



September 24, 2009

Colleagues:

I write to provide an update on the H1N1 virus as it relates to SCCC and guidance with respect to reporting potential H1N1 cases.

As you may know, in early summer, the World Health Organization raised its influenza pandemic alert to its highest level, reporting confirmed cases of the H1N1 virus. Based on the report, recovery from the illness is being achieved without hospitalization or medical care. Needless to say, higher education institutions view this as a serious health matter and have put in place preventive measures to limit the spread of the virus.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has issued new guidance for higher education institutions to use to decrease the spread of the virus. The suggested steps are as follows:

1. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
2. Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
3. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.
4. Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
5. If you are sick with influenza-like illness (ILI), the CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or other necessities. Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

As importantly, the College is working closely with the Schenectady County Commissioner of Public Health Services, Dr. David Pratt, to obtain a wealth of other information about the H1N1 virus and its effects. Dr. Pratt reviewed and applauded SCCC's precautionary activities and preventive measures that are in place to decrease the spread of the virus and to help you and our students reduce the likelihood of becoming sick.

In the immediate, Dr. Nancy Zimpher, Chancellor for the SUNY System has charged each college president to monitor the situation closely and to report the estimated total number of students with symptoms of influenza-like illnesses to System Administration. Starting Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, the College will begin daily monitoring of employee and student absentee rates to help identify any operational impact H1N1 may be having on the College community. A daily absentee report will be compiled and submitted to System Administration.

To assist the College in understanding the potential impact the H1N1 virus has on the operation of the College, full-time and adjunct faculty are asked to take daily class attendance and to report absences and any cases of the influenza-like illness of which you become aware. The attendance manager in ANGEL will be used to record daily absences and any known influenza-like illnesses. Dan Feinberg will be disseminating a communiqué that outlines step-by-step instructions on how to use the attendance manager in ANGEL. In addition, a list of training sessions on how to use the attendance manager in ANGEL is being scheduled and will commence next week.

In summary, let me reiterate four essential points:

1. Faculty must report student attendance on a daily basis. Attendance reporting and tracking is a requirement for all SUNY colleges.
2. The planning and measures we are implementing are precautionary and should not be taken as a reason for alarm. The precautionary measures are what you would expect the College to do in this situation.

3. The protection we have to reduce the risk of infection is to be mindful of good hygiene procedures and practice them consistently.
4. If you are sick, stay home – remember that you are considered to be infectious for 24 hours after you are free of fever. The CDC website (<http://www.cdc.gov/>) offers valuable information on how to take care of yourself and others.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Quintin Bullock  
President