

Student -Policy on Protecting Patients from Blood Borne Pathogens



Policy Number: 310.1011.102

Policy Revision Date: 2022-2-22

Policy Category: Academic

Policy Owner: Associate Dean for Student Affairs

**Policy Audience: Students, Faculty,
Staff**

1. Definitions:

Exposure Prone Procedure(EPP): any procedure in which the blood of a HCW could be introduced into a body cavity, tissue or blood vessel or contact non-intact skin of a patient.

Infected Healthcare Workers (HCW): A learner who is Hepatitis BeAg or HBV DNA positive, HCV RNA positive or HIV seropositive regardless of viral load.

2. Medical Curriculum Committee Review:

February 22, 2022

3. Introduction / Purpose:

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine's Policy on HIV, HBV, and HCV-infected persons is to protect infected individuals from discrimination, to insure confidentiality of sensitive information, and to protect patients from infection.

The potential exists for transmission of blood borne pathogens (BBPs) from infected health care workers or learners (HCWs) to patients during exposure prone procedures (EPPs).

Infected HCWs must be aware of this risk, take individual responsibility to minimize the potential for patient exposure and understand the duty to inform patients in the event that an exposure occurs.

Given the very low risk of transmission of a BBP, infected HCWs performing exposure prone procedures are not obligated to routinely disclose their HIV, HCV or HBV serostatus to patients.

4. Governance and Enforcement:

Associate Dean for Student Affairs

5. Policy:

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine is committed to educational programs and institutional policies which will respond appropriately and effectively to infectious diseases especially human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B (HBV), and hepatitis C (HCV).

These programs and policies shall be guided by GCSOM's regard for both public health interests and individual rights, and by recommendations and regulations of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Association of American Medical Colleges and other professional associations.

This policy is established to address issues that might arise when a student is a carrier of or has an infection that poses a risk to patients. This policy applies to all students who perform or participate in exposure prone procedures, involving sharp objects, needles or other means for sharp injury to the skin.

HCWs who perform EPPs are not required to be tested for BBPs (except as described below). Known infected HCWs have the right to confidentiality and routine BBP status disclosure to patients is neither required nor encouraged.

1. Known infected HCWs who perform EPPs (defined Appendix 1) as part of their learning are required to confidentially discuss clinical learning practices with the Manager of Student Health Services (SHS). The Manager of SHS shall serve as a monitor of risk, education, personnel practices, and clinical care and shall consult with the Medical Director of Employee Health to review work/clinical learning practices. The Medical Director of EH may consult a review committee as needed. The Manager of Student Health may make recommendations to the Disability Services Office for clinical learning accommodations based on the student's BBP infected status and need for accommodations.
2. HCWs who are known BBP infected and perform EPPs who fail to seek work practice review are subject to disciplinary action including review by the Committee and Academic and Professional Standards.
3. HCW testing for BBPs is a mandatory component of the post exposure policy following a needle stick or other sharp object injury. This policy specifically states that HCWs who expose patients to blood following such an injury must undergo testing and inform their faculty preceptor who will inform the patient, SHS/EH and Risk Management that an exposure occurred whether the HCW is known to be BBP infected or not.
4. This provides the patient with a level of protection which is equal to that afforded HCWs following needle stick or sharp object injury. • Failure of the student to notify the faculty preceptor, exposed patient, SHS/EH and Risk Management in the event of an exposure constitutes grounds for disciplinary action as outlined in the CAPS policy.
 - This policy regarding BBP policy will be reviewed each year at orientation outlining the responsibility and appropriate actions to be taken in the event of patient exposure to blood of a HCW (applies to HCW with either known or unknown BBP serostatus).
 - Yearly BBP training will address individual HCW responsibility and appropriate actions to be taken in the event of patient exposure. This applies to both the known infected HCW and the HCW with unknown serostatus
5. No discrimination will be permitted against Hepatitis or HIV-infected persons in employment, education, or the use of public facilities. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs shall take action to prevent or correct any discrimination.
6. Information relative to Hepatitis and/or HIV status shall be kept confidential and only persons with a need to know shall have access to such information. Violations of this shall be considered unprofessional conduct and subject to the penalties of such.

Appendix 1 Exposure Prone Procedures A:

- Open Abdominal Surgery (any)
- Cardiothoracic Surgery (any, including open lung bx or resection)
- Open Spine Surgery
- Obstetric/Gynecologic Surgery (any open procedure and those involving hand guided sharps also to include forceps delivery, cone biopsy, scalp electrode placement or administration of local anesthesia to cervix)
- Open Orthopedic Procedures • Plastic Surgery (major cosmetic procedures including breast reduction, abdominoplasty or thigh plasty)
- Transplantation Surgery
- Trauma Surgery including Ophthalmic Trauma
- Open surgical procedures > 3 hours duration in which glove change is anticipated or routinely performed

6. Key Stakeholders:

Students Faculty, Staff