

SWINE FLU GUIDANCE FOR LINE MANAGERS

MANAGING STAFF WHO ARE PREGNANT/OR IN OTHER HIGH RISK HEALTH GROUPS

INTRODUCTION

All line managers must ensure that all staff are aware that there is swine flu in the university community. Line managers should also draw the attention of all staff to the high risk groups and potential implications for pregnant women. Staff should be asked to regularly review the university web pages for advice/guidance regarding swine flu and inform their line managers if they are in the high risk group and/or pregnant.

It is the member of staff's responsibility to inform Occupational Health or their line manager if they are in a 'high risk' group/pregnant and want reasonable adjustments to be considered in their workplace.

The line manager should review this guidance and where appropriate take a proactive approach towards managing staff in the high risk group and/or pregnant.

It is unlikely that a line manager would be aware of all staff with health conditions that put them in high risk/vulnerable groups (<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/flu/info/highriskgroupsinfo.pdf>). However, where this is known, risk assessments should be completed and where appropriate consideration should be given to reasonable adjustments i.e. a member of staff in the high risk group and/or pregnant working in a higher risk area e.g. reception desk, could be moved to a less public area (see guidance below).

Please note, a member of staff associated with a person in an "at risk group" does not put that member of staff at higher risk themselves e.g. Having a partner who is pregnant or having a child that is asthmatic. No special action at work is necessary for that member of staff.

Staff who are suspected to have swine flu/present symptoms should be advised to stay away from work until they are fully recovered.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE TO CARE FOR STAFF?

Inform all staff now that there is swine flu in the university community.

Make sure all staff are aware of the high risk groups and potential implications for pregnant women (if they contract the virus).

Be aware of staff who have made it known that they are pregnant/or have disclosed other conditions that place them in the high risk/vulnerable group.

Seek as far as possible not to place staff that are pregnant/or in other high risk categories in a position where they are continuously mixing with people and in close contact within 1 metre, from outside the department e.g. reception area.

It is important not to cause or fuel panic; ensure staff are aware that guidance and advice is available on the university pandemic flu web pages.

When a member of staff becomes unwell and informs the line manager that the illness is swine flu, the line manager must assess whether to inform members of staff who are pregnant or in high risk groups that a colleague has contracted swine flu. As previously stated, it is important not to cause panic and personal information should not be divulged. The name of the staff member absent with swine flu is not to be disclosed. However, it is possible that they may be become identified, particularly in a small team. Please remind staff informed of the absence that this information is confidential. If the ill member of staff has worked closely with a pregnant member of staff/or staff in the high risk group in the 24-48 hours prior to them reporting in sick with swine flu, members of staff in the 'high risk' group should be informed to be aware of symptoms and seek medical help at the earliest opportunity.

In addition, all staff should be encouraged to follow the hygiene advice published by the authorities (see below) and on the posters displayed around university campuses:

- Washing hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of the virus from hands to your face or to other people.
- Cleaning hard surfaces (such as door handles) frequently using a normal cleaning product.

General good hygiene can also help to reduce the chance of catching any viruses, including the swine flu virus. This includes:

- People covering their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible.
- Disposing of dirty tissues promptly and carefully.

More information at www.cardiff.ac.uk/flu