

PREVENTION OF STUDENT EXPOSURE TO INFECTIOUS & ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS - MPAS

Compliance with all health and safety practices is a not just good technique, but also is a mark of professionalism. Failure to observe and practice preventive measures for infectious disease and environmental hazards may result in corrective action for unprofessional behavior as outlined in the Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook.

1. Maintenance of immunity and health is an essential part of infection prevention and control. Since some infectious diseases are vaccine preventable, MPAS students must:

- Meet all healthcare compliance requirements for immunizations* and immune titers by Friday of Week 7 in their first session of enrollment (refer to the Clinical Compliance Workbook).
- Maintain healthcare compliance throughout the program.
- Receive annual influenza vaccination; and
- Comply with Chamberlain's Student COVID-19 Vaccination Policy.

2. Practicing Universal Precautions in all patient care or simulated patient care settings is essential in preventing contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.

- **Hand Hygiene.** The CDC guidelines recommend use of 70 percent alcohol-based hand rub for hand hygiene; when hands are visibly soiled (e.g., dirt, blood, body fluids) or after caring for patients with known or suspected infectious diarrhea, soap and water should be used. Hand Hygiene should be performed in the following circumstances:
 - Before touching a patient, even if gloves will be worn.
 - Before exiting the patient's care area after touching the patient or the patient's immediate environment.
 - After contact with blood, body fluids or excretions or wound dressings.
 - Prior to performing an aseptic task (e.g., placing an IV, inserting an indwelling catheter).
 - If hands will be moving from a contaminated-body site to a clean-body site during patient care.
 - After glove removal.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
 - *Exam gloves* will be worn when there is risk of contact with or when handling blood or body fluids or when there is a potential for contact with mucous membranes, non-intact skin or body orifice areas or contaminated equipment.
 - *Facial masks, protective eyewear and/or gowns* (as well as gloves) will be worn when performing/assisting procedures with a risk of body fluid or other hazardous material splashes or sprays.
- **Safe use of injection devices and sharps**
 - Never recap needles unless required by the specific procedure being performed.

- Use self-sheathing needles and/or needleless systems when available.
- Keep an exposed sharp in view.
- Avoid hand-passing sharps and use verbal alerts when moving sharps.
- Be alert for sharps in linen, beds, on the floor or in waste containers.
- Place needles and other disposable sharps in designated puncture resistant containers as soon as possible after their use.
- Keep fingers away from the opening of sharps containers.
- Food, drink and cosmetics (including lip balms) are not to be consumed/used in environments where sharps contact or contact with blood, other body fluids or other potentially infectious material could potentially occur.

- **Safe handling of potentially contaminated surfaces or equipment**

- *Environmental cleaning:* Areas in which patient care activities are performed will be routinely cleaned and disinfected at the conclusion of the activity.
 - *Medical equipment safety:* Reusable medical equipment must be cleaned and disinfected (or sterilized) according to the manufacturer's instructions. If the manufacturer does not provide guidelines for this process, the device may not be suitable for multi-patient use.
 - *Cultures, tissues or specimens of body fluids:* Potentially infected human matter is placed in a container that prevents leakage during collection, handling, processing, storage, transport or shipping.
- **Respiratory hygiene/Cough etiquette**
 - Cover mouth/nose when coughing or sneezing.
 - Use the nearest waste receptacle to dispose of tissues.
 - Perform hand hygiene after hands have been in contact with respiratory secretions.
 - Consider using a mask to prevent aerosol spread. Consult with your preceptor regarding a specific clinical policy on when masks must be used.
 - Sit as far away from others as possible when coughing or sneezing.

3. Sensitivity to latex products can develop after repeated exposure. Limiting exposure to latex can help prevent allergic reactions.

- Whenever possible, use non-latex gloves (vinyl, nitrile or polymer) when there is risk of contact with or when handling infectious materials.
 - During clinical skills activities on campus, students with known latex allergy should ask faculty to provide latex-free gloves.
 - During supervised clinical practice experiences, students with known latex allergy should advise their preceptor of the allergy.
- Avoid oil-based creams or lotions when using latex gloves. They may cause the gloves to break down.
- Wash hands with a mild soap and dry hands completely after using gloves.

* If a student is unable to receive any immunization, an exemption request must be signed and submitted for approval to the proper office

noted in the Clinical Compliance Handbook or COVID-19 Vaccination Policy. The exemption Chamberlain can offer is against Chamberlain's own policies and jurisdiction. Students who do not receive all required immunizations may be denied clinical access by the clinical facility and, therefore, may experience an interruption in or be unable to complete their programs of study. The third-party facility may have their own requirements and exemption policies that students who complete work there would be subject to follow.