

**MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF NURSING**  
**H1N1 Preparedness Plan**  
**September 23, 2009**

Memorial University is anticipating that the university community will be affected by the H1N1 pandemic this fall. The university's *Academic Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness* has been working on an institution-wide plan to address the anticipated absentee rate of 15-35% for students, faculty and staff. Absenteeism is expected due to illness, concerns regarding personal safety, caring for sick family members and lack of availability to child care due to closure of schools and daycare facilities. In preparation for the development of unit level plans, the emergency preparedness subcommittee has drafted H1N1 Planning Objectives and Assumptions (Appendix A). Academic units in the university have been directed to develop unit-level plans to address these planning objectives.

The goals of planning are: (a) to ensure the safest possible environment for students, faculty and staff; (b) to minimize disruptions to teaching, research and business activities; and (c) to return to a state of normalcy as quickly as possible. The following outlines the School of Nursing plan to meet these goals. This plan is congruent with the university's planning objectives and assumptions, appropriate for implementation across programs and clinical sites, and developed in consultation with the Center for Nursing Studies (CNS) and the Western Region School of Nursing (WRSON).

This plan is based on the principles adopted by all Deans and Directors in that it reflects:

- Fairness to Students;
- Academic Integrity;
- Open and Timely Communication

As indicated in the preparedness plan, interventions target pandemic level I (mild, <15% absenteeism), pandemic level II (moderate, 15-35% absenteeism), and pandemic level III (severe, >35% absenteeism). The goal of the university is to remain open across all three levels of the pandemic.

**Objective #1: Ensure the safest possible environment for students, faculty and staff.**

- A. Educate students, faculty and staff concerning signs and symptoms of H1N1 and preventive measures (Level I).*

Donna Moralejo and Marion Yetman will implement a school-wide educational flu program for students, faculty and staff in the MUNSON and the CNS. Arrangements have been made for Sue Froude to offer the same program at the WRSON. The

educational program will consist of preparatory mini-lectures, in-class lectures, and lab practice (Appendices B1, B2, B3).

*B. Educate students, faculty and staff regarding vaccination against H1N1 and seasonal flu (Level I).*

Provide information to faculty, students and staff regarding the benefits of seasonal flu and H1N1 flu vaccination.

Provide information regarding the scheduling and location of vaccination programs.

*C. Implement a “clean” campaign (Levels I, II and III).*

Provide access to alcohol-based hand sanitization dispensers at the entrance to the Schools of Nursing (MUNSON, CNS and WRSON).

In high-interaction locations (i.e. main office, learning resource centre, classrooms, staff/faculty lounge, student lounge), provide access to alcohol-based hand sanitizers and surface wipes.

*D. Discourage congregation*

Educate students, faculty and staff to avoid congregating at work, within the university and in the community (**Levels I, II, III**).

Instruct students to limit visits to the Student Health Service to those times when they are seriously ill (i.e. students should not visit with mild flu symptoms).

In consultation with the Associate Directors, the Directors (MUNSON, CNS, WRSON) will develop a protocol for targeted staff to work at home (**Levels II and III**).

In consultation with the Associate Directors, the Directors (MUNSON, CNS, WRSON) will determine when to cancel classes (**Levels II and III**).

*E. Ensure adequate healthcare for students with H1N1 who live alone*

Instruct ill students to go home or to an environment where they will receive care. (**Levels I, II, III**).

## **Objective #2: Minimize disruptions to teaching, research and business activities.**

### **A. Increase capacity for the use of Distance Education and Learning Technologies (DELT) (Level I).**

In preparation for faculty and staff shortages, DELT has constructed an emergency preparedness plan of critical services to be maintained during the pandemic (see Appendices C1, C2, C3). In this plan, DELT encourages faculty to learn to use Desire2Learn (D2L) (see Appendix C4). Requests for course shells must be made online by September 14<sup>th</sup>.

The Associate Directors in the MUNSON, the CNS and the WRSON will consult with faculty to assess faculty capabilities concerning the use of distance technology. Faculty in need of training will be encouraged to attend the introductory workshops for D2L planned for September 14th to 24th.

Students not familiar with DELT will be required to attend online tutorials

### **B. Modify/specify evaluation methods.**

*“In the event of student absence during required activities (i.e. clinical and/or exams), the University has specified that physician’s notes will not be required. For the fall semester, students are **not** required to produce a medical note for H1N1 illness in accordance with a ruling by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUGS) on September 10, 2009”. This standard wording regarding this university policy will be posted by faculty on their course website. In the event that faculty are not using D2L, faculty will communicate this university policy to students in an addendum to their course syllabi (Level I)*

In consultation with the Associate Directors, faculty will explore creative ways to evaluate students who are ill, including submitting assignments online and rescheduling exams (**Levels II and III**).

In consultation with the Associate Directors, faculty will specify the critical level of attendance in clinical necessary to meet course objectives (**Levels II and III**).

### **C. Identify “emergency” course faculty and sessional instructors (Level I).**

Faculty will self-identify to the Associate Directors, a teaching substitute in the event of their illness.

The Directors (MUNSON, CNS, WRSON), in consultation with the Associate Directors, will compile a list of potential “emergency substitutes” for faculty.

*D. Construct communication plans (Level I)*

To ensure speedy access to information concerning health bulletins, students, faculty and staff will be instructed to consult the university H1N1 website and their university email accounts.

Faculty will develop a written emergency communication plan for each course and for each clinical group. The plan will include contact information for the course professor and the students and a protocol for communicating flu symptoms or illness. These plans will be filed with the Associate Directors.

The Directors (MUNSON, CNS, WRSON) will develop and file a communication plan for the faculty. The plan will include email addresses and contact information for faculty and a protocol for communicating flu symptoms or illness.

At the MUNSON, Sheila Nash, in consultation with the Director, will develop a communication plan for the staff. The plan will include email addresses and contact information for staff and a protocol for communicating flu symptoms or illness. This plan will be filed in the Director's office.

The Directors of the MUNSON, the CNS and WRSON will construct an inter-school communication plan to include protocols for communicating H1N1 bulletins between schools.

**Objective #3: Return to a *state of normalcy as quickly as possible.***

*A. Monitor absenteeism and recovery (Levels I, II, III).*

Using banner, students will be instructed to self-report flu symptoms. The Directors of the MUNSON, the CNS and the WRSON will monitor student absenteeism via communication from the registrar's office.

Faculty will self-report cancelled classes to the Director's office.

Staff will self-report absenteeism due to flu symptoms to Sheila Nash.

Sheila Nash will report weekly to the VPs Office concerning the number of staff absent and the number of classes cancelled.

The University Senate will notify the Director, faculty, staff and students regarding university closure.

*B. Monitor and communicate university directives (Levels I, II, III).*

The Director of the MUNSON will monitor university directives from the President's Office and/or the Senate and will communicate these promptly to the Directors of the CNS and WRSON and to all students, faculty and staff.