

The University of New South Wales – Faculty of Medicine

Immunisation and Blood-borne Viruses Policy

The aim of this Policy is to minimise the risk of medical students contracting or spreading an infectious or blood-borne disease. The Policy accords with the Guidelines established by the Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand.

All students enrolled in the Faculty of Medicine have a responsibility to comply with the specific requirements set out in the Policy. Students must understand their responsibilities to protect themselves as individuals and their responsibilities to protect patients from the hazards of blood borne and other infectious diseases. Information concerning the Policy will be accessible to students prior to enrolment and throughout the program.

All medical students are registered with the Medical Board of NSW. This Board requires that all practitioners (including medical students) know their own status in relation to blood borne viruses. Students are required to sign a statement indicating that they have read and agree to comply with the Policy at the time of enrolment.

All medical students should have access to medical advice, either in the teaching hospitals to which they are assigned or through an occupational health and safety service, if they are exposed to infectious diseases during the course of their medical training.

Students are also expected to understand and practice appropriate infection control measures during all clinical experiences.

Immunisation of Medical Students

Immunisation of medical students should be in accordance with the standard recommendations of the National Health and Medical Research Council as documented in the *Australian Immunisation Handbook*.

Furthermore all students are required to comply with the requirements of NSW Health policy directive on *Occupational Assessment, Screening and Vaccination against Specified Infectious Diseases*. This policy stipulates requirements for testing and immunisation for specified infectious diseases.

Students will be required to provide documentary evidence of immunisation status for specified infectious diseases prior to commencing clinical placements. Students who are unable to provide the required evidence will be excluded from clinical placements. Failure to complete required training in clinical placements will result in failure of a course.

Students who for medical reasons cannot receive specific vaccines or who fail to respond to vaccination may require modification to their clinical training activities in hospitals.

Blood-borne Viruses

Students are required to be aware of their status in relation to blood-borne viruses including HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C prior to commencing the medical course.

Students who engage in at risk behaviour or suspect that they may have been infected with a blood borne virus at any time during the program have an ethical duty to seek testing and counselling.

Students who are infected with HIV, hepatitis B or hepatitis C should be informed of their rights and responsibilities. Infected students are not required to disclose their status to the Medical School.

Infected students must exclude themselves from participating in exposure-prone procedures. Any infective student who knowingly undertakes an exposure-prone procedure will be reported to the Medical Board.

Infected students are encouraged to inform the Student Affairs Coordinator or Dean of their status and to seek counselling in relation to personal health measures and training and vocational issues.

No student will be discriminated against nor prevented from qualifying for the award of the degrees of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery as a result of disclosing their status.

The Faculty recognises the right of infected students to confidentiality and will neither coerce nor contrive to determine a student's status. Students may choose to decline to participate in exposure prone procedures without inference to their status.

UNSW students undertaking overseas electives

Students will be advised at the time of inquiring about overseas electives of the need to seek appropriate advice on health precautions for overseas travel.

The Faculty Office will provide a list of designated services, which can provide appropriate advice and immunisations.

Students are required to provide documentation of obtaining pre-travel advice at the time of applying for an overseas elective.

Requirements for overseas students attending UNSW

International students applying for enrolment will receive the same pre-enrolment package and will be required to comply with the Policy.

Overseas students applying for short elective periods of study at UNSW will be required to provide documentation from their Medical School of participation in a comparable immunisation program. In the absence of a comparable program, the student would be required to provide documentation of immunity to infections covered by the Policy. The student would also be required to confirm that he/she is aware of his/her status for blood-borne viruses and will not participate in exposure-prone procedures if infected.