METHODIST UNIVERSITY

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

Medical Exposures and Injury Incident Student Policy

Methodist University Blood / Bodily Fluid Exposure

Purpose
During their training, students within the College of Health Sciences and Human Services (CHSHS) will be involved in direct patient/client/student care and consequently at risk for potential exposure to blood and bodily fluid. It is the policy of Methodist University to:

1. Limit exposure to infectious agents by directing and educating students in the practice of universal precautions.
2. Establish a protocol that will allow students to be evaluated and tested promptly following exposure.
3. The program within the CHSHS shall help coordinate and ensure students are appropriately evaluated and tested promptly but shall not be involved in any discussion with the students regarding the results of any lab testing.

Immunizations

Prior to matriculation, students accepted into a CHSHS academic program must provide proof of immunization (or documented contraindication) with Methodist University Health Services. Please see the program's Student Handbook or Clinical Manual for specific information regarding immunizations required for each program.

Universal Precautions

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has developed precautions to reduce the risk of the spread of infectious diseases due to exposure to blood or bodily fluid. Students will follow these guidelines while participating in simulated and actual patient care, expecting possible blood or bodily fluid exposure.

- Hand washing (or using an antiseptic hand rub)
  - After touching blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, and contaminated items
  - Immediately after removing gloves
  - Following and between patient contact
- Gloves

        - Use in cases of any anticipated contact with blood, body fluids, secretions, and contaminated items
        - For contact with mucous membranes and non-intact skin
- Masks, goggles, face masks
    - Protect mucous membranes of eyes, nose, and mouth when contact with blood and body fluids is likely
- Gowns
    - Protect skin from blood or body fluid contact
    - Prevent soiling of clothing during procedures that may involve contact with blood or body fluids
- Linen
    - Handle soiled linen such that it prevents touching skin or mucous membranes
    - Do not pre-rinse soiled linens in patient care areas
- Patient Care Equipment
    - Handle soiled equipment in a manner to prevent contact with skin or mucous membranes and prevents contamination of clothing or the environment
    - Clean reusable equipment before reuse
- Environmental cleaning
    - Routinely care, clean, and disinfect equipment and furnishings in patient care areas
- Sharps
    - Avoid recapping used needles- use self-capping safety needles if available
    - Avoid removing used needles from disposable syringes
    - Avoid bending, breaking, or manipulating used needles by hand
    - Place used sharps in puncture-resistant containers
- Patient resuscitation
    - Use mouthpieces, resuscitation bags, or other ventilation devices to avoid mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and direct contact with blood/bodily fluid.
- Patient Placement
    - Place patients who contaminate the environment or cannot maintain appropriate hygiene in private rooms.

Training

Students within the CHSHS programs shall have appropriate didactic and practical training in universal precautions in preparation for their clinical/fieldwork rotations. Each program shall determine the training necessary for students within that discipline.

Methodist University Environmental Health Services shall also have available training materials related to bloodborne pathogen exposure. (Bloodborne Pathogen and Exposure Plan)

Students will receive training for preventing the transmission of tuberculosis annually. All students who have the potential for exposure to TB may be Fit tested at the clinical sites (if

necessary) for National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) certified personal respirator protective devices. These devices are considered personal protective equipment and must be purchased by the student if deemed a requirement.

Student Injuries

A student who is injured at a clinical/fieldwork site must notify their direct supervisor, other facility personnel, and their academic program contact immediately or as soon as possible after the injury/incident occurs. The student must complete the facility's incident report and the Methodist University Incident Report form. Workplace injuries include but are not limited to physical injury, falls, assault, exposure to hazardous material(s), and needle sticks. Students should keep a copy of the incident report and submit a copy to the program representative. The student will follow the facility policies regarding injuries and may require care at the facility. The student should clearly understand their health insurance policy regarding coverage for accidental injury or exposure before starting their clinical rotation/fieldwork experience as the policy may not cover care rendered by the affiliating institution.

Incident Reporting

Incidents involving needle sticks and exposure to body fluids or potential blood-borne pathogens require immediate action to protect a student's health and safety. If a student sustains a needle stick or is exposed to infectious materials, s/he should:

1. Immediately wash the exposure site thoroughly with soap and water for five minutes (or water only for mucous membranes)
    a. Wash needle stick and cuts with soap and water
    b. Flush the nose, mouth, or skin with water
    c. Irrigate eyes with clean water, saline, or sterile irrigants
2. Notifications
    a. Students should inform their respective programs within the CHSHS at Methodist University.
        - For PA Students: Contact the Clinical Coordinator as soon as reasonably possible.
        - For Nursing Students: Contact the nursing program Clinical Coordinator as soon as reasonably possible.
        - For Physical Therapy Students: Contact the Director of Clinical Education as soon as reasonably possible.
        - For Occupational Therapy Students: Contact the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator as soon as reasonably possible.
    b. If an exposure occurs during didactic coursework, students should notify the course coordinator, and the course coordinator should direct the student to seek care immediately at Methodist University Health Services, a primary care provider, a community urgent care, or emergency department at their own expense. In

addition, the course coordinator should assist in filling out the Incident Report Form and reporting the incident to the program director.

   c. Student may follow up with Methodist University Health Services, a primary care provider, a community urgent care, or emergency department at their own expense if follow-up care is needed.
   d. A link to the Incident Report Form will be provided by the academic program.

3. Students are recommended to seek medical attention for necessary lab work and post-exposure prophylaxis
   a. If the preceptor/clinical site has an established blood and bodily fluid exposure protocol, the student is to follow that protocol for the initial evaluation and lab work. The student should also make a follow-up appointment for re-evaluation, discussion of the results of the initial lab work, and any necessary repeat lab work at MU Health Services, a primary care provider, a community urgent care, or emergency department. **The student will be responsible for all expenses for care**.
   b. If the clinical site does not have an established protocol for exposure, the student should seek care on their own. Potential options for care would be MU Health Services, a community urgent care, or the local emergency department.
   c. Students should receive post-exposure prophylaxis within hours of the exposure or within 72 hours per CDC recommendations **if** the status of the source patient is deemed high risk or if there is uncertainty about the source patient's status. The student should seek medical attention at the nearest available facility (please note: the MU Health Services cannot provide this service).
   a. If the patient is deemed high risk, the student must seek medical attention at the nearest available facility that can provide such care and inform the clinical department and the MU Health Services of this risk.
4. Although the preceptor or clinical supervisor may contact Methodist University directly, it is still the responsibility of the student to contact their respective program as soon as reasonably possible but within a maximum of 72 hours of the exposure to finalize the incident report.
   a. The Incident Report should be completed electronically, and the link will be provided by the program.
   b. If an incident report was filed at the rotation site, a copy must be sent to the clinical coordinator in the respective academic program to be maintained in the student's file.
5. If a student is instructed by a healthcare provider to cease participation in the clinical experience due to the nature of the incident, they must provide clearance to return to the clinical rotation/fieldwork experience by a healthcare provider. Any extended time out of the clinical rotation/fieldwork experience may alter completion dates and will follow program policies for completion of necessary clinical requirements.
6. In the event of an exposure, The National Clinician's Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Hotline

(888) 448-4911 is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, to provide guidance in managing exposures.

B. Exposure to Potentially Hazardous Materials

Full participation in CHSHS classroom and lab experiences involves limited exposure to hazardous substances at levels that are not believed to be harmful to humans. Students who are pregnant, may become pregnant, are breastfeeding, or are otherwise concerned about such exposure should consult their physician. Methodist University will attempt to make reasonable accommodations for students who have a medically documented reason to avoid exposure to such substances.