

Howdy Ags!

I am writing to inform you of a policy change instituted by Qatar Foundation and the branch affiliates regarding the requirements for immunizations and submitting documentation of immunizations and/or immunity to certain diseases. This policy is described below and will go into full effect August 1, 2009.

Those of you that have been around are aware that our mission in the Department of Student Affairs Counseling and Wellness Program is to keep healthy students healthy! Our website is a great place to get information about what's happening in the world of wellness at TAMUQ and Education City! We have information about exercise classes and facilities, anxiety and stress management, counseling, self-help information, and wellness topics. Take some time to visit our website at <http://www.qatar.tamu.edu/counseling/default.aspx> so that you will be informed about how to stay healthy this coming semester.

Related to health and wellness is the matter of obtaining and recording the immunizations and vaccines you have had over the years. Qatar Foundation and Texas A&M University at Qatar respectfully require that you complete the attached Student Health and Immunization Record.

Every incoming and current student who attends a branch affiliate must submit proof of certain vaccinations/immunizations (i.e., copy of childhood or current immunization records) and/or proof of immunity (i.e., copies of the blood titer results) to their respective Counseling and Wellness staff. This information must be compiled and confirmed by your Health Care Provider in English. If you do not have the documents in English, you may have them translated. Translations of non-English documents must be certified. This policy will go into effect August 1, 2009. The required vaccinations are described in an additional attachment in the email you received December 7, 2008.

I am **encouraging** you to return the appropriate documents to me or Dr. Samson by January 31, 2009. The reason for a January deadline is to prepare for an immunization fair available to those who have completed the forms but still need some of the required vaccinations or blood titers. I am **requiring** you to return the appropriate documents before fall 2009 registration, which will occur around April 20, 2009. You will be blocked from registering until you are in complete compliance with the new Qatar Foundation policy.

It's easy to comply to this January deadline: take the form to your doctor, have him/her complete it, get copies of your immunization records (this is your proof of vaccination) and/or copies of your blood titer results (this is your proof of immunity). There are three ways you can return the information to me or Dr. Samson: 1) drop them off in our respective office (133D or 148E); 2) scan and email the forms/copies to patricia.collins@qatar.tamu.edu or amanda.samson@qatar.tamu.edu; or 3) fax the forms and copies to us at 423.0011.

When you meet the deadline for January please do not worry if there are immunizations which you still need. Just return the forms and copies of documents to us and we will determine which immunizations you need. During the Education City Immunization Fair in February and March, those who turned in their documents by January 31 will be able to receive the immunizations and/or blood titers needed. This will be a **convenient and free way for you to completely comply** to this new Qatar Foundation policy.

I have attached the Qatar Foundation Student Health and Immunization Record but it is also on our website. If you should become ill while on campus, the health history provides background information that helps us to provide care which meets your individual needs. The immunization information helps us to protect you and the community against vaccine-preventable diseases. While you will be able to complete the health information on your own, you will need your health care provider to verify when the immunizations were administered or when you contracted the illness (e.g., chicken pox), or provide the blood test results as proof of your immunity to a disease. I have also included some information about the importance of vaccinating, bacterial meningitis, and HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, United States of America Federal law).

You should know that your privacy is important to us and will be protected. This information will be stored with the Counseling and Wellness staff and used, if necessary, solely as an aid to provide health care while you are a student in Education City. It is strictly for use by qualified professionals if and when needed and will not be released to anyone without your knowledge and consent, following HIPAA Privacy Rules. If you have questions about your records and the privacy of your records please contact patricia.collins@qatar.tamu.edu or amanda.samson@qatar.tamu.edu.

Thank you for your anticipated attention to this matter. If you have questions, please contact the Counseling and Wellness Program staff via email patricia.collins@qatar.tamu.edu or amanda.samson@qatar.tamu.edu.

All of this information can also be accessed via the Counseling and Wellness Program website at <http://www.qatar.tamu.edu/counseling/default.aspx>. The website has some useful handouts of interest related to this topic and other health and wellness topics.

Sincerely,

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