



UA Recommendations:

Cold/Allergy Self-Care Resources

47th Session

2019 - 2020

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BACKGROUND

Overview

During the first few weeks of each fall semester, there is often a rise in cases of common cold and sick visits to Student Health Services among first-year students. Many students interviewed had experienced common cold symptoms for multiple weeks and expressed that their sickness had made it more difficult for them to acclimate to Penn. Additionally, there is often a resurge in sick visits to Student Health Services in the late fall due to flu season. The goal of this initiative is to improve the adjustment of first-year students to Penn by providing them with self-care resources as soon as they arrive on campus.

Current Status

Students who visit Student Health Services can receive a free Self Care Pack containing cough drops, Ibuprofen, Iodized salt, Acetaminophen, thermometers, and tissues. A limited amount of Self Care Packs was also provided to first-year college houses in November for college house staff to distribute to students who requested them. Students interviewed expressed that the self care packs were helpful in managing their symptoms, but they wished that they had received them earlier in the semester.

Undergraduate Assembly Updates

The Undergraduate Assembly has met with the following organizations to address this issue:

1. Campus Health
 - a. Date
 - i. November 8, 2019
 - b. Recommendations
 - i. They will explore the option of providing more self care packs to students earlier in the year.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

Greenfield Intercultural Center

1. Constituent Experience
 - a. A student worker at the Greenfield Intercultural Center described how the costs of medicine to alleviate cold and allergy impose a burden for many low-income students.
2. Recommendations
 - a. The student said that free or subsidized access to cold or allergy medicine would be extremely helpful for low income students

UA RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

The Undergraduate Assembly recommends Student Health Services to begin distribution of Self Care Packs upon the immediate arrival of first-year students to campus.

Proposal

1. Begin distribution of Self Care Packs upon the immediate arrival of first-year students to campus, through one of the following solutions
 - a. Collaborate with New Student Orientation organizers to place Self Care Packs in each first-year dorm room before first-year student move-in.
 - b. Distribute Self Care Packs at the Student Health Services table at the Student Services Expo held in Houston Hall during New Student Orientation.
 - c. Provide first-year college houses with Self Care Packs preceding the first day of classes of the fall semester for Residential Advisors and Graduate Associates to distribute to students.