

# Pandemic Flu Response Plan

## Belmont Abbey College

### Introduction

A pandemic is an epidemic of a disease that spreads quickly and reaches many countries across the world. Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by a virus. Influenza viruses are always changing and new strains (called "novel viruses") emerge. When a flu virus appears that is so different from all of the others that we do not have any immunity (resistance) it can spread and quickly lead to a pandemic.

Belmont Abbey College has developed this institutional guide to assist in reducing the spread of a pandemic virus within our community. This document can be predicted to require revision as more information from data regarding influenza pandemics becomes available.

Additionally, recommendations and directives from the governmental authorities such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the North Carolina Department of Public Health, and the Gaston County Health Department shall supersede this document..

### A. Objectives

To identify specific and general recommended actions in the event of a pandemic flu outbreak.

To outline the duties of the Student Health and Wellness Center and other areas of the College that will have special responsibilities.

### B. Planning Assumptions

A pandemic is a public health emergency that has political, social, and economic dimensions and will be governed by factors that cannot be fully known in advance.

Nationwide, a pandemic could last up to several years with several peak waves of activity. A pandemic wave in an affected community, if typical, will last six to eight weeks thus indicating the possibility of a rapid onset. We are now in week 36 of the flu and experiencing a second wave.

### C. Containment measures non-medical and medical

Social Isolation shall be the principal means of disease control until effective vaccinations are available and the population has had time to be inoculated.

- Sick students will be encouraged to go home if their parents live close by.
- Sick students that cannot go home can remain in their residence hall.
- Roommates of sick students will be advised on how to avoid contracting the flu or to move in with a healthy buddy for a few days.
- If a sick student needs to be moved, residence life has identified alternate rooms to isolate the sick student(s). The ill student will have to comply.
- Vaccinations and antiviral treatments are anticipated to be the most effective medical intervention, but they may be unavailable or in limited supply during the pandemic.

Additionally the Gaston County Health Department will provide members of the Belmont Abbey College community with updates and directives from the State Health Division and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Authority is given to Belmont Abbey College health professionals and administrators to act as public health officials during implementation of the pandemic plan where isolation and quarantine are necessary

The Belmont Abbey College response will be supported and largely directed by the official governmental agencies that will provide surveillance on the pandemic, public health advisories, emergency management updates, vaccine and resource information and the pandemic severity index.

The Health and Wellness Center will update campus officials when trigger events, which correspond to phases of the pandemic rating scales used by the CDC and the World Health Organization, to guide response during a pandemic.

All of the recommendations for actions will depend on variables such as infectivity of illness, severity of symptoms and advised governmental actions.

The following departments/divisions have responsibilities as part of the Belmont Abbey College plan: Academic Affairs, Chartwells Dining Services, Residence Life, Campus Police, & Wellness Center.