

Health Emergency Protocol

International students who are enrolled at WCU as degree-seeking or exchange students are under the auspices of International Programs and Service (IPS) for a number of reasons: (1) International students cannot attend WCU without proper U.S. visa status; (2) the office of IPS has authority from Homeland Security to issue visas; and (3) the office of IPS has the responsibility to inform international students about maintaining visa status while in the U.S., (4) all international students **MUST** have health insurance that is valid for the U.S. as part of the visa regulations.

The primary issues regarding proper student visa status as it relates to health and mental health emergencies are:

- a. Maintain full-time academic status: Undergraduates **MUST** be registered for 12 credit hours and graduate students **MUST** be registered for 9 credit hours each semester. If students drop below the minimum requirement, **IPS needs to know**.
- b. Report physical location: IPS must know if a student's physical location has changed from the local address filed at IPS. This means that if a student is hospitalized, **IPS needs to know**.
- c. Make normal progress in their academic performance: If the normal progress has been interrupted for a health or mental health emergency, **IPS needs to know**.

Therefore, if an international student is involved in a medical or mental health emergency, the policies set out in the WCU Student Handbook will be followed as well as the protocols below:

The office of International Programs and Services will provide the following services to international students:

- a. Rides to and from off-campus doctors offices as needed
- b. Rides to pick up prescription medication that are not available at the Health Center
- c. International telephone calls to emergency contacts, relatives, etc.
- d. General support – to be present in the room during medical consultations, examinations, etc., by request of the student, to contact relatives and other emergency contacts if student is unable to do so, to run limited errands if student is unable to do so, etc.

Additionally, Homeland Security requires that all international students on the J-1 and F-1 student visa have health insurance that covers them in the U.S. In order to safeguard the student as well as the university, the following actions will be required of international students:

- a. Obtain WCU supported health insurance each semester that they are studying at the university.
- b. Sign a Release of Information form that includes health information upon arrival at the university.
- c. Attend a mandatory International Student Orientation offered by the office of IPS at the beginning of each semester.

In the event of a medical or mental health emergency, the following protocols need to be followed:

- a. Contact the International Student Advisor or the Director in the office of IPS
Beth Walden **Office: 227-2557** **Cell: 617-872-8127**
Lois Petrovich-Mwaniki, Director
Office: 227-3433 **Home: 586-0048** **Cell: 828-342-4943**
- b. If unavailable, call the following individuals until a person is reached:
John Schweikart, Study Abroad Advisor
Office: 227-2567 **Home: 293-0181** **Cell: 614-937-9044**
- c. If the student needs an interpreter, IPS will find an interpreter for either the staff of the WCU Health Center and Counseling and Psychological Services or the student, upon request.