SHCC Internal Procedures in Response to a Suspected SARS Case
First Issued: June 4, 2003

I. **Introduction:** The University of Florida is committed to the health and safety of all members of the University community. The University further recognizes the Center's for Disease Control (CDC) and the Alachua County Health Department (ACHD) as the source for definitive information and guidance in addressing clinical and public health issues related to SARS. With these guiding principals in place, the Student Health Care Center (SHCC) has developed internal procedures that support CDC and WHO recommendations for the screening and disposition of patients suspected to have SARS illness.

II. **General Considerations:**

a. Prevention is the key to decreasing transmission of this and other infectious diseases. At all times patients and staff will be encouraged to practice the following prevention measures:

   1. Frequent hand washing with soap and water and before eating.
   2. Use of alcohol based hand rubs if hand washing is unavailable.
   3. Cover mouth and nose with disposable tissue if coughing and sneezing.
   4. Avoid sharing eating utensils and drinking after others.

b. Patients who suspect SARS or experience SARS-like symptoms must CALL FIRST (352-392-1161) before coming to the SHCC to be seen. They will ask to speak to their assigned Team nurse who will ask targeted screening questions (Attachment I – Confidential SARS Questionnaire). Should the patient need to be evaluated by a health care provider, they will be given a surgical mask to wear and placed in a private room. The staff will wear protective equipment when evaluating all patients with suspected SARS.

c. Signs will be posted in common areas of the SHCC (lobby, waiting rooms, secretarial check-in areas) alerting patients to immediately report that they have recently traveled to or arrived from a SARS affected region.

d. It is the responsibility of UF travelers, students, and staff returning from travel to a SARS affected region are required to call the SHCC Administration upon their return to Gainesville. These persons will also be asked targeted screening questions.

e. Persons who meet the epidemiological definition for being at risk for SARS will be asked to monitor their fever and symptoms for 10 days after returning from a SARS affected region or from being exposed to a person with suspected SARS. A Self Monitoring Temperature/Symptom Log (Attachment II – Self Monitoring Temperature/Symptom Log) has been developed for patient use and is available on the SHCC's SARS web site at www.health.ufl.edu/shcc/sars.htm. At risk students and staff will be contacted two times a day to monitor for symptom progression (Attachment III – SARS Patient Monitoring Flow Sheet).

f. Patients who are worried/concerned about SARS but do not meet the case and epidemiological definition will be reassured, educated and treated appropriately for their health problem.

g. Diagnosis of SARS illness will be made with assistance from the Alachua County Health Department, state health officials, and the CDC.

h. Patients with true or suspected mild to moderate SARS illness will be reported to the local health department to coordinate treatment as well as conduct contact evaluations. The SHCC will work with students and UF Housing if quarantine is indicated.

III. **First Point of Care for Patients**

a. To facilitate identification of patients who may have SARS at the SHCC, **targeted screening questions** concerning **fever, respiratory symptoms, close contact * with a SARS suspect case patient, and recent travel** should be included when patients call for appointments and at triage or as soon as possible after patient's arrival. **Close Contact** is defined as caring for or living with someone with SARS, or having direct contact with infectious material such as: respiratory secretions from person with SARS (Attachment I).

b. A list of areas with documented or suspected community transmission of SARS as identified by WHO will be published weekly in the Monday Memo.

c. Procedure for First Point of Contact:

1. Perform **targeted screening using the SHCC SARS Questionnaire as a guide:** temperature of >100.4^{o}F (38°C), one or more respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing), recent travel to countries identified by WHO (including transit in an airport), and/or close contact with a SARS case suspect patient. **This should be done before other history taking or examinations.**

2. **Place a surgical mask** on patients who have either fever or respiratory symptoms and have had close contact with SARS or who have a history of international travel. **This should be instituted early during the triage process.**

3. Follow **Standard Precautions** and wear eye protection for all patient contact.

- **Hand washing** is urged for all contact with suspect SARS patients or objects that may be contaminated with the virus. Wash hands with soap and water; if hands are not visibly soiled, alcohol-based rubs may be used as an alternative to hand washing. Alcohol-based rubs are available from the SHCC Central Supply Department.

- **Contact Precautions:** Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (e.g., use of gown, gloves, and eye protection for contact with the patient, and their environment.)

- **Airborne Precautions:** (e.g., isolate patient and use an N-95 filtering disposable respirator for persons entering the room). **If respirators are not available health-care personnel** evaluating and caring for the suspect SARS patients should **wear a surgical mask. Each team should have a designated isolation room.**

IV. **Management of the Student Patient**

a. Calls from students with URI symptoms who are concerned/worried about SARS should be directed to the Team nurse for triage. If so the Confidential SARS Questionnaire will be utilized (Attachment I). If necessary the nurse will determine if the patient meets the clinical criteria for SARS. If the patient doesn't meet the criteria, the nurse will provide: education about SARS, infection control precautions-emphasizing hand washing or use of alcohol-based hand rubs, reassurance, and basic wellness education.

b. **Exposed students without fever or respiratory symptoms should not be excluded from school.** Staff from the SHCC will monitor exposed persons twice daily. The monitoring will be conducted in consultation with the local health department. The patients should be advised to take their temperature twice daily. Digital thermometers are available at the SHCC pharmacy. *Self-monitoring temperature logs are available on the SHCC website in a printable format (Attachment II).* These students should be educated about the symptoms of SARS, and should be advised to report symptoms (via telephone) immediately. The student should be given SHCC Administration's number of 352-392-1161 ext. 1-4217, for immediate health care advice and instructions.

c. **Exposed patients, who develop symptoms** during the 10 days after exposure should not go to work or school, avoid contact with others and stay home while seeking medical evaluation. **Calls from these patients should be directed to SHCC Administration 352-392-1161 ext 1-4217 guidance regarding access to health care.** If the symptoms are not severe as per the clinical criteria definition, they should be advised to stay home and they will be monitored twice daily via telephone. They will be asked to take their temperature twice daily and report any changes. If the patient requires medical evaluation, the patient will be met at the front door, given a mask, and placed in the Team's designated isolation room. The clinical staff should wear full PPE when in contact with the patient.

d. If the exposed student lives in the dormitory (residence hall), alternative-housing arrangement should be made. UF has two "sick rooms" available for students with alternative housing needs. See attached telephone list for contact person. Also see F, Transportation of patient procedure, for guidance.

e. **The exposed patient's non-student** close contacts (spouse, children or any persons living with the patient) should be advised to contact the ACHD. Using the SHCC SARS Questionnaire the nurse should obtain the required information. The patient will be told that close contact information will be shared with the ACHD.

1. **Reporting of SARS**
    - Suspected cases of SARS should be reported immediately to the local health department. See attached phone list.
    - FAX the SHCC SARS Questionnaire to the ACHD Epidemiology Department at 352-334-7935.
2. There is *no need to send* the State of Florida Department of Health form entitled: *Physician/Hospital Report of Communicable Diseases*

f. **Transportation of patients to the Hospital, Residence Halls, * or Home**

1. Hospital admission should be based on the health care needs of the patient (e.g., diagnostic, therapeutic, or supportive regimes that necessitate hospitalization). Patients should not be hospitalized unless they cannot be discharged directly to their home or if infection control precautions recommended for the home are not feasible in their home environment, e.g., a crowded dormitory.
2. Patients should wear surgical masks when being transported, limit interactions with others, and avoid public transportation.

   The SHCC van can be used to transport patients to the hospital and residence halls. *

   Patients discharged to their homes should use private/personal car, and limit interactions with others. Avoid using public transportation.
3. Staff transporting patients should wear PPE.

   *UF has two "sick rooms" available for students with alternative housing needs.

   Contact Person: Norb Dunkle, Director of Housing
   Phone#: 352-392-2161

V. **Management of Exposure to SARS for Health-care Personnel**

a. *All health-care facility workers should be educated concerning the symptoms of SARS.*

b. **Wear** personal protective equipment (PPE). The transmission of SARS appears to occur by direct contact with infectious material, including dispersal of large respiratory droplets. See definition of PPE under Standard, Contact and Airborne precautions.

c. Health-care workers who have **unprotected exposure to SARS** should monitor for fever or respiratory symptoms during the 10 days following exposure; those who develop fever or respiratory symptoms should limit interactions outside the home and should not go to work or to other public health authorities should be consulted.

d. If symptoms (as per SARS clinical criteria) do not progress within 72 hours after onset of symptoms, the health-care worker may be allowed to return to work. Before allowing the worker to return to work the infection control, occupational health and/or local public health authorities should be consulted.

e. If the symptoms progress, infection control precautions should be continued until 10 days after the resolution of fever and respiratory symptoms are absent or improving. **Suspected SARS cases should be reported to local health authorities immediately.**

f. Exclusion from duty is not recommended for an exposed health-care worker if they do not have symptoms that progress to meet the suspect SARS case definition or SARS clinical criteria.

g. Employees with unprotected exposure to SARS who develop symptoms should not report to work, and should report symptoms to their supervisor immediately. **Supervisors are expected to contact the SHCC Director and/or a medical member of the executive staff as soon as they receive the employee's call.** After assessing the employee's symptoms (via telephone), if SARS is suspected the local health authorities should be notified immediately.

h. Education on Infection Control is essential for all health-care facility workers.

i. Disposal of Waste and Cleaning of Soiled Surfaces:

- Discard PPE's and all materials soiled with the body fluids of SARS patients as normal waste. This is a CDC recommendation.
- Clean all soiled surfaces with **DCS 100-N** disinfectant. This disinfectant should be available in all clinical areas and can be obtained from the SHCC's Environmental Services Department.

j. Available PPE at the SHCC:

- Surgical Masks
- N-95 Masks
- Face Shields
- Disposable paper gowns
- Gloves
- Eye Protection (goggles)
- Shoe covers
- Hair covers
- Alcohol-based hand rub

VI. Resources/Contacts

a. **Alachua County Health Department**

- **Phone (epidemiology): 352-334-7981 or 352-334-8827**

b. **Residence Halls ("sick rooms")**

- **Norb Dunkle, Director of Housing**
- **Phone: 352-392-2161**

c. **Web Sites for ongoing and up-to-date SARS Information**

- **Center for Disease Control and Prevention**
  - **www.cdc.gov**
- **Frequently Asked Questions (CDC)**
  - **www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/faq.htm**
- **World Health Organization (WHO)**
  - **www.who.int**
- **Student Health Care Center**
  - **www.health.ufl.edu/shcc/sars.htm**

Student Health Care Center
(352) 392-1161

CONFIDENTIAL
SARS Questionnaire

Name: _____ Date of Birth: (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

UF ID: _____ Daytime Phone: (_____) _____

Email Address: _____ Evening Phone: (_____) _____

Questions to be asked by nurse:

YES or NO Recent travel to an infected area? If **YES**, list area of recent travel and date:
_____

YES or NO Close contact with person(s) identified with SARS? (Close contact is defined as caring for or living with someone with SARS, or having direct contact with infectious material such as, respiratory secretions from a person with SARS.)

YES or NO Do you have a fever greater than 100.4°F or 38°C?
Record temperature: _____

YES or NO Respiratory symptoms? (i.e. cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing)

YES or NO Were there family members who accompanied you?
If **YES**, list details (name, age and relationship): _____
_____
_____
_____

_____ Patient informed contact information will be shared with the Alachua County Public Health Department (352-334-7981 or 352-334-8827).

_____ Information has been reviewed.

YES or NO Risk factors identified. Any instructions given to patient: _____
_____
_____
_____

☐ ***Faxed to Alachua County Public Health Department***
Fax number: 352-334-7935
Epidemiology Department

Nurse Signature:_____
Date: _____
Referred to: _____

SARS Patient Monitoring Flowsheet

Patient Name: _____

UF ID#: _____

Daytime Phone: (_____) _____

Evening Phone: (_____) _____

Date		*Temp. (F/C)*	*Additional Comments/Symptoms:*	*Initials*
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			

Initials	**Signature**
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

SARS Self-Monitoring Temperature Log

Date		*Time*	*Temp. (F/C)*	*Additional Comments/Symptoms:*
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			
	AM			
	PM			

For information or questions regarding this log, or SARS in general, please contact the Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161.