

Policy on the effects of infectious and environmental disease or disability on medical student learning activities

Office of Accountability:	Office of the Dean
Office of Administrative Responsibility:	MD Program, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry
Approver:	MD Curriculum & Program Committee (MDCPC)
Scope:	These procedures apply to instances where undergraduate students registered in the Doctor of Medicine (MD) program at the University of Alberta, irrespective of the geographically distributed site to which they are currently assigned, as well as faculty and staff identify instances of perceived or real conflict of interest in assessment.

Overview

This policy addresses standard 12.8 (Student Exposure Policies/Procedures) of the Committee on Accreditation of Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS), which states:

A medical school has policies in place that effectively address medical student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards, including:

- a) education of medical students about methods of prevention
- b) procedures of care and treatment after exposure
- c) effects of infectious and environmental disease or disability on medical student learning activities.

This policy specifically is to address point c) effects of infectious and environmental disease or disability on medical student learning activities.

Oversight

The Associate Dean, MD Program is responsible for the oversight and implementation of the *Policy on the effects of infectious and environmental disease or disability on medical student learning activities*.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe the effects of infectious and environmental disease or disability on medical student learning activities, with consideration of both the safety of the patient and the learning of the student.

POLICY

Proactive Disclosure

The MD Program, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, will inform students of the *Policy on the effects of infectious and environmental disease or disability on medical student learning activities* by posting it online under MD Program Policies and by discussing with students on an annual basis.

Policy

1. As registrants of the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA), MD undergraduate program students must comply with the CPSA Blood-borne Infections in Health Care Workers Advice to the Professions document (<http://www.cpsa.ca/physician-health-monitoring-program-phmp/blood-borne-viral-infections/>).
2. Medical students must be immunized against Hepatitis B virus and must be tested for Hepatitis C virus, HIV and Hepatitis B virus (unless confirmed immune) before applying for an educational license from the College.
3. To comply with CPSA guidelines, students must be tested immediately after an exposure (see Blood or Body Fluid (BBF) Exposure).
4. Students who test positive for BBP above the SHEA standards of acceptable limits are required by the CPSA to report their status to the CPSA when they become aware of such status. Students are expected to report their status to the CPSA annually upon registration.
5. Students with acceptably low viral loads below the SHEA standards of acceptable limits, as assessed on an individual basis by a CPSA Expert Panel, are not required to take any extraordinary precautions and may perform all activities, including EPPs.



Guidelines

1. Access to immunization programs is available at no personal cost for all medical students and health care workers
2. The MD Program is not responsible for testing, reporting or monitoring students' BBP status.
3. If a student tests positive for a BBP, ongoing monitoring is done by the student's health care practitioner.
4. Students are encouraged to confidentially report their BBP status (if viral loads rise about SHEA standards of acceptable limits) to the MD Program and the OAW on admission or when they become aware of such status.
5. When a student discloses a blood borne pathogen that information is kept strictly confidential and only shared on a need to know basis if it affects limitations on clinical practice as dictated by the CPSA.
6. If the CPSA or the student inform OAW of a significant status changes in a student's BBP levels, OAW will work with the student, the CPSA, and the MD Program to either tailor specific clinical activities to avoid EPPs within a placement, to modify the student's rotation schedule, or, when appropriate, to arrange a medical leave of absence.

DEFINITIONS

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use. [[▲Top](#)]

Defined Term:	
BBF Blood or Body Fluid Exposure	<p>Blood or Body Fluid Exposure is the result of an event where a person is exposed to potentially infectious blood or bodily fluids through one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Percutaneous exposure through puncture of skin by needlestick or another sharp object ● Permucosal exposure through contact with mucous membranes ● Non-intact skin exposure through eczema, scratches, and damaged skin
BBP Blood Borne Pathogen	<p>Blood Borne Pathogens are infectious microorganisms in human blood that can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B (HBV), hepatitis C (HCV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).</p>



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

CACMS Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools	The Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS) ensures that Canadian medical faculties' MD programs meet the quality expected when producing tomorrow's doctors. Medical schools demonstrating compliance are afforded accreditation, a necessary condition for a program's graduates to be licensed as physicians.
CPSA	The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta
EPP Exposure-Prone Procedures	Exposure-Prone Procedures are invasive procedures where there is a higher than average risk that injury to the health-care worker may result in the exposure of the patient's open tissues to the blood or body fluid of the worker.
OAW Office of Advocacy & Wellbeing	The Office of Advocacy & Wellbeing (OAW) in the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry at the University of Alberta looks after issues pertaining to the health and well-being of learners. The office also advocates on their behalf.
MD Program The Doctor of Medicine Program	The MD Program in the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry at the University of Alberta oversees the four-year program leading to the degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD).
PEP Post-exposure prophylaxis	Post-exposure prophylaxis is an emergency medical response given as soon as possible to reduce the risk of transmission of bloodborne pathogens after potential exposure. It is available for HIV and hepatitis B.
SHEA Guidelines Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America Guidelines	SHEA Category III: Procedures for which there is definite risk of bloodborne virus transmission or that have been classified previously as "exposure-prone"

APPROVAL HISTORY

APPROVER	STATUS	DATE
MD Program Committee	Approved	14 February 2018
MD Curriculum & Program Committee	Approved	26 August 2021