



Policy Name <p style="text-align: center;">COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT</p>	Policy Number: <p style="text-align: center;">1110</p>
Approved By: <p style="text-align: center;">Management</p>	Effective Date: <p style="text-align: center;">October 1, 2009</p>
Classification: <p style="text-align: center;">Occupational Health & Safety</p>	Date Revised: <p style="text-align: center;">October 3, 2018</p>

POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to communicate requirements all staff (employees, volunteers, physicians, contractors, and students) that ensure staff and residents are protected as much as possible from the risk of infection and complications associated with communicable diseases; and to actively promote the reduction of risk for acquiring and/or transmitting vaccine-preventable diseases. Within the terms identified in this policy, immunization for staff is required for the following communicable diseases:

- * Varicella (chickenpox)
- * Rubella
- * Hepatitis B

PROCESS

Responsibility for Immunization Program Management: To provide a safe and supportive environment for all Agapé Hospice staff and residents.

Employee Relations staff are responsible for: reviewing and considering vaccination criteria/eligibility for staff; requiring that a pre-placement health assessment be undertaken where required on new staff; establishing standards and protocols for screening, exposure and post-exposure management in accordance with legislation and directives of Alberta Health and Wellness; and is operated in cooperation and collaboration with The Salvation Army and Alberta Health Services' infection prevention and control requirements.

REQUIRED IMMUNIZATION:

All staff are required to provide Employee Relations with a vaccination history at the time of hire. If evidence of rubella/varicella/Hepatitis B vaccination is not available, the prospective staff member will be required to be tested. If non-immune, the prospective staff member is required to be immunized in accordance with the established protocols defined below:

REQUIRED IMMUNIZATION

- Varicella (chickenpox) – all Staff (employees, volunteers, students, contractors)
- Rubella (German Measles) – all health care workers who have face-to-face contact with residents
- Hepatitis B – all Staff (employees, volunteers, students, contractors) identified to be at occupational risk of exposure to blood and/or body fluids – *(please see Employee Relations if you are unsure about your risk of exposure to blood and/or body fluids)*



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Staff holding a position at Agapé prior to October 2009 and/or those who do not have direct contact with residents will be assessed and managed in accordance with the established OH&S vaccination standards in order to minimize any health or occupational risk to the staff member, other staff, and/or residents.

Tuberculosis (TB) Protection

In order to minimize the risk of TB transmission for staff and residents, Pre-Placement Baseline assessments for staff are required for all new hires at Agapé. Additionally, Staff who have been identified as being exposed to TB will be provided with ongoing surveillance.

Recommended Immunization

Based on documented infection rates, health care workers are considered to be at significant risk for acquiring and/or transmitting diseases, many of which are vaccine-preventable (e.g. influenza). To actively promote the reduction of risk, immunization will be offered to all staff in accordance with the guidelines set by Alberta Health and Wellness.

Exemptions

Exemption from required immunization is granted, provided authorized information is provided, for reasons of: religious beliefs; documented allergic or anaphylactic reaction to a specific vaccine or any of its components; other extenuating or extraordinary circumstances deemed acceptable.

Communicable Disease Exposure Management

Employee Relations must be notified of actual or suspected exposure to a communicable disease. Management of such risk is in accordance with the established exposure and post-exposure management protocols for the specific communicable disease, which may include testing, vaccination and/or provision of appropriate prophylactic medications.

Response to an 'Outbreak' of Disease

In the event of an 'outbreak' in a health care facility, the Medical Officer of Health ("MOH") has the authority to exclude from the outbreak site any staff who have not been vaccinated appropriately (s.29(2) Public Health Act). Exclusion may include prohibition from working, reassignment to other duties for a period to be determined by the MOH, and/or placement on prophylactic medication.



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DEFINITIONS

Communicable disease means "an illness that is caused by an organism or micro-organism or its toxic products that is transmitted directly or indirectly from an infected person or animal or the environment."

Face-to-face contact means casual contact of five (5) minutes or more in duration.

Direct contact means direct physical contact between an infected or colonized source and a susceptible host (body surface to body surface).

Immunization means protection against infection by inoculation (vaccination).

Outbreak means a sudden appearance or increase in activity of a disease as determined by AHS.

REFERENCES

Canadian Immunization Guidelines, AH&W
Communicable Diseases Regulations, AR238/1985
Guidelines for Preventing the Transmission of TB
Occupational Health and Safety Act
Public Health Act