



Office of the Dean of Student Affairs

October 28, 2009

Dear Parent of a Lycoming College Student:

As we are sure you are aware, the spread of the H1N1 flu virus (also known as Swine Flu) has become an issue of concern on college campuses across the nation. We want to provide you with an update on the steps Lycoming College is taking to keep our community healthy and provide information for you in case your student contracts H1N1 this flu season.

From the cases seen so far, we know that this particular flu virus spreads quickly and easily among the college-age population. Fortunately, the H1N1 virus has produced relatively mild illness in the majority of cases. This strain, however, does seem to affect young adults more frequently than typical flu. As such we are focused on managing the spread of H1N1 as well as other types of flu virus that might come our way.

Lycoming College's Emergency Response Committee has been meeting for several years preparing emergency plans to address a wide-range of campus issues and health concerns in the event of a pandemic. The H1N1 Committee is currently meeting on a weekly basis and is regularly monitoring the CDC web site as well as working closely with Pennsylvania Department of Health to monitor flu conditions. These steps will enable us to make our decision about the best steps to take for the Lycoming College community.

Efforts have been initiated to keep prevention efforts in front of our community through a media campaign (posters, bulletin boards, e-mails) that will continue throughout the flu season; hand sanitizers have been placed in high traffic areas and computer labs; and our custodial staff has been instructed to be vigilant in cleaning surfaces in high traffic areas.

We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available through our website: <http://www.lycoming.edu/healthservices/SwineFlu.html>. We hope you will take advantage of this site and that you will encourage your student to do the same. Your student has also already received emails about awareness of the H1N1 concern with suggestions for prevention by practicing good hygiene methods.

We need your help to limit any future spread of H1N1 on our campus. Please encourage your student to immediately let us know when they are experiencing flu-like symptoms by sending an e-mail to flu@lycoming.edu. If your student becomes infected with H1N1, he/she will likely be sick for 5 to 7 days. Our best advice for those who live within a short distance of campus is to take your student home to recover. We are asking students who cannot go home to self-isolate in their residence hall room or apartment until 24 hours after their fever has passed. A student who returns to classes while still exhibiting these symptoms may cause infection to other students and staff. Students should not feel pressured to attend classes and should not attend other campus activities until they are fever free for 24 hours. We have asked our faculty to consider liberal absence policies for flu-like symptoms during this time.

Dining Services has arranged to provide "flu take-out meals" for self-isolating students. These can be picked up by roommates or friends by showing the ill student's ID card. Additionally students have been advised that they can e-mail or call the Dean of Students Office should they require assistance with delivery of meals. However, you may also want to consider preparing a "flu package" for your student to have ready in the event they become ill with H1N1 or seasonal flu. Non-perishable items such as dry cereal and granola, protein or fruit bars, ready to eat packaged foods like canned or package soups, medicines for fever, a thermometer, anti-diarrheal medications, electrolyte drinks and tissues would be good items to include in the flu package. Many of these items can be found at the Campus Store or in local pharmacies and supermarkets.

The Colleges Health Center has already held one flu clinic for seasonal flu and another clinic will be held when additional vaccine arrives. We have not been notified by the Federal Government if we have been designated a provider for the H1N1 vaccine. If we are notified, we will e-mail an announcement of dates and times for H1N1 flu clinics to the College community.

We hope this information is helpful to you and encourage you to contact us at 570.321.4039 or e-mail wool@lycoming.edu should you have further questions or concerns. We value the partnership we share with you in your son's or daughter's education and appreciate your continued support.

Sincerely,

Daniel P. Miller, Ed.D.
Dean of Student Affairs