

Avian Influenza

Human beings have no natural immunity to avian influenza (often called bird flu), which is why this virus constitutes a threat to human beings worldwide. It is important to note that there have been no reported cases of avian flu in animals or human beings in the United States, but a small number of outbreaks have resulted in a significant mortality rate in infected human beings in Asia and the Middle East. Currently, avian flu is not easily transmitted from animals to humans and as of this date, there is no sustained human-to-human transmission of the disease. However, easy human-to-human transmission is the single remaining factor necessary to bring avian influenza to a worldwide influenza pandemic.

Good planning is essential not only to good communication, but also to effective preparedness. The President directed the formation of a GCC Task Force in the development of a plan for Germanna's Pandemic Flu Response. The College continues to work with government officials and area health agencies in the ongoing development and continual updating of the College's response plan. A copy of Germanna's Pandemic Flu Response Plan will be made available once the Task Force has completed its commission.

It is very important that individuals and families take responsibility for developing personal response plans. GCC's plan lists some resources that can be helpful. For example, the Staying Healthy section includes steps that you can take to help safeguard the health of you and your family.

- [Planning Checklist for Individuals and Families](#)

We hope never to need any of these plans, but hope is not a plan. We encourage you to read information from reliable sources, to plan prudently, and to review GCC's response plan frequently. We will continue to monitor developments associated with avian influenza and will update GCC's plan to keep the Germanna community fully informed.

Richard Brehm
Vice President for Administrative Services