



EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

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MEMORANDUM

To: The Campus Community
From: Dr. Robert Jennette, M.D., Director of Health Services; Dorothy Phillips, APRN;
Christine Corrigan, APRN; Geeta Pfau, RN., Ph.D.
Re: **What You Should Know About the H1N1 Virus**
Date: August 2009

Since spring 2009, a new strain of the influenza virus referred to as H1N1 (previously called swine flu, sometimes called pandemic flu) has been circulating in the United States and around the world. In Connecticut, hundreds of cases have been reported throughout the state; so far, none have occurred at Eastern. Despite initial concerns that this new flu virus would result in millions of very seriously ill people, it has turned out to be no more severe than the regular flu viruses we see each fall and winter. In fact, the great majority of individuals infected with H1N1 have fully recovered without any complications and without the need for hospitalization. Even more positive news is the fact that, since it first appeared in April 2009, this virus has not developed into a more dangerous flu strain and does not appear to be doing so at this time. Nonetheless, health officials continue to watch for this possibility.

We would like to remind the campus community that medical help is available at the University's Health Service for any students with concerns or questions about H1N1 or any students who think they might have flu symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat or body aches. The Student Health Service office is located on campus next to Windham Street Apartments. Eastern is also only a few blocks from Windham Memorial Hospital.

A vaccine for this new H1N1 flu strain is being produced and is expected to be ready in October; however, further testing is needed. **When we get more information about the vaccine or any other important H1N1 developments, we'll pass it along to you at www.easternct.edu/fluwatch. We strongly advise you to check this site regularly for new or updated H1N1 information.** In the meantime, Student Health Services will be offering regular, seasonal flu shots this fall. The cost is \$15. **Keep in mind these regular flu shots do not protect you from the H1N1 strain. A separate vaccine is needed for that.**

Finally, we want to reassure the campus community that the University continues to closely monitor the H1N1 situation. A committee of staff and faculty at Eastern is meeting regularly to review and respond to the latest H1N1 developments. The group has put into place a number of steps to address the H1N1 issue should it directly impact the campus. In addition, the Connecticut Department of Public Health and the North Central District Health Department are two valuable resources available we can call upon should the need arise.

We encourage each member of the campus community to read and keep nearby the attached list of ways you can reduce the risk of getting the flu, as well as the list of things you need to do should you develop flu-like symptoms. These lists, along with other current information on the H1N1 virus, can be found at www.easternct.edu/health or at www.easternct.edu/fluwatch.