AUBURN UNIVERSITY
HARRISON SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

INFLUENZA POLICY FOR HSOP STUDENT PHARMACISTS AND GRADUATE STUDENTS

The purpose of the policy is to outline the procedure to be followed by students (this includes both student pharmacists and graduate students) who have contracted influenza or have developed influenza-like symptoms. This policy considers the current high prevalence of both seasonal and H1N1 influenza and the likelihood of a much higher level of infection for the 2009-2010 influenza season. These policies build upon the policies of Auburn University with specific modifications to address the HSOP’s unique circumstances.

Influenza continues to be a significant health care burden resulting in absenteeism and is particularly concerning because of the risk of transfer of the virus from one person to another. Influenza infections include seasonal influenza and the current pandemic of H1N1 influenza.

The HSOP’s faculty, staff, and administration are committed to working in conjunction with the Auburn University administration to facilitate completion of the doctor of pharmacy and graduate degrees by the students in our school. This includes using as much flexibility as possible regarding procedures by which students can make up work.

Prevention Procedures
Students are strongly encouraged to receive an annual seasonal influenza vaccination. Students are also strongly encouraged to receive the H1N1 vaccination or other influenza vaccinations that may become available.

Influenza vaccination will be the student’s responsibility including any associated cost of vaccination.

Students should also exercise appropriate prevention measures as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) including frequent hand washing, covering mouth and nose during coughing or sneezing, and avoiding, whenever possible, persons that are known or suspected of having influenza.

It is the professional responsibility of students to take those actions that will minimize the spread of influenza to other members of the Auburn University community, and particularly to patients. Students are asked to self-isolate should they develop influenza-like symptoms.

Infection control and management
Policies related to class attendance
Students with influenza or influenza-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, headache, muscle aches, extreme tiredness, and possibly diarrhea and/or vomiting) should self-isolate and not attend classes or participate in other activities within the HSOP. Students with influenza-like symptoms should not return to class and other school activities until they have been afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications. Students are to notify their course instructors of their illness and absence at the earliest possible time. HSOP faculty and staff members may ask students with influenza-like symptoms to leave the building and return to their place of residence; student pharmacists are expected to comply with such requests.

Given the severity of the current influenza outbreak, students are strongly encouraged to seek medical care should they develop influenza-like symptoms. This will facilitate proper evaluation and the timely
provision of antiviral medications to appropriate individuals. Any medical evaluation and treatment will be the student’s responsibility.

During the current pandemic, it is possible that the demand for medical services will greatly outstrip the supply. Given this, HSOP students will not be required to provide physician excuses in order to receive excused absences for classes, yet medical care is strongly recommended. However, faculty members have the prerogative to require excuses from individual students who have repeated absences.

**Policies related to Pharmacy Practice Experience (PPE)**

Student pharmacists with influenza or influenza-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, headache, muscle aches, extreme tiredness, and possibly diarrhea and/or vomiting) should immediately notify their faculty mentor(s) and the Director of Experiential Learning/PPE Course Coordinator. The Director of Experiential Learning/PPE Course Coordinator will provide further instruction and guidance to the student with regards to isolation from the PPE program and other students, including guidance on whether the student should seek further medical evaluation and possible treatment. Student pharmacists with known or suspected influenza infection should not conduct any patient visits until cleared to do so by Office of Experiential Learning (OEL) staff. OEL staff will notify the faculty mentors regarding status of any affected student pharmacists on their particular teams. Student isolation from and return to the PPE program/patient visits will be based on the CDC recommendations regarding length of time away from a practice site/patients for health care workers.

**Policies related to Introductory and Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences in Training Sites**

Student pharmacists with influenza or influenza-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, headache, muscle aches, extreme tiredness, and possibly diarrhea and/or vomiting) should immediately notify their preceptor and regional coordinator. The preceptor and/or regional coordinator will provide further instruction and guidance to the student with regards to isolation from the practice site and other students including guidance on whether the student should seek further medical evaluation and possible treatment. Student decisions regarding medical evaluation and possible treatment should be based on severity of symptoms and/or underlying medical conditions. Student removal from the practice site will be based on the specific policies and procedures of the practice site. Return to the practice site will follow practice site policies and procedures, which should be based on CDC recommendations regarding length of time away from the health care setting.

Any medical evaluation and treatment related to suspected influenza infection will be the student’s responsibility.

**Policies related to Integrated Pharmacotherapy**

Student pharmacists with influenza or influenza-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, headache, muscle aches, extreme tiredness, and possibly diarrhea and/or vomiting) should immediately notify the Course Coordinator. The Course Coordinator will provide further instructions and guidance with regards to attendance and recommendations for further medical evaluation and treatment. Student pharmacists with known or suspected influenza infection should not attend class (facilitation or large group).

In the case of absence due to suspected or confirmed influenza, the Course Coordinator will notify the respective facilitator and group. Students with influenza-like symptoms should not return to class and
other school activities until they have been afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications. Every effort will be made to provide access to missed information; however, given the nature of the course, this may not always be possible. The Course Coordinator will discuss available options with students on a case by case basis.

Policy Maintenance
This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure current standards and procedures are adhered to and that current CDC recommendations are being followed. The Director of Experiential Learning and HSOP administration will continue to work with University administration to ensure appropriate compliance with this policy.

Contact information
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Additional references
1. CDC. 2009 H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu); http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/
2. CDC. Influenza; http://www.cdc.gov/flu/