University of Ottawa
H1N1 Pandemic Framework

Purpose
This document provides an overview of the specific protocols, procedures and processes for the University of Ottawa’s response to the H1N1 pandemic. This document falls under the framework of the University of Ottawa Pandemic Plan, August 2009.

Commitment
The University of Ottawa is committed to the following:

• Providing students, faculty, staff and visitors as safe and healthy a campus environment as possible.
• Minimizing the impact of the pandemic and disruption to normal operations.
• Limiting the impact to the University community and its responsibility to teaching and research.
• Working with provincial and municipal authorities to ensure consistency of messaging and synchronization of efforts and actions.
• Being a good corporate citizen and community partner

Response Structure
The Emergency Co-ordination Team (ECT) was activated on 4 May 2009 in response to the increased incidence and severity rates of the H1N1 virus in Mexico. H1N1 was determined to be of a nature and scope that would require ongoing action and monitoring. As such, the Pandemic Plan has been activated for H1N1 by the University and this virus specific framework was developed.

Assumptions

• Phase 1 of H1N1 pandemic is complete in Ottawa.
• Phase 2 is expected to last 8-12 weeks.
  o Peak of Phase 2 is approximately 30 October 2009.
• Subsequent Phases may occur.
• 20-40% of the population is symptomatic at some point during Phase 2. The regular seasonal flu affects 5 to 15% of the population.
• 2% of the population is likely to be symptomatic at the same time (ie at the peak of Phase 2).
• The expected duration of the symptoms is estimated at 3 to 5 days.
• Once recovered from H1N1, re-infection is not anticipated.
• It is expected that there will be areas in which the province or City of Ottawa will not offer directives and that the University Emergency Coordination Team will need to provide leadership to the University community.
• uOttawa is expected to remain open throughout Phase 2.

Roles and Responsibilities
Members of the Emergency Co-ordination Team make strategic and tactical decisions based on the latest recommendations from the City of Ottawa, Ontario Ministry of Health.
and Long Term Care, and the Public Health Agency of Canada, and allocate resources to implement them. The Emergency Co-ordination Team connects directly with civil authorities, University Senior Administration, as well as critical staff, Services or Faculties who may assist with the response.

The roles and responsibilities that are articulated in the University of Ottawa Pandemic Plan have been implemented. The Incident Management Structure has been adhered to and the following roles have been assigned:

The roles and responsibilities with respect to academic programming are outlined in the document Decision-Making Responsibilities Regarding Academic Activities at the University in Case of a Pandemic.

**Specific Actions**
The primary impact that is anticipated as a result of the H1N1 is on the health of students and employees. This will result in an increase of short-term absences from the University.

Until specifically identified as otherwise by the Incident Commander, Mike Histed, all standard University policies, procedures and regulations will continue to apply.
If deemed necessary, short term modifications to policies, procedures and regulations may be implemented.

**Academic**
The overall impact on the University’s academic programming due to the anticipated Phase 2 of the H1N1 virus has been evaluated. While some Faculties or specific Schools/Departments may see a greater impact than others, all academic programs are anticipated to continue without material interruption. All current academic regulations continue to apply unless specifically communicated.

An advisory committee to the Vice President, Academic and Provost was formed specifically to address the potential H1N1 and academic issues. The committee meets regularly. Documents such as the following have been developed:

- Guidelines Regarding Academic Activities in the Event of a Pandemic
- Decision-Making Responsibilities Regarding Academic Activities at the University in Case of a Pandemic
- University of Ottawa Protocol for Minimizing Pandemic Spread during Clinical Placements

**Research**
The overall impact on the University’s research due to the anticipated Phase 2 of the H1N1 virus has been evaluated. Research is anticipated to continue without material disruption. Specific areas within research have developed specific H1N1 plans.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
Emergency response personnel, such as Protection Services officers, have received training and appropriate personal protective equipment. The use of personal protective equipment, such as N95 masks and gloves, has been evaluated for other roles at the University and is not recommended at this time. This will be reviewed on an on-going basis and any changes will be communicated.

If you are ill with flu-like symptoms (see below), surgical masks will reduce the transmission of the H1N1 virus and are recommended to be worn when you are in close contact with non-infected people.

**If you feel ill**

**Symptoms**
The symptoms of all pandemics are subject to change as the disease changes. However, the current symptoms of H1N1 may include:

- Fever (more than 38°C)
- Chills, shakes
- Cough and/or sore throat and/or runny nose
- Shortness of breath
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Body aches and/or headache
• Loss of appetite.

**Students**
As with any illness, students are advised not to attend classes if they are feeling unwell. The standard academic regulations on absences continue to apply.

If you are in residence, it is recommended that you advise your Community Advisor (CA) if you feel unwell. The CAs have received additional training specific to the H1N1 pandemic to assist you.

The University *Protocol for Flu-Like Symptoms* provides additional information for anyone with symptoms. Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000 or TTY: 1-866-797-007) can provide medical advice. Anyone experiencing severe symptoms should see a Health Care Professional as soon as possible, Protection Services (613-562-5411) can assist personnel on campus reach medical aid.

**Employees**
As with any illness, employees are advised not to report for work if they are feeling unwell. The employee shall notify their supervisor as soon as reasonably practicable and a doctors’ note shall be obtained as appropriate under University Policy 9B. The following questionnaire should be completed by every employee who is requesting sick leave due to flu-like symptoms and forwarded to the Occupational Health, and Leave Sector.

[http://www.hr.uottawa.ca/files/health/guides/supervisor_guide_H1N1.pdf](http://www.hr.uottawa.ca/files/health/guides/supervisor_guide_H1N1.pdf)

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**Prevention Activities**
Key elements in the management of the H1N1 Phase 2 are the preventative activities. The H1N1 vaccine is expected to prevent the recipient from developing the virus. As such it is the strongest preventative measure available. Other preventative measures that are emphasized include hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette.

**H1N1 vaccinations**
It is anticipated that a H1N1 vaccine will be available. The H1N1 vaccine is highly recommended as a preventative measure. The priority for receiving the vaccine will be determined by the government and in particular Public Health. Pending finalization of the priorities, it is nonetheless anticipated that vaccination clinics will be held at the University. Students who have clinical placements may be required by their agency to receive the H1N1 vaccine as a condition of their clinical placement.
Hand Hygiene
The most effective means of hand hygiene is frequent washing with soap and warm water. It is recommended that the washing continue for at least 20 seconds.

The University has installed hand sanitizer stations in high traffic areas throughout University buildings.

Cough/Sneeze Etiquette
To minimize the airborne spread of the H1N1 virus it is recommended that you cover your nose and mouth with your arm or sleeve when you cough or sneeze.

Housekeeping
Housekeeping is key to minimizing the transmission of the H1N1 virus within the University. Additional housekeeping measures will be evaluated on a regular basis throughout a H1N1 phase. These may include increasing the frequency of cleaning common areas and high traffic areas and the removal of papers and other common use items in waiting areas.

Housing
The University leases residence rooms to many students. Given the close living quarters, there is an increased risk of transmission of H1N1 between residents. Measures have been implemented to reduce this risk, such as increasing the frequency of cleaning the common areas. These will be reviewed on a frequent basis. Students are responsible for providing a reasonable supply (48 hours worth) of food and water for their personal consumption. If a resident contracts the H1N1 virus it is recommended that they minimize their contact with other residents.

Volunteer activities
During Phase 2 of the H1N1 pandemic there will be requests by non-University organizations for volunteers to assist in multiple activities. Students and employees may volunteer to the extent their studies and work schedule permits, however, volunteers do not represent the University in any official capacity when they do so. Therefore, they are not covered by the University’s insurance programs while volunteering nor will they receive academic credit for doing so. This applies equally to students in Medicine, Health Sciences, and Social Sciences who have a level of specialist medical knowledge.

Travel
Students and employees travel frequently on behalf of the University. Travel restrictions are not anticipated at this time. University policy requires students and employees not to travel for University purposes to destinations where the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has recommended to “avoid non-essential travel” or “avoid all travel” (http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/menu-eng.asp). All travelers should ensure their health insurance is appropriate to their particular situation.
Events and Activities
The University organizes and hosts many events throughout the year. These events are attended by both the University community and visitors. Based on the information currently available, the impact on events and activities both on and off campus will be minimal but should be evaluated on an individual basis. The University will follow City of Ottawa Public Health guidelines, these may include restricting large gatherings.

Communications
Following consultation with key stakeholders, the University’s Communications and Marketing Service has developed a communications plan specific to H1N1. The plan involves frequent communications to the University community. A key communication tool is the web-site: http://www.uottawa.ca/flu/home.html. A flu infoline has been established at 613-562-5555.

To ensure consistency, all official communications on H1N1 are to be approved by the Incident Commander, Mike Histed.

The key messages from the communications plan are the prevention activities that everyone should implement and to increase knowledge of H1N1.

Community Consultation and Co-ordination
The University of Ottawa participates in a number of groups to enhance information transfer and communications between organizations. These groups include the following:
- Canadian Association of University Business Officers
- Council of Ontario Universities
- Ottawa Region Post-Secondary Working Group
- City of Ottawa Pandemic Planning Group
- City of Ottawa Emergency Operations Center
- Champaign Region Clinical Care Command Center (C4) which includes the Public Health Agency of Canada

Post H1N1 Pandemic Response
Following recommendations from the City of Ottawa Public Health, the H1N1 pandemic will be declared over by the Incident Commander, Mike Histed.

To ensure an effective and efficient return to normal operations, the impact of the H1N1 pandemic on students, employees, academic programming and the research community will be undertaken. Action plans will be developed through the Emergency Co-ordination Team to return the University to full operational status.

A full debriefing will be undertaken following the conclusion of the H1N1 pandemic. The output of the debriefing will be to ensure the lessons learned are fully understood, communicated key stakeholders and modifications to the general Pandemic Plan and future virus specific plans are made.