

Dear Parents and Families,

Robert Morris University is concerned about the health of your child. In light of recent reports in the news media about suspected cases of the H1N1 flu virus at local and national universities, I want to update you on the steps that RMU is taking to prevent and, if necessary, respond to an outbreak here.

First and foremost, there have been no reported cases of the H1N1 flu virus among students, faculty or staff of the university. We have formed a task force, representing all campus functions, to ensure that we are prepared in the event of an outbreak and that we are taking every possible measure to prevent one. Among the task force's responsibilities will be to provide regular updates and information pertaining to the flu.

We are already working to maintain a safe and healthy environment. Student Health Services has educated students about maintaining good hygiene and preventing the spread of communicable illnesses. The Athletics Department has effective practices in place to prevent the outbreak of illnesses among student athletes, and our Facilities Department does an excellent job maintaining a clean and healthy environment on campus.

Over the next few weeks, we will be installing dispensers with hand sanitizer throughout campus, and we will be hanging posters with tips for practicing good hygiene to prevent the spread of illness. We are identifying common and heavily trafficked areas on campus that may need additional sanitation. We are also working to identify locations in our residence halls where we can isolate ill students, should that become necessary.

As we do every year, we will offer the seasonal flu vaccine on November 4 in the Jefferson Center. We will try to acquire a supply of the new H1N1 vaccine that is currently in production, though we cannot guarantee that it will be available at RMU. Please note that the H1N1 vaccine is not intended to replace the seasonal flu vaccine. We urge your student to receive the seasonal vaccine either at RMU or through your student's own health care provider.

The University administration, following the guidelines of the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention and the World Health Organization (WHO), has taken the following actions:

- Students who develop flu-like symptoms – fever of 100 degrees F (37.8 C) accompanied by cough, runny or stuffy nose, sneezes, headaches, body aches, chills or fatigue, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting – are to immediately contact the Office of Student Health Services Hotline 412-397-6200, which will advise them on the proper next steps. The hotline will be available 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. After these hours and during the weekend, resident students should contact the Office of Residence Life at 412-397-3291. Roommates of ill students, who have an underlying medical condition or concerns for their own well-being, should contact the hotline and residence life.
- Parents may also call the Office of Student Health Services Hotline to obtain current information, or the Office of Residence Life telephone number to report their student's condition.
- Students with flu symptoms who are within a 50 mile driving distance should return to their homes until they have recovered. It is recommended that students returning to their homes have someone drive them or have a family member come to pick them up.
- Students with flu symptoms who live on campus and cannot travel to their homes, should call the Hotline or Residence Life telephone numbers listed above. The Office of Residence Life is identifying locations in our residence halls where ill students can be treated and recuperate in isolation. In the event of an outbreak among resident students who cannot return home, we will contract with outside health care professionals to help care for students on campus, including providing meals. A university staff member will contact ill students once a day to assess their needs and recovery.

- Students with flu symptoms should not attend classes. They should contact professors by email or phone as soon as possible to alert them to the situation and explore ways to make up work or view course materials online. Since most students with flu will not be seen by a physician, a physician's excuse for absences of typical duration will not be expected.
- All H1N1 information is also posted on the Student Health Services website with links to the CDC, WHO, and the Allegheny County Health Department. For the most up-to-date information on the flu, I encourage you to visit the Center for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov/swineflu/ or www.flu.gov.

The university is monitoring this situation very closely and if this year's flu season becomes more severe, we may take additional steps to prevent the spread of the virus.

Sincerely,

Gregory G. Dell'Omo, Ph.D.
President