Since Monday afternoon, University Health Service (UHS) has learned that one ill student’s test has been positive for Norovirus, which is almost undoubtedly the cause of the sudden onset nausea, vomiting and diarrhea among students. To date, the total number of students from River Campus and the Eastman School of Music reporting these symptoms is 60, with the highest concentration of cases still being on River Campus. Many of the students who have contracted this illness over the past several days have recovered, while some are just now dealing with the effects of it, which tend to last 24-48 hours. UHS is not aware of any student that has been admitted to a hospital due to the severity of symptoms, although a few have been treated in emergency departments.

Because the Norovirus particles can live on surfaces for weeks, the most effective ways to contain and reduce the number of cases among a population are through thorough and repeated surface disinfection, proper handwashing (http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html), and limiting personal exposure. The CDC recommends that individuals who have contracted the Norovirus not go into public areas for 48 hours after their symptoms have ended.

Due to concerns with common utensils being handled by many different customers, Dining Services will soon temporarily suspend the use of self-service operations on the River Campus due to the uptick in the number of ill students. This is no reflection on the food itself being a source of the outbreak.

University Facilities is aggressively continuing with its comprehensive surface sanitizing protocol that includes River Campus and Eastman School residential common areas and bathrooms, and ServPro hygienists and sanitization crews arrived at the University early this morning to begin supplemental disinfecting work of other University public spaces.

Last night, the Office of Environmental Health and Safety with Residence Life delivered packages of Clorox Germicidal wipes to residential apartments for students to sanitize their bathrooms and surfaces. It is strongly recommended that this bathroom cleaning be done at least daily during this health event. Clorox Germicidal wipes, which are proven to be very effective against the Norovirus, are now also available at the UHS offices on River Campus and at the Eastman School.

In effort to further limit personal exposure to the virus in group settings, University community members are encouraged to think about conference call meetings when possible as an alternative to face-to-face meetings.

The University Facilities Customer Service line at 273-4567 is available to take service calls 24 hours a day for areas needing clean-up and disinfection as a result of a person being ill.
The University’s high-level sanitization efforts and practices will be continued until this outbreak has been brought under control.

To view the previous notices on this issue, please visit the UHS website at: https://www.rochester.edu/uhs/.