



## MOOSONEE DISTRICT SCHOOL AREA BOARD

### ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE STUDENTS: NO. 326

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## BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS (HIV / HEPATITIS B & C)

### PURPOSE

The Moosonee District School Area Board recognizes that it has an obligation to foster the personal and social well-being of students and staff in relation to blood-borne pathogens, including Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Hepatitis B & C, and other similar communicable/infectious diseases.

This administrative procedure has been developed to inform the staff about the nature of blood-borne pathogen infections, the need for confidentiality when cases occur, and the appropriate measures required to prevent transmission of blood-borne pathogen infections.

### DEFINITIONS

**Blood-borne Pathogens:** Blood-borne pathogens refer to pathogenic microorganisms, such as viruses and bacteria, which can exist in blood and cause disease in humans. These pathogens are spread from one person to another through contact with infected bodily fluids. There are many different blood-borne pathogens, including Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis C Virus, and Hepatitis B Virus.

**HIV:** Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a retrovirus which attacks the immune system, causing the individual who does not obtain treatment to be vulnerable to other infections over the course of many years. Without treatment HIV leads to severe immune dysfunction, and results in AIDS. HIV is transmitted from an infected person by body fluids such as blood, semen, vaginal and rectal fluids, and breast milk.

**Hepatitis B:** Hepatitis B is an infection that attacks the liver. It is caused by the Hepatitis B virus (HBV) and is more infectious than HIV or Hepatitis C. Infection with HBV may be acute or chronic. The virus is found in the body fluids of people with Hepatitis B (e.g., the body fluids may include blood, semen, vaginal and rectal fluids, and to a much lesser extent, saliva). The virus can be passed on to another person through contact with an infected person's blood and other body fluids. It is vaccine-preventable.

**Hepatitis C:** Hepatitis C (HCV) is transmitted when HCV+(positive) blood comes into contact with the bloodstream of an HCV-(negative) person via direct blood-to-blood contact (e.g. shared syringes, tattoos, piercings), or via contact with HCV+(positive) blood and the mucus membrane of an HCV-(negative) person (e.g. sharing needles, illicit drug inhalation equipment). Other ways of transmission include blood transfusions prior to the year 1990, and mother-to-child during childbirth.

**Universal Precautions:** As a general measure to minimize the risk of infection, universal precautions such as the wearing of vinyl gloves should be taken when handling human blood or other bodily fluids capable of transmitting blood-borne pathogen infections. Immediate hand washing with soap after direct contact is recommended if vinyl gloves are not available. Universal precautions include the following four-step approach:

- 1) Wash Hands
- 2) Wear Protective Barriers
- 3) Use Safe Disposal
- 4) Clean Contaminated Surfaces

## PROCEDURES

### 1. Confidentiality of Information

#### Medical Officer of Health:

- 1.1. The identity of any student within the Moosonee District School Area Board with HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis B & C shall be protected unless the Medical Officer of Health deems it necessary that the principal or supervisory officer be informed.
- 1.2. Where the Medical Officer of Health decides it is necessary to inform the principal or supervisory officer of a student's infection, the student, where appropriate, must be made aware of the intention and appropriate consent must be obtained from parents/guardians.
- 1.3. The records of any meeting will remain confidential to those attending. Dissemination of any information shall be restricted to "those who need to know" as determined by the Medical Officer of Health in consultation with the principal or supervisory officer.

#### Principal:

- 1.4. The Health Protection and Promotion Act, Part IV, Section 28 states: "The principal of a school who is of the opinion that a pupil in the school has or may have a communicable disease shall, as soon as possible after forming the opinion, report thereon to the Medical Officer of Health of the Health Unit in which the school is located."
- 1.5. The identity of a person affected with a blood-borne pathogen infection or living with a related disease is strictly confidential. This information will not be disclosed by the Board or by any Board employee to any other person without the prior written consent of the affected person, except where disclosure is otherwise required or authorized by law. Any person who violates this confidentiality by disclosing information, even if it is accidental, will be held liable for breach of confidentiality.
- 1.6. Information for which written consent has been given may only be disclosed within the limits of the consent.

### 2. No Exclusion from Regular Program

- 2.1. There is no evidence that blood-borne pathogens are transmitted through casual contact with affected individuals. As a general measure to minimize the risk of infection, staff members should take universal precautions when handling human blood or other bodily fluids capable of transmitting blood-borne pathogens.
- 2.2. Students with HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis shall not be excluded from the regular instructional programs unless the Medical Officer of Health advises otherwise.
- 2.3. If class exclusion becomes an issue, a further meeting of the Medical Officer of Health, the student (if appropriate), the family physician, the principal or supervisory officer, and the parents/guardians will be held.

2.4. In the rare event of an exclusion from the regular program, alternative instructional programming shall be made available.

### 3. **Staff Training**

3.1. Information on blood-borne pathogens shall be provided by the Board as part of training required by the Occupational Health & Safety Act.

3.2. Staff members shall attend instruction on the nature and transmission of blood-borne pathogen infections as required. In addition, instruction will be provided regarding the appropriate measures required to prevent transmission of blood-borne pathogen infections.

3.3. The Board shall provide resource materials and precautionary equipment in sufficient quantities to minimize exposure to blood-borne pathogen infections, e.g., disposable gloves, CPR mouthpiece airways, cleaning materials. Location of these materials is to be determined by the Health and Safety committee.

3.4. It is the responsibility of the staff to use such materials and equipment in all situations where there is the possibility of personal contact with other people's body fluids.

### 4. **Support for Students**

4.1. Support for students is important and needs to begin early. The school community will support students whose lives are affected with blood-borne pathogen infections and will assist them to access any support program established in the community. Students, parents/guardians, and school personnel will be made aware of the support programs that are available.

4.2. Confidentiality must be an essential component of any support program provided.

4.3. The support program for an affected student should promote a compassionate, humane, and understanding environment that will allow the student to be a valued and productive member of the school community.

## **REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**

### **Legal:**

*Education Act, Section 265 Duties of Principal: Attention to the Health of Pupils Health*

*Protection and Promotion Act*

*Occupational Health & Safety Act*

*Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum No. 96 Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

### **Board:**

Board Policy GOV-18 Health and Safety: Working Environment

Administrative Procedure 330 Administration of Medication / Medical Procedures