

Important Addendum to Clerkship Absentee Policy  
Related to Fall 2009/Winter 2010 Influenza Season

Dear Clerkship Faculty and Students:

As we anticipate the arrival of novel H1N1 influenza virus in our communities, we are concerned about the potential spread of illness through our student population. Generally, our medical students are extremely reluctant to miss time on clinical rotations. However, to protect peers, colleagues, staff, and particularly vulnerable patients, we are asking students with symptoms of influenza to NOT enter the patient care environment while ill. Influenza Like Illness (ILI) symptoms include fever over 100°F and one or more of the following: cough; nasal congestion; sore throat. We are asking clerkship faculty to be flexible and accommodating with students who miss clerkship time due to illness.

Because of the increased risk to our students who are pregnant, we recommend that they not see patients with influenza-like illness or known influenza. Pregnant women who may have been exposed or develop ILI symptoms should call their obstetrical provider.

Recommendations for returning to the patient care environment will vary depending upon the student's clinical site of practice. We ask that first and foremost, students follow the "return" policy of their clinical site. This will vary from returning 24-48 hours after fever resolves to returning seven days from the start of illness. If there is no formal policy in place, we recommend checking and following the most up to date CDC guidelines. Please go to: [www.cdc.gov/H1N1FLU/](http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1FLU/)

Most students will not need to visit a health care facility for influenza, and we are not encouraging students to do so. Therefore, we should not expect students to have a note from their health care provider or confirmation of influenza "status" unless this is a requirement of their clinical clerkship site.

It remains the responsibility of the student to communicate directly with the clerkship director if more than two days of clerkship time are missed due to illness (or more than four days of Internal Medicine). Students will be permitted to miss up to seven days due to influenza and still receive full credit. It will be determined by the clerkship director if any time missed needs to be made up. If more than seven days are missed due to illness, discussion will occur between the clerkship director and the Associate Dean for Curriculum.

We ask all faculty and students to forward questions to their Seattle-based clerkship director or to the Associate Dean for Curriculum.

Sincerely,

Susan G. Marshall, MD  
Associate Dean for Curriculum  
University of Washington  
School of Medicine

## Angie Wick

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**From:** Susan G. Marshall  
**Sent:** Monday, October 12, 2009 8:20 AM  
**To:** Angie Wick  
**Cc:** smarsh@uw.edu  
**Subject:** FW: Novel H1N1 Influenza - For inclusion for mtg today

-----Original Message-----

From: Phyllis Wise [mailto:provost@uw.edu]  
Sent: Friday, September 18, 2009 11:09 AM  
Subject: Novel H1N1 Influenza - Instructional and Research Planning

Dear Colleagues:

You received recently from President Emmert a message about the novel H1N1 influenza virus and our anticipation of it arriving on our campuses sometime this fall. If it follows a pattern other universities have experienced, it will spread fairly quickly among the University community, especially among students living in close quarters in the residence hall system and in the sororities and fraternities. As President Emmert mentioned in his message, we are asking you to be flexible and accommodating with students who miss class or assigned activities due to illness. The influenza appears to be relatively mild and may last up to a week. To help stem the spread of the virus, we are asking students, faculty, and staff who become ill to stay at home until at least 24 hours after they are fever free, without the aid of fever reducing medication.

Most who become ill will not need to visit a health care provider, and we are not encouraging students to do so unless their symptoms persist or are severe. The resources of the Hall Health Center and other local clinics would be overwhelmed with a high volume of visits. Also, therefore, we should not require students to present a note from a doctor or evidence of having visited a health care provider in order to be eligible to make up missed work. That, too, would simply overwhelm the system and divert our health care providers from their primary task of serving ill patients. So please do not ask students to present documentation regarding their absence due to illness.

The flu may cause students to miss a larger amount of class instruction than normal, and we want them to be able to make up any work they may have missed. To this end, UW Technology has worked with others across campus to develop a new website of online tools to help you make instructional materials available online and to manage instruction through a period of unusual absenteeism. It is called an Academic Continuity Toolkit (ACT) and may be found at <http://www.washington.edu/itconnect/emergency/act/>. I encourage you to visit the site and see if the toolkit may be of use to you if the influenza virus is widespread. I also encourage you to work within your units or among your colleagues to develop plans for instructional or research coverage in the event of faculty, librarian, academic staff, and/or academic student employee absences. It should be our goal to keep our academic offerings and research programs as intact as possible.

For information and guidance specific to the novel H1N1 influenza virus, go to the Campus Health Services web site at [www.uw.edu/flu](http://www.uw.edu/flu). Look there for updates and the most recent developments regarding influenza at the University. We will keep the campus informed as information becomes available during the quarter, both in terms of the incidence of the disease in our community as well as when a vaccine becomes available and the plan for administering it.

I appreciate your patience and commitment to serving our students as best we can during what may be an unusually difficult period. We all hope an outbreak of H1N1 influenza is not widespread, but we need to be prepared in case it is.

Sincerely,

Phyllis M. Wise  
Provost and Executive Vice President