



September 21, 2017

Dear Students and Faculty members,

Flu season will soon be here and this year, more than ever, we are strongly encouraging each one of you to get vaccinated.

- Influenza is a serious respiratory disease that kills thousands of people in the United States each year.
- A person who comes in contact with the influenza virus can shed it for 24 to 48 hours before symptoms may appear.
- This can spread virus to patients in Gundersen Health System's facilities, to colleagues, and to family members.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone six months of age and older get a flu vaccine each year.

All employees, volunteers, students, faculty and contracted employees working in patient care areas in the Gundersen Health System during the 2017-2018 are encouraged to get vaccinated against influenza during influenza season. Students and faculty completing a rotation at Gundersen Health System will not be required to wear a mask at this time if not vaccinated for influenza during the influenza season. Information will be disseminated if masking is required. The influenza season typically begins in early December but the exact date will be determined based on local disease prevalence. The influenza season typically ends in April or May but the decision to end masking of health care workers in patient care areas will be based on local disease prevalence.

You and your students may receive the influenza vaccination at a Gundersen Health System or another place of your choosing. Please understand that any payment in which you will be responsible is due at the time of service or, the applicable Provider will send an invoice after the time of service, upon which you will be responsible for payment. **The important thing is that you get the vaccine unless you have a medical contraindication.**

Gundersen Health System **does** need to receive the student and faculty information with names, dates and where the vaccination was given or the reason why student and faculty is declining the vaccination.

Please note students and faculty completing a rotation at Gundersen Health System will not be required to wear a mask at this time if not vaccinated for influenza during the influenza season. Information will be disseminated if masking is required.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and please plan to stay safe this flu season and become vaccinated.

Sincerely,

*Chelsey Dehning & Mai Vue*

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