

Swine Flu – Advice for Staff

In the course of the last few days, we have had a number of independent verifications of staff reporting close family contact with confirmed or suspected swine flu. The University's position on absence in such circumstances is based on the advice contained on the NHS Q&As Web site* to which staff should refer to for general advice about swine flu. The web link is shown below. As long as you do not have flu-like symptoms, if you are feeling well, you should go about your normal activities including attending work. However, the following arrangements will apply for those staff who are absent for the following reasons:

- Staff who display symptoms of swine flu will be sent home if they are at work or told to remain at home if they are telephoning from home to advise their manager of the position. They should be advised to telephone their GP for advice, not to visit the surgery and not to return to work until fully recovered. Normal university sickness arrangements will apply in that they will be able to self certify for the first seven calendar days of absence and thereafter should obtain a doctor's note to cover the remaining absence. Payment will be made in accordance with our existing sickness absence policy.
- Staff who are absent because of the need to look after a member of their immediate family, who has been diagnosed with swine flu or who is showing symptoms of it, but are not affected themselves, should advise their manager as soon as possible. Managers have the discretion to agree either home-working, if this is practical, or annual holiday taken from existing entitlement, unpaid leave, or compassionate leave in accordance with existing policy.

If staff are in one of the categories listed on the NHS Web site as most vulnerable from swine flu, they should in the first place contact their doctor/specialist for specific advice.

Managers are asked to contact their Personnel Manager for advice if the individual circumstances are different from those outlined above. They should ensure that Deans, Service Directors and Heads of Functions are kept aware of the numbers of staff absent in their areas of responsibility due to swine flu or a suspected connection with swine flu.

This advice will be kept under review and updated as necessary.

Roger Williams
Director of Personnel
15th July 2009

*** Extract from NHS Website - Should I go to work or school if I have been in contact with someone who I know has swine flu?**

Yes, as long as you do not have flu-like symptoms. If you are feeling well, you should go about your normal activities, including going to school or work.

It can take up to seven days (normally two to five days) after infection for swine flu symptoms to develop. If you develop symptoms, stay at home and follow the general advice (see "What should I do if I think I'm infected") using the link below:

The full Q&A is available at this web address:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Pandemic-flu/Pages/QA.aspx#close>