

## Stanford University Planning and Response to 2009 Novel H1N1 Influenza

Stanford University Faculty Senate

October 8, 2009

Lawrence M. Gibbs, CIH

Ira M. Friedman, MD

### Campus Infectious Disease Planning Efforts

- 2003 SARS Outbreak – led to Creation of Infectious Disease Control Working Group – subset of the Campus Emergency Management Steering Committee
- 2006 Avian Influenza – pandemic concerns emerge
- 2009 Novel H1N1 Influenza emergence in Spring
  - New influenza virus
  - Highly communicable
  - Originally, unknown severity
  - H1N1 severity now known to be similar to seasonal flu
  - Attack rate higher in younger populations than seasonal flu

### Current status of planning activities

- Guided by 2007 Campus Pandemic Plan, with updated information (e.g., mild severity of H1N1)
- Planning group meets weekly to update and set response action priorities
- Ongoing collaboration with Infectious Disease faculty, hospital representatives
- Active and ongoing review of H1N1 related issues
- Following CDC guidelines and county public health recommendations, with frequent interaction with county public health department representatives

### Key Strategies for Campus Populations

- Medical care for the very ill and high risk individuals
- Self-care for typical mild to moderate cases
- Decrease diseases spread to others
  - Hand washing, cough etiquette
  - Isolation: don't go to class, gatherings or work;
    - isolate in residence hall rooms (food delivery, academic support from Residence Deans, Grad Life Deans)
- Help everyone stay healthy – sleep, nutrition, exercise, hand washing, avoid ill persons, vaccination

### Communication is coordinated

- Central informational website resource for Stanford <http://flu.stanford.edu>
- Parents newsletter
- Student outreach and information
- Faculty/staff outreach and information

## Operational Impacts and Support Roles

- Student Affairs
  - Review of large events
  - Isolation and support of ill students
  - Supplies distribution
  - Coordination of communications to students
- Vaden Health Center
  - Disease surveillance
  - Direct medical care
  - Advice line
- Residential & Dining Enterprises
  - Food delivery
  - Housekeeping

## Seasonal Influenza Vaccine

- Available and free for faculty, staff, students (this year)
- High risk individuals (age 50+ years, chronic disease) strongly encouraged to get vaccination
- Should get early in season – available from personal health care provider as well as available on campus
- Information on availability at University flu website
- Stanford attempting to obtain sufficient vaccine to offer vaccination campaign for students
- Not protective against H1N1 influenza

## Novel H1N1 Influenza Vaccine

- Will be strongly encouraged for **high risk individuals** (including everyone 24 years of age and younger, chronic disease, pregnancy, etc.)
- Distribution will be directed by County Public Health
- Will be provided without charge
- Have volunteered to County Public Health to administer vaccine to campus high risk individuals
- Details pending finalization of vaccine and availability
- Stanford is working on plans for a vaccination campaign for students, and at risk faculty and staff

## Novel H1N1 Planning Summary

- Campus is appropriately prepared
- Expect to experience earlier occurrence and an increase above normal seasonal rates in influenza-like illness (ILI) due to Novel H1N1
- Major mitigation factor is personal behavior - each individual should become knowledgeable about how to protect him or her self, and how to prevent spread to others
- Central campus ILI information resource: <http://flu.stanford.edu>

# Stanford officials prepare for H1N1 flu

BY KATE CHESLEY

As the university prepares for the start of a new academic year, members of Stanford's Infection Control Planning Group continue to update their plans for dealing with the H1N1 flu, also known as swine flu.

Following on the August release of H1N1 flu guidelines for colleges and universities from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), the group has updated its [web pages](#) and has focused on such issues as communicating with faculty, staff, students and parents; managing illness in the residences; and creating new guidelines for recently ill employees returning to work. An updated policy has been posted on the university's [H1N1 flu web pages](#).

As the university prepares for the possibility of an increase in the rate of H1N1 infection, Ira Friedman, director of [Vaden Health Center](#), said he hopes in particular that ill faculty and staff will resolve to stay home until they are well.

"It is tough to get staff and faculty to stay home," said Friedman, who heads the Infection Control Planning Group with Larry Gibbs, associate vice provost for environmental health and safety. "Sometimes, our culture doesn't promote self-care. People feel like others are depending on them, and they take liberties with their health. That's not good for the community. If I could say one thing to faculty and staff, it would be this: Please, if you are not feeling well, stay home."

Moreover, the university has developed an interim [return-to-work policy](#) that complies with the recommendations of the CDC and the Santa Clara County Public Health Department.

Provost John Etchemendy is writing to members of the faculty, asking them to encourage ill students to stay home. He wrote, "We expect a greater than normal number of students to be sick and unable to attend class for as many as three to five days. If students feel obligated to come to class while sick, this will endanger both you and other students in your class."

Among the key elements of the [CDC](#) guidelines that Stanford is following is a recommendation that students who are ill with the flu and who live relatively close to the campus return home if possible to be cared for by their families. The CDC also shortened the recommended isolation period for individuals with the flu to just 24 hours after a fever has ceased without aid of medication.

Friedman will be writing to parents of students, asking for their help in encouraging their children to take steps to avoid illness and to remain isolated if they are sick. The university will stress self-isolation for ill students. Dining Services also has been working to provide meals to students unable to leave their rooms.

Friedman said he anticipates that Stanford will participate in the H1N1 vaccination program. Young adults are considered to be among the highest risk groups. Stanford annually administers [vaccinations for the seasonal flu](#) and is scheduled to do so at [Vaden](#) beginning Oct. 12. A full schedule is available on the Vaden [website](#).

Although there will be no benefits fairs this year, seasonal flu vaccinations also will be offered by Stanford Benefits at [various locations Oct. 6, 7, and 8](#).

Individuals also are encouraged to seek shots from their primary health care providers.

In the spring, Friedman said Stanford had 12 probable student cases of H1N1 and confirmation on five of them. Cases of the flu continued into summer, as influenza circulated in camps, conferences and summer programs.

"Numbers aren't as crucial, given that the range of severity for H1N1 matches that of the seasonal influenza," he said. "And just about any case of the flu at this point is likely due to H1N1."

Although H1N1 remains an unpredictable virus, Friedman said Stanford learned much from battling the spread of the virus in the spring. Those lessons are now being applied as Stanford enters a new school year. In addition, Friedman said Stanford benefits from its late fall opening date because it has been able to monitor the experiences of other colleges and universities that began school earlier.

"We learned how valuable our advance planning was," he said. "We already had a pandemic plan in place. We also learned that it is possible to manage influenza in a residential environment."

Students with flu symptoms can be seen at [Vaden](#). Faculty and staff should consult their primary care physicians.

Updated information is available on the university's [H1N1 flu information website](#).