

## **SCHOOL MANAGEMENT OF BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS**

### **Background**

The prospect of students with blood-borne infection attending school raises many issues. The following Appendix has been developed to support administrators and staff in responding appropriately and effectively when a student has been identified as having such an infection. For the purpose of this document, the term “infection” refers to blood-borne infections that can include but are not limited to Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus (HIV).

### **Procedures**

1. Every employee has a duty to treat as highly confidential any knowledge or speculation concerning the infection status of a student. Parents and students must be involved in the decision whether or not to inform others and, where appropriate, will be participants during the transmission of this information to ensure that everyone involved understands the situation and the implications of any actions that may be taken. The Medical Health Officer, can provide assistance to school staff when such issues arise.
2. Decisions regarding the type of educational and care setting for HIV-infected students will be based on the behaviour, neurological development, and physical condition of the student and the expected type of interaction with others in that setting. These decisions are best made on a case-by-case basis, using a team approach, including the student's physician, public health personnel, the student, the student's parent, and the personnel associated with the proposed care or educational setting.
3. For most immuno-compromised students, the benefits of an unrestricted setting outweigh the risks of acquiring potentially harmful infections in the setting and the minimal risk of blood-borne pathogen transmission to others. Students infected with blood-born pathogens will be allowed to attend school.
4. Personnel providing care for neurologically disabled students who lack control of their body secretions or who display behaviour, such as biting, and those students who have uncover able, oozing lesions will follow guidelines for infection control available through the community health nurse. In addition, because people can be unaware that they have a blood-borne infection, school staff who may be required to provide first aid to others are to be aware of the guidelines.
5. Mandatory screening as a condition for school entry is not warranted.
6. The following information is provided to assist persons providing first aid in schools. While the chances of caring for a person with one of these infections are very low, it is recommended that these procedures regarding handling blood or any body fluid contaminated with blood be followed for all persons.
  - 6.1. Use dressings and tissues to minimize direct contact with blood, other body fluids and wounds. Whenever possible, protective disposable gloves shall be worn.

- 6.2. When cleaning up body fluids, protective disposable plastic gloves shall be worn.
- 6.3. If any part of the skin comes in contact with body fluids, it shall immediately be washed with a disinfectant or hot, soapy water.
- 6.4. Exposure of open skin lesions and eye and mouth areas to body fluids shall be avoided.
- 6.5. Appropriate disinfectants (e.g. 1:16 dilution ration of hydrogen peroxide disinfectant in water) shall be used in cleaning body fluids from floors, walls, and clothing. The Health Authority can be contacted if there is doubt as to which disinfectants or cleansers are to be used.
- 6.6. The person doing the cleaning is to use disposable materials such as paper towels, if at all possible. If a mop is used, it shall be rinsed in disinfectant.
- 6.7. All disposable articles soiled with body fluids (e.g. paper towels) shall be placed in a plastic container, which shall be sealed and disposed of immediately.
- 6.8. Non-disposable articles, such as clothing and linens visibly soiled with blood or other body fluids, are to be rinsed in cold water and then machine-washed in hot water with ordinary household laundry detergent, including bleach (or dry cleaned). The person who is rinsing the clothes is to wear necessary protective coverings.
- 6.9. A puncture-proof sharps container is to be available at each school to discard contaminated objects that could puncture or cut skin.

Reference: Sections 17, 20, 22, 65, 85, 89, 90, 91 School Act  
Health Act  
Safety Standards Act  
Workers' Compensation Act  
Communicable Diseases Regulation  
Occupational Health and Safety Regulation  
A Quick Guide to Common Childhood Diseases

Adopted: November 2019  
Revised: