

To Glen Oaks Community College students, faculty, and staff:

By now you know that flu can be spread easily from person to person. While national and global health officials are predicting a high incidence of flu with the return of students to schools and campuses across the country, at Glen Oaks we are taking steps to slow the spread. We need your help to accomplish this.

We are working closely across campus and with the St. Joseph County regional health department to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning our institution. In all decisions, Glen Oaks is following guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control <<http://www.flu.gov>>. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available to us.

For now, we are doing everything we can to keep the college operating as usual. Here are a few things you can do to help:

- **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing your hands with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners can be effective, though somewhat less so than soap and water washing.
- **Practice respiratory etiquette** by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth; germs are spread this way.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** A fever is a temperature of at least 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius. Look for possible signs of fever: if the person feels very warm, has a flushed appearance, or is sweating or shivering. Symptoms of flu include fever or chills and cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting.
- **Stay home if you have flu or flu-like illness** for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating). This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen). The flu may last up to 7 days. Don't go to class or work if you're ill.
- **Talk with your health care providers** about whether you should be vaccinated for seasonal flu. Also if you are at higher risk for flu complications from 2009 H1N1 flu, you should consider getting the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available. People at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 flu complications include pregnant women and people with chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, heart disease, or diabetes). For more information about priority groups for vaccination, visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm.

It is important for those individuals who have temperatures of at least 102 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius with a cough and/or sore throat to call their physician or other health care provider for an appointment. Individuals who have flu symptoms but also have chronic diseases such as diabetes, asthma, or heart problems also should call for an appointment as soon as possible.

For those who do become ill, the CDC has specific recommendations regarding the use of anti-viral medication. These recommendations also can change, according to the biology of the virus as well as other factors. See your health care provider for additional details.

Again, the college will monitor emerging events regarding the H1N1 ("swine flu") virus closely and will make pertinent information available as we receive it.

If this year's flu season becomes more severe, we may take the following additional steps to prevent the spread of the virus:

- Allow students, faculty, and staff at higher risk for complications to stay home. These students, faculty, and staff should make this decision in consultation with their health care provider.
- Find ways to increase social distances (the space between people) in classrooms such as moving desks farther apart, leaving empty seats between students, holding outdoor classes, and using distance learning methods.
- Extend the time sick students, faculty, or staff stays home. During severe flu conditions sick people should stay home for at least 7 days, even if they feel better sooner. Those who are still sick after 7 days should continue to stay home until at least 24 hours after symptoms have gone away. Symptoms of flu include fever or chills and cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting.
- Suspend classes. This decision will be made together with local and state public health officials. The length of time classes should be suspended will depend on the goal of suspending classes as well as the severity and extent of illness.

We will notify you of any additional changes to Glen Oaks' strategy to prevent the spread of flu on our campus and among our students and employees.

Sincerely,

Gary Wheeler, President