

From: Toni O'Keeffe
Sent: October 21, 2009 12:23 PM
To: ML Employees; ML Emergency Mail Registrants
Subject: Influenza and H1N1 - update

Good afternoon,

As we are well into the academic year and flu season, we are providing you with this update on influenza and H1N1 monitoring at VIU.

We have been advised that health care practitioners are no longer routinely sending individuals with influenza like symptoms for testing to confirm a diagnoses of the H1N1 virus. We understand that Dr's are advising those individuals presenting H1N1 like symptoms that they should recuperate at home. This approach to tracking influenza and H1N1 makes it difficult to confirm actual cases amongst our student and employee populations.

VIU's Health and Safety Services office is relying on the cooperation of students and employees to voluntarily report illnesses so that VIU officials have an accurate picture of what the influenza status is at all of our sites.

To date our operating centres in Nanaimo, Cowichan, Powell River and Parksville-Qualicum have reported limited numbers of influenza like illness. At this time we have less than a 1% absenteeism rate amongst students and employees.

The Nanaimo campus has had students and employees reporting influenza like illness since September. This week the Nanaimo campus has received 4 notifications of suspected H1N1 cases. These cases have not been confirmed.

Absenteeism related to influenza like illness appears to be spread evenly across the Nanaimo campus and is not contained to one particular program or building.

VIU's Health and Safety Services office is continuing to monitor the situation closely and will continue to update you accordingly. Please remember to visit the Health and Safety Services website at <http://www.viu.ca/healthandsafety/SwineInfluenzaUpdate.asp> for additional information and updates.

Prevention is the key to staying healthy, so please remember to wash your hands often, use proper coughing and sneezing etiquette and stay home if you are ill.

I would also like to thank the employees Erin, Mark and Carl that work in VIU's Health and Safety Services office for their attention to managing prevention and providing education related to the spread of HiN1 and other illnesses. Thank you!

If you have questions regarding H1N1 or influenza monitoring on campus please contact VIU's Health and Safety Services office at safety@viu.ca or by calling 250 740-6283

Thank you

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