

Q&A Session for Resumption of On-Site Research Activities – September 23, 2020

Q: Regarding Dr. Kaplan's updated guideline indicating that when individuals within the laboratories are unable to maintain the required 6 feet of physical distancing for prolonged periods of time that the individuals involved need to be tested for Covid19 following the university guidelines, a question was asked as to where is the preferred sites/locations for the testing to occur?

A: Wherever you prefer to get tested. The University Clinics has drive-through testing available by appointment.

Q: What is considered prolonged?

A: This is a judgement call. If you are next to someone for 2 minutes with both of you wearing masks and face shields as required in the research setting, Covid testing is probably not needed. If you are near each other for longer periods of time, say an hour or two, then you should be tested. Use caution as well as your best judgement. The additional testing is for the personal safety of you and your colleagues, as well as that of the University at large.

Q: Can we get an update on the ventilation system in the IRP? Is the IRP filtered with a HEPA filter?

A: The entire University has been upgraded with MERV 14 filters which are close to HEPA effectiveness. We are also maximizing outside airflow and closely monitoring humidity. These upgrades beyond minimal recommendations should help manage aerosol contamination.

Comment: Mitch Beales mentioned that all autoclaves are due for preventative maintenance. Within the next few weeks, he should have a confirmed date and a schedule that will be shared with Dr. Kaplan, who will alert the faculty. All autoclaves are currently working as they should be.

Q: With Thanksgiving coming, what will be the travel requirements?

A: No University related travel is permitted. For personal travel, we will need to watch what the projections and positivity rates in other states. Looking into November and following the current trends, the probability is likely that things may be restricted moving forward. IL is doing well, but we need to stay tuned for announcements from our public health experts.

Comment: Dr. Oblinger gave KUDOS for the fast and efficient COVID testing by the University Clinics. Mitch Beales also stated that the clinic was quick and efficient regarding administration of the flu shot. John Nysten gave credit to Dr. Yorath and Angie Sentine for enabling these excellent turnaround times.

Q: What happens when the temperatures drop? How will COVID testing be provided?

A: The University is looking into solutions for the colder weather. There may be a tent with a portable heater as a possible solution. If this does not seem feasible, then a process will be put in place with appointments and allowing reduced numbers of patients/staff within the University Clinics. Also the clinic is looking into different testing options: cheek swabs vs nasal swabs, Abbott rapid tests, etc. Stay tuned as a plan will be put in place for safe and effective testing. Updates will be forthcoming.

Q: What about WIFI (EduRoam) which seems to be sporadic at best in the IRP?

A: WIFI had been checked on the second floor and it was found that some hotspots were being used. This has been rectified and a request will be put into the HELP Desk to check the third floor as there have been recent complaints from individuals on that floor as well.

The next scheduled Q&A forum is scheduled for **October 7, 2020**