

August 31, 2009

Re: Novel H1N1 Flu

Dear students, parents and guardians:

This letter is a collaboration between the Ontario County Public Health Department and Finger Lakes Community College Student Health Services. As you may know, flu can be easily spread from person to person. According to the Centers for Disease Control, H1N1 (swine) flu continues to circulate and will probably be present in our community in addition to regular seasonal flu this fall and winter. We are anticipating a busy flu season; therefore, we are taking steps to reduce its spread at FLCC. We want to keep the college open to students and functioning in a normal manner throughout the academic year.

With the start of fall classes, we want to share some information on how Finger Lakes Community College is preparing for the flu season.

The CDC reports that some 20 percent of the U.S. population spends part of their day in a school as a student or employee. This gives schools and colleges, in cooperation with students and parents, a special role in helping reduce the spread of the Novel H1N1 flu virus, also called swine flu.

FLCC has a plan to monitor and respond to the global outbreak of Novel H1N1. Any changes to the schedule of classes or campus activities will be posted on the Web site at www.flcc.edu.

At this point, we have no reason to close school, dismiss classes or take more aggressive action to protect the health and welfare of our campus community. If this changes, we will work closely with local health officials to determine and fully communicate the appropriate next steps.

It is recommended that anyone with flu-like symptoms should stay home from school and work *at least 24 hours AFTER they no longer have a fever WITHOUT using fever reducing drugs* (such as Aspirin, Tylenol or Ibuprofen). Symptoms of the Novel H1N1 flu resemble those of the regular seasonal flu. These may include:

- Fever greater than 100°F
- Cough or sore throat
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills and/or fatigue
- Some people have also reported diarrhea and vomiting, which are not usual symptoms of seasonal flu.

We strongly recommend adopting and discussing with your student the following precautionary measures:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol-based hand gel; wash long enough to sing “Happy Birthday” twice.
- Stay away from people who are sick, if possible.
- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing.
- Dispose of tissues properly in the garbage.
- If your student experiences flu-like symptoms, instruct them to stay home and call: Karen Stein, Health Services Director, at 585.394.3500 x7297.

Emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen, sudden dizziness, confusion, and/or severe or persistent vomiting. Please instruct your student to call 911 if these warning signs appear. For more information about swine flu, please visit the Center for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov/swineflu/. Should you wish to speak to a Student Health Services care provider, please contact us at (585) 394-3500, extension 7297.

Sincerely,

Karen Stein, RN, MS, CASAC
Director of Student Health Services

Mary L. Beer, RN, BSN
Director of Ontario County Public Health