



Shetland College

Creating the University of the Highlands and Islands



H1N1 (Swine) Flu current College position.

The UK Government has changed its response from containment of the H1N1 towards that of treatment. This means that efforts to slow the spread of the virus are now focused on providing appropriate treatment to people who appear to have the virus.

In reality this means that:

- GPs will diagnose H1N1 flu (also known as swine flu) on the basis of symptoms rather than waiting for laboratory testing.
- All contact tracing has now ceased, and antiviral drugs will not automatically be given to people who may only have been exposed to the virus.
- It will be a matter for clinical discretion to decide whether antivirals should be prescribed in individual cases.

Although the virus has become more widespread it does not appear to have mutated into a more severe strain. However, it is still important that we continue to do everything we can to stop flu from spreading.

As part of its Business Continuity planning the college has put in place contingency plans for dealing with pandemic flu. The College will base any future decisions and communications through guidance and advice issued by the Government and expert health bodies.

Current guidance states that:

- If you have flu-like symptoms of a more severe nature (whether or not potentially connected with swine flu) and these cause you concern you should contact your GP or NHS24 on 0845 4 24 24 24.
- If you have been in close contact with a probable or confirmed case of swine flu and you develop flu-like symptoms, stay at home and phone your GP or NHS 24 on 08454 24 24 24. **There is no need to stay off work if you do not have symptoms.**
- If you have returned from a country affected by swine flu and do not have flu-like symptoms, **you need not stay off work** and you need take no further action.

The health and safety of our students, staff and visitors is of paramount importance. However, all staff and students are reminded of their duties to minimise any future spread by practising good hygiene at all times, including:

- good respiratory and hand hygiene - remember to **Catch it, Bin It, Kill It**. Catch your sneeze in a tissue, place it quickly in a bin and wash your hands and surfaces regularly to kill the virus.
- avoiding touching your mouth, eyes and nose unless you have recently cleaned your hands
- Use an alcohol hand rub, which kills the flu virus within 30 seconds and could be used as an alternative for cleaning hands which are visibly clean.

Until there is any change in the current situation the key message is that Shetland College is working as normal for staff and students and is welcoming visitors as normal.

This site will be updated as and when any situation changes that directly effects the college.

Useful Links

NHS 24

<http://www.nhs24.com/content/>

Health Protection Scotland

<http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/>

Department of Health

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publichealth>

The Scottish Government leaflet

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/924/0080955.pdf>