Forward Together Update, March 23, 2021

University of Northern Iowa
Dear Panther Community,

With the supply of COVID-19 vaccines expected to ramp up dramatically in the coming weeks, we plan to send an email survey soon to the entire campus community to gauge interest in obtaining on-campus vaccinations. This survey, which can only be taken once, is completely voluntary and will be used only to help us work with the Black Hawk County Health Department to secure the necessary number of doses.

We anticipate on-campus vaccine clinics will be held in the spring to early summer for students, as well as employees and their immediate family members, but those plans are dependent on vaccine supply distribution and other factors. Vaccination appointments will be scheduled when availability is known.

More information will be provided as soon as it becomes available.

Currently vaccinations in Iowa are open only to those 16 and above with an underlying medical condition that leaves them more susceptible to risk of severe illness from COVID-19. The survey will ask respondents if they or immediate family members fall into this category or not, but that information will not be shared and will only be used to help estimate the need for doses.

Those who are interested will be asked to provide their names and email addresses so they can be contacted to schedule an appointment when they become available.

Individuals who do not wish to be vaccinated on campus can still receive the vaccine through their health care provider as it becomes available.

We're excited vaccines have become more widely available and we encourage everyone to get vaccinated at their first available opportunity.

COVID-19 cases declining nationally

In other positive news, COVID-19 numbers continue to decline both locally and nationally, but experts continue to warn that we’re not out of the woods yet. Doing our part by wearing masks, remaining physically distanced, washing our hands, completing the Panther Health survey and getting tested as needed is still very important.
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Black Hawk County has seen its case positivity numbers drop to 3.5% - possibly their lowest levels ever since they began publicly posting their COVID-19 test results last fall. The county has also remained in "elevated" risk status - the second-lowest level.

But there have been increased numbers of the more infectious B.1.1.7 variant detected in Iowa and there is a risk that case levels could continue to climb. Following public safety guidelines will help us all through the next few months until vaccinations are expected to become widespread.

If you have a question, please visit forwardtogether.uni.edu or email it to forwardtogether@uni.edu. Thanks for all that you do to keep yourself, your family and the Panther community safe.

Stay Well,

John Vallentine,
Associate Provost for Faculty

Joseph Rayzor,
Director of Risk Management, Environmental Health and Safety