

GUIDANCE FOR ACADEMIC UNIT MANAGERS ON DEALING WITH STAFF AND STUDENTS WHO DISPLAY FLU LIKE SYMPTOMS

What are Flu Like Symptoms?

A fever or high temperature (over 38°C/100.4°F) and two or more of the following symptoms, may indicate a person has swine flu:

- unusual tiredness,
- headache,
- runny nose,
- sore throat,
- shortness of breath or cough,
- loss of appetite,
- aching muscles,
- diarrhoea or vomiting.

How should I handle staff or students displaying flu-like symptoms?

- If a member of staff or a student is obviously unwell with flu-like symptoms while on the premises, they should be told to go home and contact the National Pandemic Flu Service on 0800 1 513 513.
- This service will assess their symptoms and if required provide an authorisation number which can be used to collect antivirals from a local Antiviral Collection Point. Those with internet access can log onto the website at <http://www.direct.gov.uk/pandemicflu>. Further information on what that advice may be can be found on this website.
- Those ringing the National Pandemic Flu Service should have the following information to hand : their date of birth, current symptoms, history of any serious medical conditions, home address including postcode

It is important that you do not attempt to offer medical advice to staff or students displaying flu like symptoms yourself, but refer them to authoritative sources of information and treatment

What do I do if staff or students who display flu-like symptoms refuse to go home and insist on continuing to work?

If you cannot persuade staff or students with flu-like symptoms to act responsibly by going home for the good of their own health, remind them that they should do so in the wider interest of the health of their fellow staff and students and ensuring that the ongoing work of the unit is not put at risk by their spreading infection. You may wish to ask your departmental head or another senior member of the department to support you.

What do I say to well staff or students who tell me they have been in close contact with swine flu cases?

If a member of staff or a student has had contact with a person with swine flu, but are showing no symptoms themselves, they do not need to stay away from work.

Certain groups who are at higher risk of developing complications if they contract swine flu and who have had close contact with people with swine flu may have been prescribed antiviral medicine (eg Tamiflu) as a precautionary measure. If this happens, they will normally have been

advised to continue with their normal daily activities, including going to work, as long as they do not develop any flu-like symptoms. *Those at higher risk may include those with a chronic lung, heart, kidney, liver or neurological disease, with immuno suppression (whether caused by disease or treatment), diabetes mellitus; those who have had drug treatment for their asthma within the last 3 years; pregnant women, people aged 65 and over.*

What can we do to preventing the spread of swine flu in the unit?

Flu is usually spread from one person to another when an infected person has symptoms (i.e. through coughing and sneezing). All staff and students can play their part in helping prevent the spread of infection by practising good hygiene while on School premises. "Good hygiene" includes:

- washing their hands frequently with soap and hot water, to reduce the spread of virus from their hands to their face or to other people.
- covering their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible.
- disposing of dirty tissues promptly and carefully
- if practical, wiping down all hard surfaces (such as door handles) frequently, with a normal cleaning product.

You might wish to read the official government leaflet that explains how to prevent transmission of swine flu and download it and make copies available within public areas ([NHS swine flu information leaflet](#) on the NHS Choices website.)

Please contact either myself (ext 4959) or Ann O'Brien (ext 3677) if you need further advice or information.

Andrew Webb
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