Policy and Procedure on Flu Vaccinations for Nursing Students

BACKGROUND:
Students working in healthcare facilities are at a greater risk of acquiring and spreading communicable diseases, such as the influenza virus. Nursing students are held to the same health requirements as health care providers. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends annual influenza immunizations for all health care workers. The School of Nursing recognizes the benefits of requiring students to become immunized annually with the influenza vaccine to protect themselves and to prevent transmission to patients and coworkers.

POLICY:
All undergraduate, Doctor of Nursing Practice, Post-Graduate Psychiatric Nursing Capstone Certificate students are required to receive an annual flu vaccination within the time frame set forth by the CDC for the current academic year no later than October 31st. Students can obtain an immunization through the healthcare provider of their choice and must submit written documentation they received the influenza vaccination. In the event of an influenza serum shortage nationally, agencies and the School of Nursing may choose to suspend or modify all or part of this policy.

PROCEDURE:
Students are required to submit documentation showing proof that they received an annual influenza vaccination by October 31. Documentation submitted as evidence must be on agency letterhead and must include, at a minimum, the name of the student, the date the injection was administered, and the name, signature and credentials of the healthcare provider who administered the vaccination. Exceptions to this requirement are allowed for individuals who provide a waiver due to medical or religious reasons. Waiver forms are available on the StudentNet at http://academic.son.wisc.edu/studentnet/compliance/flu-vaccination.php.

Waivers:
A. Medical waivers must be completed and signed by the healthcare provider and returned to Academic Programs by October 31st.
B. Religious waivers must be completed and returned to Academic Programs by October 31st.
C. Students providing medical or religious waivers will be required to wear surgical masks according to agency policy when providing patient care and influenza is known to be in the community as defined by the Public Health Department or Hospital Epidemiologist.

D. Waivers only need to be submitted once unless a student’s medical situation or religious belief changes. It is the student’s responsibility to self-report such changes to Academic Programs prior to October 31st.

E. Academic Programs at UW-Madison School of Nursing will notify the agency if a student has a medical or religious signed waiver on file.

CONSEQUENCES OF BEING NONCOMPLIANT

The consequences of being noncompliant with this requirement are twofold:

1. The student will not be allowed to participate in classroom/online courses or complete further clinical hours until the required documentation is submitted

2. AND

3. An enrollment hold will be placed on the student’s university record and will not be removed until two weeks past the priority enrollment date for the following semester.

If a student comes out of compliance, an email is sent to the student; course professors are copied on the email so they are aware that the student cannot participate in class until he/she has submitted the required documentation. An email will be sent to both the student and course professors when the student is in good standing and able to participate in class and/or clinical again.

REFERENCES:

Center for Disease Control (CDC) Recommended Vaccines for Healthcare Workers.
http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/ hcw.html