

## **Immunisation and Blood-borne Viruses**

At various stages of your training and subsequent practice, you will be exposed to patients with infectious diseases. It is essential that you protect yourself and prevent the transmission of infections to other patients. The Faculty of Medicine has implemented the Immunisation and Blood-borne Viruses Policy, which aims to minimise the risk of students contracting or spreading an infectious disease or blood-borne virus, such as HIV, and Hepatitis B or C.

Compliance with this Policy will ensure that you can undertake clinical placements in teaching hospitals, which are administered by NSW Health.

### **Immunisation requirements of NSW Health for clinical placements**

All students on clinical placements in teaching hospitals of the UNSW are required to comply with the NSW Health policy on *Occupational Assessment, Screening and Vaccination against Specified Infectious Diseases*.

If you fail to comply with the NSW Health policy, you will be excluded from clinical placements and you will not be able to complete the requirements of the program.

If you are unable to meet the requirements of the NSW Health policy because of medical contraindications or if you fail to respond to a vaccine, you may have your clinical training program modified depending on the circumstances.

In order to comply with this policy, you must obtain the evidence of protection against the infectious diseases specified in the attached document

([http://www.med.unsw.edu.au/medweb.nsf/resources/csp5/\\$file/NSW+Health+Information+sheet.pdf](http://www.med.unsw.edu.au/medweb.nsf/resources/csp5/$file/NSW+Health+Information+sheet.pdf)).

Explanatory Notes:

1. The written record of vaccination signed by a medical practitioner must provide details of the vaccination (batch number, date of administration) and be stamped. Handwritten notes with a signature will not be accepted by NSW Health. The most suitable record is the *Health Care Worker/Student Vaccination Record Card* which you can obtain from the Medicine Education and Student Office.
2. The most suitable evidence of serological confirmation is a copy of the test result.

You must also complete Forms 2 and 3 from the NSW Health policy. These forms are available from the Medicine Education and Student Office.

The Office will forward the completed forms to the NSW Health facility where you'll be placed for your first clinical placement. Staff from the facility will check that you have completed the immunisation requirements and you will be given a Certificate of Compliance. You must retain this certificate as you may be asked to present it at any other NSW Health facility to which you are subsequently attached. You are strongly advised to return a copy of the certificate to the Medicine Education and Student Office for keeping if in the event that you lose the original.

## **Blood-borne viruses**

All students in the Medicine program could ordinarily be expected to undertake exposure-prone procedures during their clinical training and all medical students must know their status for blood-borne viruses. This does not apply to students in the Exercise Physiology program.

Prior to commencing clinical studies, you must be tested for HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. You are also required to have these tests repeated if you have been potentially exposed under any circumstances.

The results of these tests are confidential and there is no requirement or expectation that you inform the Faculty if tests confirm that you have an infection with a blood-borne virus. However an infected student should seek advice from an appropriate specialist to determine how this may affect clinical training and future options for professional practice.

A student who is aware that he/she has a blood-borne virus infection must not undertake exposure-prone procedures<sup>1</sup>. Any infected student who knowingly undertakes an exposure-prone procedure or any student who in any other way endangers the health of patients will be reported to the Medical Board of Australia, which may refer the complaint to the Board's Impaired Practitioner Program. The Board may prohibit or restrict the student's right to undertake clinical studies or practice. Such a student would also be liable to criminal prosecution if a blood-borne virus is knowingly transmitted. Depending on the circumstances, the student could also be subject to the University's Student Misconduct Rules.

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<sup>1</sup> Procedures where there is potential for contact between the skin of a health care worker and sharp surgical instruments, needles or pieces of bone/tooth in body cavities or in poorly visualised or confined body sites.