

**12 August 2009**

Dear UNIS Parents and Community Members,

UNIS Hanoi has revised its influenza plans and protocols for A (H1N1) virus to reflect current information available from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Center for Disease Control (CDC), local health practitioners with the highest standards, and taking into account current recommendations and guidelines from Vietnamese and Hanoi health authorities.

To this end, the Hanoi People's Committee, Department of Education and Training, sent out an urgent circular last week requiring all schools to curtail student activities until further notice. **Therefore, we have decided to cancel the Welcome Back to School BBQ planned for Monday afternoon, 17 August at 17:00.** Our apologies for any inconvenience but we believe this is in the best long term interests of the school community.

Please note also the following:

**We are planning for school to open on Tuesday morning, 18 August at 08:15 (remember the new hours).**

I would like to spell out in more detail our policies and procedures as it relates to the Influenza A (H1N1) virus. We continue to see confirmed cases in Hanoi, in Vietnam and on all continents.

So as our families return from their vacations and homes around the world, we would like to inform you of our health practices to ensure a safe, secure and healthy campus. Some are a continuation from last Spring and some are new.

### **School Procedures**

The following is what we have in place for this school year:

1. Cleaning compounds have been changed to enhance cleanliness while maintaining safety.
2. Doorknobs, banisters, all areas in and around the toilets and all other public areas including the Canteen are being cleaned twice a day.
3. The whole campus including all classrooms will be professionally disinfected with Chloramine B until further notice. This is a safe yet effective method of eliminating the flu virus on campus.
4. Students will be trained during assemblies and in classes to:
  - A. Wash their hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and water
  - B. Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth
  - C. Cover their mouth when coughing or sneezing...use tissue if available, otherwise even use their hand or corner of their elbow, and then wash the areas affected thoroughly
  - D. Report to a parent or faculty/staff member when they are not feeling well
5. An additional nurse will be employed for the next few weeks to monitor student, faculty and staff health.
6. While the WHO recommends the use of masks only for those who are ill, parents are welcome to send their child to school with a mask.
7. An isolation area has been established in the administrative building B7 should there be a suspected case of H1N1 Flu. The affected person would remain there until being picked up by parents.

8. Specialists from the Hanoi medical care community will come to train teachers, students and parents in effective flu prevention methods and answer any questions.

As parents, you are in the best position to first determine if your child is sick. Below please find a description of the symptoms.

### **Symptoms**

The symptoms of the H1N1 flu virus are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. A significant number of people who have been infected with this virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting. Also, like a seasonal flu, severe illnesses and death has occurred in a small percentage of those infected as a result of illness associated with this virus.

### **Parent Responsibilities**

The school is determined to do all that it can to keep students healthy and prevent this virus from spreading. However, we must rely on parents as well. Therefore your responsibilities are as follows:

1. Take your child's temperature twice a day. If there are any abnormalities, contact your physician as soon as possible.
2. If any child in your family has any of the symptoms listed above please keep your child at home and take your child to your doctor for verification of H1N1 Pandemic Flu. If verified, please keep your child home for at least seven days after the onset of the flu. Re-entry to school will only be allowed with a doctor's note submitted to our Nurse confirming that there is no transmission risk.
3. Follow and enforce the same hand-washing and mouth-covering procedures we have set up at school.
4. Take the time to reinforce with your child the importance of following these procedures and letting you know when they are feeling any of the symptoms above.

Finally, we are developing contingency plans should there be a major outbreak and the school has to be closed for a period of time.

Please contact me if you have any questions. In the meantime, we remain committed to having a healthy, safe and secure campus for everyone in our school community. With your help, we can achieve this goal.

Kind regards,

Dr. Chip Barder