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Category: Health and Safety	Date Created: April 2004
Responsibility: Health and Safety Manager	Date Last Reviewed: March 2017
Approval: Director Organisational Development & Human Resources	Version: 17.1

Purpose

This policy specifies how UCOL will minimise the risk of infection and identifies the responsibilities associated with this.

Scope

This is an organisational wide policy.

Responsibility

The Health and Safety Section will act as a resource on infection control and associated matters.

All managers, staff, students, contractors and other users of UCOL will take all practicable steps to comply with this policy.

Policy Statements

UCOL is required to provide a healthy and safe environment for its staff, students, contractors and visitors, by ensuring that all practicable steps are taken to ensure the risk of harm caused by infection is minimised.

In acting on this responsibility UCOL will:

- Recognise its duty of care under the Health Act 1956 and its amendments, the Health and Safety at Work Act (2015) and the rights of staff and students to a discrimination and harassment free environment under the Equal Employment Opportunity requirements of the State Sector Act (1989-94) and the Human Rights Act (1993).
- Adopt the Infection Control Standard Precautions in Health Care model recommended by the Ministry of Health.
- Be aware of the requirements for the management of communicable diseases as outlined in the Ministry of Health's Communicable Disease Control Manual.
- Provide, appropriate information on infection control to those working in at risk areas.
- Provide appropriate protective clothing and equipment for those working in at risk areas and monitor the health of staff and students where exposure has occurred or presumed to have occurred.
- Take all practicable steps to ensure that staff and student infectious status information is managed in accordance with the relevant privacy and anti-discrimination provisions of the Health Information Privacy Code (1994) and Human Rights Act (1993).
- Provide advice and guidance, and where necessary instructions, during a pandemic or epidemic in accordance with UCOL's Pandemic Plan.

- Require compliance with this policy and where applicable those of specified institutions or agencies in which clinical practice is being undertaken.

Definition

Infection Control Standard Precautions in Health Care

These are prescribed by the World Health Organisation, summarised at their website:
http://www.who.int/csr/resources/publications/4EPR_AM2.pdf

The basic precautions involve hand hygiene, personal protective equipment and respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette with ten key elements provided.

Relevant Legislation

- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) requirements of the State Sector Act (1988)
- Health Act 1956 and its amendments
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Health Information Privacy Code (1994)
- Human Rights Act (1993).

Related Documentation and Links

- [Infection Control Information and Guidelines](#)
- [Staff Immunisation Policy](#)
- [UCOL's Pandemic Plan](#)

Appendix

- Appendix 1- Standard Precautions

APPENDIX 1

STANDARD PRECAUTIONS

For practical purposes in daily living, standard precautions mean assuming that every person's blood and body fluids are infectious.

What is a body fluid? – Anything that can be excreted or discharged from the body – ie spit and sputum (excretions from the respiratory tract), blood, sweat, urine, faeces, mucus, semen, serum and discharge from wounds and vomit.

The safest approach is to assume that everyone is infected with something. People of all colours, rich and poor, fat and thin, old and young may be infected with a blood borne disease.

If you know your child has hepatitis, you probably spend some of your time thinking of how to keep them from infecting others. It's good that you're aware, but don't forget those people out there who don't know or aren't telling about their disease and who could pass it on.

It is *impossible* to identify those living with an infectious disease. The only way to try and keep yourself and those about you reasonably safe is to learn a practical approach to standard precautions. As the precautions become a habit, they'll be a natural part of your life - like turning the lock on a door, or stepping on the brake at a red light. They will become normal, daily precautions.

The primary thing to remember with standard precautions is to always have a barrier between your skin or mucous membrane (around the eyeballs, gums, and inside the nose), and the (potentially) infectious substance. Buy some disposable gloves. Keep them in your house and car. If you don't happen to have gloves and you need to deal with someone's body fluid, put a plastic bag or rubbish bin liner over your hand or use a thick, rolled-up towel to create a barrier. If you have cuts on your hands or broken skin due to eczema or dermatitis you are not the one who should be dealing with any situation that involves body fluids.

If there is any risk of body fluid splashing onto your face keep your glasses on. If you don't wear glasses, put on your sunglasses to protect your eyes. If you have one, put on a mask – or in an emergency tie a tea – towel or similar cloth “bandit style” around your face. If there is a risk of body fluids splashing onto your clothes protect them with a disposable plastic apron (if your area regularly deals with body fluid situations purchase a box of these and keep them handy).

Use a one-part bleach to ten-part water solution, for cleaning up body fluids - including your own!

As soon as you have dealt with the situation, throw away the disposable protective items (your gloves, etc.) and wash your hands thoroughly.

As soon as possible, cover your hands again and remove any non-disposable items you're wearing and wash them appropriately. Common sense will guide you in this.

Make sure you keep all your cuts and abrasions covered with a waterproof bandage. Be careful with badly chapped skin. It can crack and allow fluids to enter and exit. These precautions are a two-way street. You may be one of the millions unaware that you're living with an infectious disease.