

## **UConn Stamford Swine Flu (H1N1) Pandemic Plan**

### Background

In Spring 2009, the Task Force for Pandemic Planning was convened to seriously begin discussions about how the UConn Stamford Campus should prepare for a potential swine flu pandemic that could affect the campus as early as the Fall 2009 semester.

As part of that process, four sub-committees were convened on specific topic areas and faculty and staff served as chair of each subcommittee that included Instruction (Elena Levy and Anne Farrell), Student Services (Sharon White), Staffing and Human Resources Coordination (Sheila Moore), and Communication and Coordination (Kathy Harrison). Each subcommittee developed a set of recommendations for each topic area, and this document offers the campus a guide to prepare for a potential swine flu pandemic.

### Instruction

The Subcommittee on Instruction developed a set of recommendations for the faculty at the Stamford Campus on what steps can be taken now, as well as if and when the swine flu does affect instruction on our campus.

Although it seems unlikely that a severe form of flu will occur, the subcommittee approached the task with an intention to “plan for the worst and hope for the best.” With that in mind, the subcommittee has put together a set of suggestions for the faculty. The subcommittee worked under the premise that faculty should be prepared for various foreseeable circumstances, and can provide prompt, clear, reliable information and reassurance for students.

As part of the process to assist faculty, Lauren Dechant has created a 25 page guidebook for the faculty, which can be accessible on the Stamford Campus website: [www.stamford.uconn.edu/FluNews.html](http://www.stamford.uconn.edu/FluNews.html). You will see in the guidebook how faculty can utilize HuskyCT as a common tool for all students and Lauren has offered to assist faculty who wish to learn how to use HuskyCT.

The adjunct faculty will be asked to work with Sheila Moore, who will match adjuncts with full time instructors who serve as mentors. Adjuncts should contact mentors for department specific advice and mentors should contact their adjuncts to make sure they are prepared to function remotely for a brief period of time.

### Student Services

The Subcommittee on Student Services developed recommendations regarding how the campus communicates to students and how student support services will be able to respond to a potential swine flu outbreak. First, communication to new students, continuing students and families can be achieved by general announcement at all new student orientations and parent orientations; by student leaders handling questions related to the swine flu pandemic and Stamford Campus’ response to it; by utilizing FYE classes to disseminate information about the campus plan; and by utilizing campus monitors and the scrolling bar in the concourse.

There should be a series of programs and services offered on the campus to educate the campus population about the swine flu. These programs/services should be developed to curtail the number of cases that will occur on campus and information on safety precautions/practices for day-to-day operations would also be provided. These programs and services include a “pandemic alert” system that will alert students, faculty, and staff via available communication sources on the severity of the flu; an all-day “Pandemic Fair” in the concourse to include an educational science display about the swine flu; the City of Stamford Health Department partnering to provide information tables about the swine flu vaccine and when/if the vaccines will be available on campus; and information provided about where students can seek help for stress-related issues related to the swine flu pandemic.

#### Communication and Coordination

The Subcommittee on Communications and Coordination focused on developing a communication plan that would be consistent and easily understood by the campus. In addition, the subcommittee identified a system of coordination within and outside the Stamford Campus.

First, it was agreed that the Associate Vice Provost, Michael Ego, would serve as the primary point person for all media and other inquiries, regarding campus information. If he is ill with the swine flu, then Sheila Moore will be the next designated person to be the primary contact. Second, the UConn Stamford Campus website ([www.stamford.uconn.edu](http://www.stamford.uconn.edu)) would be the primary source for the most recent information about the swine flu’s impact on the Stamford Campus and other pertinent information. The website will also provide a link to the City of Stamford Health Department website for additional information and emergency preparedness announcements made by Dr. Johnnie Lee, Director of City of Stamford Health Dept. Next, faculty will develop a communication plan for enrolled students, which would include student email addresses, HuskyCT notification, student cell phone numbers for text messages to reach the students, and students knowing how to forward their Husky mail accounts to their preferred email address. Foremost, students must maintain and check regularly their husky mail accounts to receive important university information and emergency notifications.

#### Staffing and Human Resources Coordination

The regional campus structure must comply with all collective bargaining agreements regarding staff workloads and work conditions. Thus, staff absenteeism due to the swine flu will pose challenges for maintaining the level of service throughout the campus.

The campus administration has consulted with the UConn Office of Human Resources on how to proceed with conditions that may include work stoppage or slowdown due to high absenteeism during a pandemic. The UConn Office of Human Resources does not have a plan to address this matter at this time. The UConn Stamford administration will keep all staff and faculty informed when information is provided to us by the Office of Human Resources regarding work obligations and responsibilities during the pandemic period.

#### Conclusion

Let us all hope that the swine flu outbreak will not be serious enough to impact the Stamford Campus. In the meantime, let's work together to prepare accordingly for a potential swine flu pandemic that might affect campus operations. For more detailed information regarding the subcommittee recommendations, please check the campus website: [www.stamford.uconn.edu](http://www.stamford.uconn.edu).

