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H1N1 Influenza Update August 28, 2009

UW-River Falls continues to work with authorities to follow current local, state, and federal recommendations related to the novel 2009 H1N1 influenza. Our pandemic and emergency plans remain in place and campus is working together with others in the community to assure a coordinated response.

The novel 2009 H1N1 pandemic flu is widespread throughout the world. Fortunately, the vast majority of cases are mild and, at this point, the H1N1 virus appears no more virulent or severe than most seasonal flus. This strain does seem to be more frequent in children and young adults because those who are younger than 50 years of age have not yet had contact with a similar type of this virus. **It is important to note that it will be very hard to tell if someone who is sick has the novel 2009 H1N1 flu or seasonal flu. Public health officials and medical authorities will very likely not be recommending laboratory tests.**

Cases of novel 2009 H1N1 have already appeared on most college campuses. We expect to see more cases this fall, consistent with what is happening in public communities. We strongly encourage all members of the campus community to take the standard precautions adopted during the flu season-and to play an active role in our public health prevention efforts. The precautions include:

1. **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
2. **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.** If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder; not into your hands.
3. **Stay home or at your place of residence if you are sick** for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating). This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen). Staying away from others while sick can prevent others from getting sick too. Ask a roommate, friend, or family member to check up on you and to bring you food and supplies if needed. Anyone who has the symptoms of flu-like illness should stay home and not go to school or work.
4. **Talk to your health care provider** to find out if you should be vaccinated for seasonal flu and/or novel 2009 H1N1 flu. Information about the novel 2009 H1N1 flu vaccination can be found at: www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination. Information about seasonal flu vaccine can be found at: www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm.
5. **Please consider keeping waterless hand sanitizer, tissues, and wet wipes handy in your home and workplaces.** Having these available will make it easier for persons to wash hands often, use a tissue if they cough or sneeze, and wipe down keyboards and work spaces, especially shared workspaces between users. Also, please consider printing off posters (examples below) and posting them in your areas.

<http://www.flu.gov/plan/school/stopfeelsick85x11.pdf>
http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/pdf/covercough_school8-5x11.pdf
<http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/materials.htm>
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/flugallery/index.htm#materials>

UW-River Falls students can call the River Falls Medical Clinic for an appointment at 425-6701 (basic office visits are covered by Student Health Services, but additional testing and treatment may not be covered). Students can take

the River Falls Taxi (425-7878) to and from the River Falls Medical Clinic covered by Student Health Services. Disposable thermometers are available at each resident hall front desk and at the Student Health Services office at 211 Hagestad Hall.

For more information about influenza and the novel 2009 H1N1 influenza, go to the UW-River Falls Emergency preparedness web page at <http://www.uwrf.edu/emergency/>. Watch for more information about opportunities to receive influenza vaccination. For questions, contact Student Health Services at 715/425-3293.