

Message to students from the Vice President for Student Life

September 4, 2009

Dear Gonzaga Students:

Gonzaga University recently experienced the first confirmed case of flu on campus this semester. As reported in today's Gonzaga Bulletin, a student in residence was diagnosed with Influenza A, which includes a variety of flu viruses including the seasonal flu and H1N1 flu. Specific testing is not being done for any suspected cases of H1N1 per the direction of public health authorities; instead, current medical guidance is to treat all flu cases as if they are H1N1 cases.

Transmission of the flu virus occurs when droplets are expelled through a cough or sneeze. Please take these common-sense precautions:

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and then dispose of the tissue right away
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer
- Avoid contact with others if you experience flu-like symptoms. These symptoms may include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some individuals also experience diarrhea and vomiting.

An individual may have been exposed to the virus, and may be contagious themselves, a day or more before symptoms appear and for five or more days thereafter. Avoiding contact with others (or "self isolation") for the duration of the illness is the best way to stop the spread of the virus.

If you experience flu-like symptoms please contact the University Health Center at 313-4052 to speak with a nurse as soon as possible. Contact information and hours for the Health Center can be found here: <http://www.gonzaga.edu/Student-Life/Support-for-Students/Wellness/Health-Center/Office-Hours.asp> If you experience severe flu symptoms when the Health Center is closed you should seek medical attention at an urgent care facility or hospital emergency department. For situations which pose a threat to health or safety call 911 first, then contact the Campus Security dispatch at 313-2222. The Security dispatcher can also arrange a cab ride at no charge to and from a medical facility if emergency medical response is not needed.

Treatment for the flu includes a strong recommendation to isolate yourself to your room until symptoms are gone and 24 hours after any fever is gone. Self-isolation can occur in a student's residence hall room or apartment/house, although students may be encouraged to recuperate at home with family if possible. In general self-isolation will last from four to seven days. The Health Center staff is available, both by phone and at the Health Center, to discuss specifics of self-isolation and treatment of the flu. It is important to observe the full period of self-isolation because even if an individual appears healthy or feels better, he or she can still be contagious.

The University is continuing to develop and revise its flu response plan as the situation changes. A team of administrators and staff have been appointed by the interim president to coordinate the University's overall response. In particular the Health Center, Housing, Dining Services and Security are prepared to address the needs of individual students and the campus community. Arrangements are available for well students of sick roommates to temporarily relocate during the self-isolation period. The Health

Center continues to provide the seasonal flu vaccine (not specific to H1N1) for a \$5. fee on a walk-in basis. Plant Services is intensifying the usual cleaning process and supplies such as disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer are widely available on campus. The Academic Vice President's office is working with all academic deans and departments on issues such as class absences and instruction alternatives. You can read separate messages sent to Gonzaga faculty, staff and parents on the Health Center's Seasonal Flu and H1N1 Update page: <http://www.gonzaga.edu/Healthcenter>

I want to emphasize that although the H1N1 flu situation is serious it need not cause panic or alarm. We all have responsibility for stopping the spread of the disease. The best way to keep yourself and others from becoming ill is to practice good hygiene at all times. If you experience flu-like symptoms call or visit the Health Center and self-isolate. My sincerest hope is for you to remain healthy throughout the entire flu season and to recover quickly if you become ill.

Sincerely,
Sue Weitz, PhD
Vice President for Student Life