

**STATEMENT 4.0.1 – BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS**

**Undergraduate Medical Education**

**Approved by:** Curriculum Committee  
**Date of original approval:** December, 2013  
**Date of last review:** N/A  
**Date of next scheduled review:** December, 2015

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this statement is to ensure that students understand and are aware of the COFM Blood Borne Pathogen Policy. The policy compiles evidence contained within the SHEA guideline for Management of Healthcare Workers Who Are Infected with Hepatitis B Virus, Hepatitis C Virus, and/or Human Immunodeficiency Virus. The COFM Policy applies to all students attending an Ontario Medical School who participate in clinical activities in Ontario.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

**Blood borne disease:** A disease caused by a microbiologic agent capable of being transmitted via contact with the blood of an infected individual. Most notably, this includes the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B virus (HBV), and hepatitis C virus (HCV).

**Exposure-prone procedures:** Invasive procedures where there is the potential for direct contact between the skin (usually a hand, finger or thumb) of the physician and sharp instruments, needle tips, or sharp tissues (spicules of bone or teeth) in body cavities, wounds, or in poorly visualized, confined anatomical sites.

**Non-exposure prone procedures:** Procedures where the hands and fingers of the physician worker are visible and outside of the body at all times and procedures or internal examinations that do not involve possible injury to the health-care worker's hands by sharp instruments and/or tissues are considered NEPP, provided routine infection prevention and control procedures are adhered to at all times.

Examples of such NEPP include:

- the drawing of blood
- setting up and maintaining intravenous lines or central lines provided that there has been no skin tunneling and the procedure is performed in a non-exposure prone manner
- minor suturing on the surface of the body
- the incision of external abscesses or similar lesions
- routine oral, vaginal or rectal examinations

### **III. STATEMENT**

#### **a. COFM Policy on Blood Borne Pathogens**

- i. It is understood that the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry Statement on Blood Borne Pathogens does not differ from the COFM Policy and that the following items are directly copied from or aligned with the COFM Policy.
- ii. The Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry Undergraduate Medical Education defers to the COFM policy, definitions and appendices in all cases.
  1. The COFM Policy on Blood Borne Pathogens can be found on the Schulich Website at:  
[http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/medicine/undergraduate/files/Unfiled/blood\\_borne\\_pathogen\\_policy\\_COFM.pdf](http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/medicine/undergraduate/files/Unfiled/blood_borne_pathogen_policy_COFM.pdf)

#### **b. Applicants to the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry Undergraduate Medical Education will be:**

- i. Required to participate in the care of patients with various communicable diseases or infections including hepatitis, HIV and AIDS.
- ii. Required to comply with Hepatitis B immunization and blood borne pathogen policies and requirements.
- iii. Ethically responsible and, upon acceptance, inform the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education, if they are positive for a blood borne pathogen. The Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education may consult with the Expert Board/Board of Medical Assessors or other experts as appropriate. Confidentiality concerning the applicant's state of health will be maintained to the greatest extent possible.

#### **c. The Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry Undergraduate Medical Education Program will:**

- i. Provide education and training to all students in appropriate methods to prevent the transmission of communicable diseases, including blood borne pathogens, that is consistent with *Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee's Document: Routine Practices and Additional Precautions in All Health Care Settings*;
- ii. Maintain confidentiality to the greatest extent possible regarding information disclosed by students concerning their serological status and disclose relevant information only with the appropriate consent.

#### **d. Schulich Undergraduate Medical Students are:**

- i. ethically obligated to know their serological status with respect to blood borne pathogens;
- ii. expected to be in a state of health such that they may participate in the academic programs, including patient care, without posing a risk to themselves or others (see COFM's Policy on Essential Skills for Medical Students);
- iii. obligated to comply with Faculty/Program Hepatitis B immunization policies and requirements (see Statement on Immunization);
- iv. mandated to comply with the Provincial Communicable Disease Surveillance Protocol, *Blood-Borne Diseases Surveillance Protocol for Ontario Hospitals*, developed under the *Public Hospitals Act, Regulation 965*;
- v. required to use Routine Practices and Additional Precautions in order to prevent the spread of blood borne pathogens and other infections;
- vi. required to disclose, as per school policy, if they are potentially exposed to a blood borne pathogen in a clinical setting; and provide a blood specimen, if indicated.

#### **e. Schulich Undergraduate Medical Students Infected with Blood Borne Pathogens:**

- i. Are professionally and ethically obligated, on acceptance, to inform the Associate Dean of any blood borne infection;
- ii. May pursue their studies only as long as their continued involvement does not pose a health or safety hazard to themselves or others; it is expected that all students can be accommodated as needed with some modification to their program of study to reduce the risks of blood borne pathogen transmission;

- iii. May have their condition reviewed and monitored by an Expert Board at the request of the Associate Dean. The review panel may include individuals who have expertise in the infected provider's specialty or subspecialty, Infection Prevention and Control, Infectious Diseases and/or Hepatology with expertise in viral hepatitis and/or HIV infection, Public Health, Bioethics, Occupational Medicine, and/or hospital administration; and an individual with legal expertise;
  - iv. May have clinical duties or clinical exposure modified, limited or abbreviated based on recommendations from an Expert Board regarding the details of the modifications or limitations – particularly as it relates to the performance of exposure prone procedures and the status of the blood borne infection (i.e. viral loads etc.);
  - v. required to disclose if they accidentally expose a patient to their blood borne pathogen in a clinical setting; must be offered advice and counseling that will assist him/her regarding clinical practice and career choices;
  - vi. have the right to appeal decisions made by the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education or the Expert Board by submitting, in writing or in person, a proposed amendment to the decision and the rationale supporting such an amendment.
    - 1. The student may submit additional documentation from his/her personal physician or other healthcare provider in support of their appeal. In the case where the student's appeal is rejected by the Associate Dean and/or Expert Board, the student may engage in the Student Appeal Procedure of the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry Undergraduate Medical Education program to submit any additional appeals.
- f. **Schulich Undergraduate Medical Students who are potentially exposed to a blood borne pathogen are:**
  - i. required to seek medical attention as soon as possible after the event as per faculty and organizational policy (e.g. within 1-2 hours for HIV post exposure prophylaxis);
  - ii. required to report and document occurrence as per faculty and organizational policy;
  - iii. required to follow post-occurrence testing and treatment.