

**From:** Byrne, Michael (Dr.)  
**Sent:** Friday 31 January 2020 17:29  
**Subject:** novel-Corona Virus Outbreak update

Dear All,

On 30/01/2020 The World Health Organisation declared the novel-Corona Virus Outbreak which began in Wuhan City in China a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

This escalation in the categorisation of the Outbreak situation is an important step in mobilising and co-ordinating resources to contain the threat posed by the outbreak. It will also serve to assist countries in supporting each other on the identification of the source of this new virus, its full potential for human-to-human transmission, preparedness for potential importation of cases, and research for developing necessary treatment. It also will result in the provision of support to low- and middle-income countries to enable their response to this event, as well as to facilitate access to diagnostics, potential vaccines and therapeutics.

In Ireland the advice relating to appropriate measures required will continue to be provided by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie) and UCC will continue to monitor any recommendations from the HPSC and act on advice as it emerges.

Please be conscious of the concerns some of our students and staff may have about the evolving outbreak in China. The University has convened a group to ensure that our responses are consistent with the local, national and international advice as well as seeking to address issues which are particular to the University setting.

Expert recommendations included in such guidance are being considered on a daily basis and any recommended actions will be implemented as they arise.

The general precautions advised to limit the spread of any respiratory virus infection apply particularly now during this period of heightened concern.

A reminder of these precautions is as follows;

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, or an alcohol-based gel hand wash.
- If you are coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue. Throw the used tissue away into a closed bin, and wash your hands. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your flexed (bent) elbow.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who you know has cold or flu symptoms

Available national guidance is that the wearing of individual face masks by individuals who are not ill is not part of the recommended precautionary measures in Ireland at present.

You can read the up to date national advice that applies in Ireland in relation to novel-corona virus here:

<https://www.hpsc.ie/>  
<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/>

There is also useful information on the Department of Foreign Affairs Website including travel-advisory notices [www.dfa.ie](http://www.dfa.ie) .

The Department of Foreign Affairs' current travel advisory for China remains "avoid non-essential travel".

Finally there is updated advice from the Health Protection Surveillance Centre which is relevant for those in our UCC community who might have concerns about students, staff or family recently arrived or planning to arrive in Ireland from China.

This updated advice, including relevant local contact telephone numbers, is available on the Student Health Website:

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/studenthealth/flu/>

Regards

Dr Michael Byrne Head of Student Health Services & Mr. Keith Burke Deputy Corporate Secretary