

Pandemic Task Force Update

October 4, 2009

As we all know the H1N1 and seasonal flu virus has already had an impact on the communities and schools in the area. The Centers for Disease Control and Arkansas Department of Health expect these viruses to infect a sizable percentage of the population (20-40 % absenteeism are possible) this winter, even though fortunately the viruses are not extremely severe. The World Health Organization rates the H1N1 virus as a level 6 pandemic, because it has spread to some much of the world's population. The affects of the flu viruses are expected to worsen during the fall and winter seasons, so institutions of higher education are encouraged to plan for this.

In light of this development, the Pandemic Task Force met twice this year, its last meeting on September 3, 2009 and recommended actions for various parts of the College to the Cabinet. The Cabinet approved these recommendations on September 7, and various Task Force members and other employees have been working to implement these approved actions since then.

As of now, these are the actions that NWACC has taken:

Cleaning and Sanitization:

1. A Plan for Flu Sanitization is being implemented , which includes increased cleaning of bathrooms, handrails, doorknobs, and surfaces where the virus is likely to be deposited.
2. Fourteen (14) College computer labs have been or will be supplied with disinfecting wipes to be used by the computer users to disinfect their computer mouse and keyboard before using it and a flyer will be placed in each lab encouraging students to do this.
3. Departments are being urged to order disinfecting wipes and gels for use by their employees in their offices, reception areas, etc.

Communication:

1. Posters (attached) have been posted around the campus and centers and on the NWACC Pandemic Flu page on the intranet and My NWACC Connection urging employees and students to wash their hands frequently (**clean**) cover their coughs (**cover**), and stay home if they are sick(**contain**) to prevent the increased or needless spread of the flu.
2. Student Clubs and organizations have been contacted to help get the word out to students on the **clean, cover and contain campaign**.
3. Risk Management and Marketing have created a NWACC Fact Sheet on H1N1 and Seasonal Flu, which will be distributed this week to employees at the Employees Benefits Fair and through departmental administrative

assistants to other employees. The Fact Sheet discusses the flu vaccine, flu symptoms, flu prevention, provides information of where employees can access additional information, and gives employees and update on actions being taken by NWACC.

4. A person from the Benton County Health Department will be at the Employee Benefits Fair to provide additional information to employees.
5. The NWACC Pandemic Flu page on the intranet and My NWACC Connection are constantly updated to provide information electronically to employees and students.

Education and Classes:

1. The VP for Learning's Office has contacted faculty and is encouraging them to work with students who miss classes due to the flu so that class work can be made up in an appropriate period of time. This office is also coordinating with the Deans to work with faculty who are absent due the flu, with their classes and with substitute faculty if necessary to make sure instruction is not unduly interrupted as the flu worsens.
2. The Distance Education Director has created an resource page for faculty on the Distance Education website which can help faculty use NWACC email and Course Studio to communicate electronically with students if face to face communication becomes more difficult due to the flu.

Employee Attendance and Business Continuity:

1. The Department of Human Resources has made recommendation to the Task Force on policies dealing with employee absences during the flu season. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Cabinet for discussion and approval.
2. Several departments have submitted business continuity plans either to the Task Force or to their Vice Presidents dealing with the performance of essential functions in their departments during a period of excessive absenteeism expected in the height of the flu season. Business continuity planning must to take place at all levels within the College to assure that essential college functions are continued. The Task Force will follow-up with all College departments.

Food Service with Aramark:

1. Aramark has sent NWACC a document titled "Aramarks Proactive Steps to address H1N1" (attached), which outlines steps being taken by the company to assure that Aramark employees are doing all they can to contain the flu virus within their food service operation at NWACC.

The members of the NWACC Pandemic Task Force are:

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Christy Reynolds	Ed Rogers
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Brooke Holt	Wyley Elliott
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The Pandemic Task Force will be meeting in a few days to review actions, assess the situation and make further recommendations as needed to help minimize the impact of these flu viruses at NWACC.