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MEMORANDUM

To: SUNY Campus Presidents, Chief Academic Officers, and Student Health Centers
From: Tod A. Laursen, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor
Subject: Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Communication and Preparation

An outbreak of pneumonia of unknown etiology in Wuhan City, China was initially reported to the World Health Organization on December 31, 2019. Chinese authorities report most patients in the Wuhan City outbreak have been linked to a large seafood and animal market, suggesting a possible zoonotic origin to the outbreak. Chinese authorities additionally report that they are monitoring several hundred healthcare workers who are caring for outbreak patients. Since the initial outbreak, cases have been reported in at least eight other countries, including the United States, suggesting person-to-person transmission is occurring. It is unclear how easily the virus spreads between people. SUNY is monitoring the situation and is in discussion with community partners. At this time, we have the following recommendation for recognition and response to the novel coronavirus:

- 1) **Communicate the symptoms of novel coronavirus to campus healthcare facilities.** Patients who report symptoms of lower respiratory illness (coughing, difficulty breathing, etc.), fever (may be mild or not present in all cases), and recent travel to Wuhan should be evaluated as a patient under investigation; likewise, symptomatic individuals with exposure to someone with recent travel to Wuhan or laboratory confirmed 2019-nCoV should be treated as patients under investigation. Full interim guidance for healthcare professionals can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/clinical-criteria.html>. Healthcare facilities should consistently ask about recent travel when evaluating patients with lower respiratory symptoms, regardless of the severity.
- 2) **If an individual presents with possible 2019-nCoV, use best practices to reduce transmission.** Request that the individual wear a mask, conduct the patient evaluation in a private room with the door closed, and follow CDC infection control recommendations. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides the following detailed infection prevention and control recommendations for clinicians: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control.html>
- 3) **If an individual presents with possible 2019-nCoV, immediately contact your local health department.** The local health department, New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), and health care facility will work together to test for 2019-nCoV and other respiratory illness. Testing for 2019-nCoV can, at this time, only be conducted at the CDC.

4) **Campus leadership should consider alternative housing arrangements for patients under investigation that reside on campus, especially if they have a roommate.** At present, it's not clear how effectively the virus is transmitted between individuals. If a student resides on campus in a shared room, they should be moved into a private living space if it is available. The student should remain in a private living space until the local health department determines that such precautions are no longer necessary.

5) **Students, faculty, and staff who are planning travel to China, including the Wuhan region, should confirm the outbreak status before making arrangements.** On 1/23/2020, the CDC raised the warning level for Wuhan, China to Level 3, recommending that travelers avoid all nonessential travel. The situation is rapidly evolving; SUNY System recommends that campuses follow CDC guidance. Campuses can monitor travel health recommendations from the CDC at: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

We recognize that SUNY benefits from tens of thousands of international students, as well as faculty and staff from around the globe. **At this point, SUNY System is not recommending proactive engagement with students based on country of origin,** but rather, travel history screening of students presenting to the student health services as prescribed by the CDC and DOH, effective management of symptoms, prompt collaboration with local health departments, and appropriate separation for symptomatic individuals. This reflects the current clinical and administrative guidance from the New York State Department of Health.

We appreciate the work all of our campuses do in promoting and protecting health, and will update campuses as the situation evolves. If you have any questions about a student's health related to 2019-nCoV, contact your local health department.

Complete information from the CDC on 2019-nCoV, including situation summary, updated travel guidance, and CDC response may be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

cc: Barbara Boyle, Director of Environmental Health and Safety
Stephanie Fagnoli, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Health and Hospital Affairs
John Graham, Associate Provost of Student Affairs
Leah Wentworth, Director of Student Wellness