

**Question and Answer Document  
for University of Southampton medical and healthcare students**

Given the current global concern over swine flu, the University is currently working to ensure that placements for medical and healthcare students will not be unduly affected in the event of an epidemic situation occurring in the UK. Working with our partners in the NHS, we have assembled the following information which should prove helpful for all medical and healthcare students.

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>1</p> <p>My placement location has no confirmed cases of human swine 'flu. Will my placement be affected?</p>	<p>There is no need for your placement to be affected if there are no cases where you are working.</p> <p>However, as always it is important that all students and their tutors maintain high levels of personal hygiene and follow the normal infection control procedures. This can make a significant difference to the spread of the human swine influenza virus.</p>
<p>2</p> <p>What are the infection control measures I should be following in relation to 'flu?</p>	<p>As you will hear and see on national media, the NHS is promoting a 'Catch it, bin it, kill it' campaign.</p> <p>Catch it: Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible.</p> <p>Bin it: Dispose of dirty tissues promptly and carefully.</p> <p>Kill it: Maintain good hygiene, for example washing hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of the virus.</p>
<p>3</p> <p>I have symptoms of flu, what should I do?</p>	<p>Please stay at home, report in sick from your placement and phone your GP or NHS Direct (0845 46 47). If you suspect you have been in contact with someone diagnosed with human swine 'flu, mention this when you ring.</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Should I go to the doctor if I feel unwell?</p>	<p>No, do not go to the doctor's surgery – ring them or contact NHS Direct.</p>
<p>5</p> <p>What should I do if a doctor confirms that I have swine flu?</p>	<p>To help you to get better and to minimise spread to others, it is essential that you stay at home, follow all official guidance and continue adhering strictly to the infection control practices. At the earliest opportunity, you would also need to inform your educational supervisor or another appropriate NHS Trust staff member if your supervisor is unavailable, that you have confirmed human swine flu.</p>

6	<p>What happens if there is a confirmed case of human swine flu in the hospital, department or practice where I am on placement?</p>	<p>Where possible, you would be expected to remain on your programme. You should continue working in the same hospital or department as before, following the 'flu plans which they will have worked on and will be implementing.</p> <p>Unless advised otherwise, you should not go to work anywhere else as this would increase the risk of spreading the virus.</p>
7	<p>As a healthcare placement student what could I expect from the hospital where I am based if a case is confirmed on site?</p>	<p>In the event of a flu pandemic whilst on placement, you can expect to be treated as a Trust/PCT employee in relation to health and safety practices and policies, procedures and training.</p> <p>You can also expect to receive Tamiflu from the same source as other NHS staff, in line with the national post-exposure prophylactic guidance.</p>
8	<p>What will be the impact on my placement?</p>	<p>We will always try to ensure that your placement will continue. You will continue to be supervised at all times and, whilst undertaking your programme requirements, you will remain supernumerary.</p> <p>Every effort will be made to ensure you are not compromised or disadvantaged in the event of local contingency plans being put into operation and interruption to your training will be minimised wherever possible.</p>
9	<p>If there is a pandemic will I be asked to provide care outside of or beyond my training?</p>	<p>You should continue to give any care that you are competent to give at your stage of training, with appropriate supervision. If at any stage your experience is considered not to be suitable or safe in the event of a pandemic, your placement may be suspended in favour of study.</p>
10	<p>If I need to support my dependants who have been affected by a pandemic, how should I approach this?</p>	<p>Please inform your School office of your request. You will have the opportunity to discuss the possibility of authorised absence to support your dependants.</p>
11	<p>I wish to remove myself from my placement, who can authorise this?</p>	<p>Your educational supervisor, or another senior member of NHS Trust staff, needs to authorise a student's departure from a placement. Anyone removing themselves from a placement without this level of authorisation would be regarded as being absent for that period.</p>
12	<p>Can I work in the NHS outside of my normal placement activity?</p>	<p>In a pandemic situation, the NHS may look to healthcare students to support its workforce. If this happens, you may be asked to volunteer (you do not have to say yes).</p>
13	<p>Where can I find out more information?</p>	<p><a href="#">UK Government</a>  <a href="#">NHS Direct</a>  <a href="#">Nursing and Midwifery Council advice</a>  <a href="#">Health Protection Agency</a></p>

