



# County of Santa Cruz

## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

POST OFFICE BOX 962, 1080 EMELINE AVENUE SANTA CRUZ, CA 95061-0962

(831) 454-4120 FAX: (831) 454-4272 TDD: (831) 454-4123

EMERGENCY MEDICAL  
SERVICES PROGRAM

**Policy No. 4500**  
**Reviewed 9/2009**

### UC Fire Department Influenza Response Procedure

Approved

Medical Director

#### **I. PURPOSE**

To allow UC Fire personnel to determine if UCSC students presenting with suspected influenza-like illness (ILI) symptoms can safely remain on campus to manage their illness rather than being transported to local emergency departments.

#### **II. BACKGROUND**

UC Santa Cruz houses well over 8,000 students on campus. Should novel or seasonal influenza infect large numbers of students, the resultant rush of students to local emergency departments could potentially place a huge strain on local EMS resources. The focus of this procedure is to allow UC Fire Department personnel to respond to, and evaluate, students with ILI symptoms to determine if they truly need an EMS transport response and medical intervention, or if they can safely self isolate in their dorm rooms and weather their mild illness with the help of housing personnel and fellow students. This self-isolation will also serve to reduce the spread of influenza to the rest of the UCSC community and the City of Santa Cruz.

#### **III. CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING PRESENCE OF INFLUENZA-LIKE ILLNESS (ILI)**

1. Documented presence of influenza in the community.
2. Presence of fever  $> 100.4^{\circ}$  F and cough
3. Other symptoms may include:
  - a. Runny nose
  - b. Sore throat
  - c. Body aches
  - d. Sweating
  - e. Malaise
  - f. Vomiting and/or diarrhea

#### **IV. CRITERIA FOR IMMEDIATE MEDICAL EVALUATION BY A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER**

If the following conditions exist in addition to ILI symptoms, UC Fire responders will recommend that a health care provider evaluate the patient. If the patient wishes to be transported by ambulance, or displays any priority symptoms, personnel will request an ambulance through normal dispatching procedures.

1. Priority symptoms – shortness of breath, substantially altered vital signs, significant weakness, unrelenting vomiting or diarrhea, signs of dehydration, fever unrelieved by fever medications, severe headache or neck pain, painful urination, significant abdominal pain, chest pain, significant dizziness, altered mentation, other signs of severe illness.
2. Presence of chronic medical problems, including diabetes, respiratory disease, immunosuppression (due to diseases, chemotherapy, etc.), kidney disease, etc.
3. The patient is pregnant.

#### **V. CRITERIA FOR SELF-ISOLATING AND CONTINUING SELF CARE ON CAMPUS**

1. Patient has ILI symptoms.
2. Conditions in Section IV above are not present.
3. Patient wants to remain in on-campus housing during his/her illness.
4. Patient is able to care for him or herself – able to take liquids and food, shower, etc.
5. Patient has access to fever reducing medications; plenty of liquids and other home care essentials.
6. Patient may be regularly checked throughout the day by housing officials, dorm mates, or other personnel. Patient has access to 911 activation should this be needed.

#### **VI. PROCEDURE FOR LEAVING THE ILI PATIENT IN ON-CAMPUS HOUSING**

1. Leave influenza self care fact sheet with patient.
2. Confirm with housing personnel and dorm mates that the patient will be checked on a regular basis.
3. Review steps the patient can take to reduce transmission to other people in the dorm/apartment.
4. Confirm that the patient has all needed supplies for self-care, and if not, how these might be obtained.
5. Advise the patient to rest, stay hydrated, and take fever-reducing medications.
6. Confirm that the patient and other caregivers have a plan should the patient's condition worsen, including calling 911 as needed.
7. Advise the patient that he/she is contagious until at least 24 hours after the resolution of fever without the aid of fever-reducing medications.
8. Responder should fill out a Santa Cruz County EMS Release at Scene form, and have the patient and witnesses sign as indicated. In addition, UC FD personnel will maintain a brief record of all responses, including the patient's name and phone number, date, time, call location, and status of the patient in brief.

9. Responder will report all suspected ILI cases to Cowell Health Center for record keeping purposes. UC  
FD will report the number of patients contacted under this policy to the EMS Agency at least weekly.

## **VII. ENACTMENT OF THIS PROCEDURE**

County EMS reserves the right to enact, or rescind, this policy at any time, and will coordinate this decision-making process with UCSC FD personnel, UCSC Health Center staff, the EMS transport provider, and other relevant responding agencies.