



News Release

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Universities Work to Prepare for and Prevent H1N1 Flu

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Board of Regents and officials at each of the public universities and special schools are working on preparations for the fall semester to protect students from the predicted second wave of the H1N1 flu virus.

According to the South Dakota Department of Health, college-age students are among the high-risk groups recommended to receive the H1N1 vaccine when the first supplies become available. Unlike seasonal flu that hits older adults harder, children and young adults are the primary groups affected by H1N1. Seventy-nine percent of South Dakota's cases of H1N1 are younger than age 30.

“We will provide optional vaccinations free of charge to our students and staff under age 25 or in high-risk categories as soon as the vaccine becomes available. At this point we expect arrival of the vaccine in mid-October,” said Regents Executive Director and CEO Jack R. Warner. “In the mean time, we will be educating our students and staff on how to prevent the spread of the virus.”

Students can help protect themselves by following some simple personal hygiene practices:

- Frequent hand washing, or use of liquid hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.
- Coughing or sneezing into a tissue or sleeve.
- Most importantly if you are feeling ill, stay home from school and work. If you have a flu-like illness, stay home at least 24 hours after fever symptoms have ended.

For more information about H1N1 pandemic flu, visit the South Dakota Department of Health's Web site at <http://doh.sd.gov>

Information is also available from the Centers for Disease Control at 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) or on the Internet at <http://www.PandemicFlu.gov>