



Policy Title

Exposure to Blood Borne Pathogens

Identifier

UofSCSOMG – STAF – 7.3

Prepared by: Office for Student Affairs	
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LCME Standards

12.8 – Student Exposure Policies/Procedures

Scope

University of South Carolina (UofSC) School of Medicine Greenville students

Policy Statement

It is the policy of UofSC School of Medicine Greenville to maintain a safe healthcare environment for patients, students and staff. Students caring for patients experience an increased risk of exposure to several infectious diseases, including Hepatitis-B (Hep B), Hepatitis-C (Hep C) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). UofSC School of Medicine Greenville and the partner health system, Prisma Health–Upstate, shall implement measures to prevent transmission of infectious diseases, which may at times warrant exclusion of students from certain patient care settings or types of patient contact.

UofSC School of Medicine Greenville and the partner health system do not discriminate against otherwise qualified students based upon disabilities, including students infected with HIV, Hepatitis C or Hepatitis B virus, as long as the individual is able to perform the essential functions of the job safely and effectively with reasonable accommodations.

Reason for Policy

The purpose of this policy is for the safety and well-being of patients, students and staff. The policy outlines required actions expected of all students involved in patient care in order to minimize the risk of transmission of infections to themselves and others and to prevent or minimize clinical disease in the event they experience significant exposure. LCME requires that a medical school has policies in place that effectively address medical student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards.

Procedures

All UofSC School of Medicine Greenville students must follow the requirements and procedures as outlined in the GHS Policy: S-106-07 Work Policy Relating to Blood-borne Infectious Diseases.

In addition, students must follow Standard Precautions as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prevent fluid borne infections in health care workers:

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/bbp/default.html>.

The following actions are specifically required of students to minimize risk of transmission of infection:

- Gloves must be worn during all parts of a physical examination in which contact might be expected with the oral, genital or rectal mucosa of a patient.
- Gloves must be worn while examining any skin rash that might be infectious (e.g., syphilis, herpes simplex, etc.)
- Gloves must be worn during all procedures that involve risk of exposure to blood or body fluids, including venipuncture, arterial puncture and lumbar puncture.
- Gloves must be worn during any laboratory test on blood, serum or other blood product or body fluids.
- After performing a venipuncture, the needle (and syringe) must be deposited immediately in a disposal box (available in all patient and procedure rooms).
 - DO NOT recap or remove needles by hand. Care must be taken to avoid bringing the needle near the body of other persons while transferring it to the container.
 - To reduce the overall risk of a needle stick, OSHA requires the use of syringes and other “sharps” designed with safety features that permit safe recapping/closure using one-handed techniques. Students must use these safety devices while on clinical rotations and must first receive training from nurses or physicians experienced with using the particular type of device prior to using it themselves.
- Protective eye wear (such as goggles or a face shield) must be worn when participating in surgical procedures or other activities in which exposure to airborne blood or body fluids (via aerosolization or splashes) may occur.

Actions to Take Following Exposure to Blood or Body Fluids:

Despite the best efforts to prevent blood/body fluid exposure, such exposures occasionally occur. Exposure to blood-borne pathogens may occur through direct contact with a patient's blood or body fluid via a needle or through contact with non-intact skin or the mucous membranes. If an exposure is suspected, the following steps must immediately be taken:

1. The site of the contamination must be thoroughly irrigated and washed with soap and water for 5 minutes. Exposed eyes should be flushed with water, normal saline or appropriate eye wash for 10 minutes.
2. Notify the attending physician and supervising resident immediately.
 - Blood tests for HIV, Hepatitis C and Hepatitis B infection will be ordered by the resident or attending physician from the “source patient.”
 - It is imperative to ensure that these tests are ordered promptly.
3. The patient’s record should be promptly reviewed to determine if there is any evidence of a blood-borne infection (e.g. HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C)
4. Contact the Greenville Memorial Hospital (GMH) Exposure Control Office (864-455-4209). Do not leave a voice message regarding exposures. Instead, page the Exposure Control Nurse, 864-345-6133. After hours exposures must be reported to Infection Prevention & Control pager number 864-345-6133 (the area code must be dialed to page the Infection Preventionist).
5. Complete an eSREO located on the partner health system Plexus intranet system– type “eSREO” in the search box; select ‘eSREO’; and complete the yellow highlighted fields. List the Physician Director of Employee Health as your supervisor. When the form is completed select ‘Submit’ to turn in your form.
6. Subsequent actions are dependent upon the exposure risk.
 - When indicated, counseling and prophylactic treatment in accordance with CDC recommendations to prevent HIV infection should occur as soon as possible following exposure.

- Following exposure to other blood-borne pathogens the student will receive treatment and follow-up in accordance with CDC recommendations.
7. Depending on the exposure and risk, clinical restrictions on medical student learning activities will be determined by the prevailing policy of the partner health system.

Confidentiality:

It is the intent of UofSC School of Medicine Greenville and the partner health system to treat all student information and records relating to infectious and contagious diseases with strict confidentiality. GMH Employee Health & Wellness records are private and HIPAA-protected and shall be released without consent only to individuals who have an absolute “need to know” as determined by the Medical Director of Employee Health, the Hospital Epidemiologist, or the Vice President of Human Resources.

Employee Health & Wellness will notify the Office for Student Affairs in the event of a student exposure to blood or body fluids to allow school officials to follow up with affected student to ensure compliance with exposure protocols.

Sanctions

Failure or refusal to cooperate with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Additional Contacts

- Office for Student Affairs
- Office for Academic Affairs
- Prisma Health–Upstate Employee Health & Wellness
- Prisma Health–Upstate Infection Prevention & Control

Related Information

- UofSC School of Medicine Greenville Student Handbook
- Prisma Health–Upstate Policy: S-106-07 Work Policy Relating to Blood-borne Infectious Diseases
- Prisma Health–Upstate Infection Prevention & Control Manual
- Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSHA)

History

Date of Change	Change
May 2019	Monitoring procedures were clarified. Editorial changes made due to branding updates and titles.
May 2018	Policy formalized into standardized template, LCME CQI