



The University of Vermont

Emergency Operations Group

April 30, 2009

To: UVM Community & Parents

From: Annie Stevens, Assistant Vice President and EOG Director
Jon Porter, M.D., Director of the Center for Health and Wellbeing

RE: **H1N1 Influenza Update and Mexico Travel Ban**

The number of H1N1 Influenza cases confirmed by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in the U.S. increases and the World Health Organization (WHO) has decided to raise the threat level to five and has stated that a world-wide pandemic is likely. **Currently there are no confirmed or suspected cases at UVM.** We want to update you about the University's planning and preparation and let you know that since last Friday, members of the University's Emergency Operations Group (EOG) have been monitoring the global, national, and local situation. The EOG, comprised of representatives from various units across the University, is in daily consultation with administrative and academic leadership, and other agencies including the Vermont Department of Health.

The University's EOG is developing several planning scenarios based upon levels of possible exposure and severity of the H1N1 flu in the event that we need to activate certain resources and support. We believe that despite the relatively mild nature of cases in the United States, compared to the more severe cases in Mexico, some of which have resulted in death, it ultimately is in our community's best interest to do all we can to prevent the spread of this virus, which still has the potential to cause a flu pandemic. EOG actions have included:

- Monitoring various sources for continual updates and guidelines
- Stocking appropriate medical and support supplies
- Assigning staff to particular medical, custodial, or safety-related activities
- Identifying resources to support those who may become ill or exposed
- Communicating with students, faculty, or staff who have returned from study abroad programs

As preparations continue at UVM to ensure a swift and thoughtful response to the growing number of, and geographical reach of the H1N1 flu cases, we continue to work under the premise that we will be able to complete exams as scheduled and continue all planned Senior Week and Commencement activities. However, we are monitoring the situation constantly and will advise immediately if a change in course is warranted.

Faculty are encouraged to consider how they would alter the completion of exams if necessary. Also, students may want to consider how their travel plans would change if they needed to get home earlier than scheduled. Units may want to consider alternate plans for upcoming large group events.

President Fogel has decided to **suspend all University sponsored or funded travel to Mexico through May 31, 2009** due to the H1N1 flu outbreak. This includes travel of students, faculty and staff for study, conferences, research or other University-related purposes. This decision is consistent with the CDC which recommends avoiding all non-essential travel to Mexico. This ban will be reviewed weekly beginning May 7, 2009, and may be lifted or extended prior to the end of May, depending on developments. Any appeals to UVM's ban on travel to Mexico should be directed to Provost John Hughes.

Further, travelers are advised to monitor the news carefully and that those traveling to locations with confirmed cases of the H1N1 flu within the U.S. or abroad take appropriate precautions, outlined on the [CDC Website](#).

Students are urged to contact the Center for Health and Wellbeing, and staff and faculty to contact your personal physician, if you develop flu-like symptoms. Symptoms include fever, body aches, sore throat, coughing and occasionally vomiting and diarrhea. If you have these symptoms, stay in your home or residence until you obtain medical advice. Ill employees should not come to work.

Any questions regarding faculty or staff led group travel abroad should be directed to Kim Howard, Director of the Office of International Education at Kimberly.Howard@uvm.edu. Any other questions regarding UVM sponsored non-group travel within the USA, should be directed to Mary Dewey, Director of Risk Management at Mary.Dewey@uvm.edu.

Our top priority remains the health and well being of our students, as well as all members of the UVM community. We will continue to make all necessary preparations and share all pertinent information as needed. Please regularly check the [UVM Emergency Management](#) web site for updates and other important information. The EOG will meet on a daily basis until we are assured that the flu has been mitigated and we are passed a point of risk for our community.