confusion  
Severe or persistent vomiting

In the event of a medical emergency, please call 911.

## DISEASE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

The best way to prevent the spread of influenza is through good hygiene practices. Please follow these disease prevention and control strategies outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners also are effective. Please use the Purell hand sanitizer dispensers placed throughout campus.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people. Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- If you get sick, seek medical attention.

## USEFUL PANDEMIC FLU RESOURCES

### American College Health Association

- [http://www.acha.org/info\\_resources/pandemic\\_flu.cfm](http://www.acha.org/info_resources/pandemic_flu.cfm)

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>
- CDC guidance for Institutions of Higher Education: [http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/guidelines\\_colleges.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/guidelines_colleges.htm)
- CDC guidance for General Business and Workplace (prevention in workers): <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/workplace.htm>

### Federal Government Pandemic Flu Information Page

- <http://www.flu.gov>

### Florida Department of Health

- <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/demo/php/FluInfo.htm>

### Pinellas County Health Department

- <http://www.pinellashealth.com/H1N1SwineFlu.asp>
- <http://www.pinellashealth.com/index.asp>

### U.S. Department of Education (ED) Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools (OSDFS):

- <http://www.edgovblogs.org/duncan/2009/04/public-health-officials-offer-swine-flu-guidance-to-schools/>
- <http://rems.ed.gov/index.cfm?event=PandemicPreparedns4Schools>

### U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

- <http://www.hhs.gov/pandemicflu/plan/>

### U.S. Department of Homeland Security

- [http://www.dhs.gov/xprevprot/programs/editorial\\_0760.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xprevprot/programs/editorial_0760.shtm)

### World Health Organization

- <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html>