



Professor Derrick Armstrong

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Registrar

MEMORANDUM

TO: University of Sydney Students Required to Undertake a Clinical Placement in a NSW Health Department Facility

SUBJECT: Occupational Screening and Vaccination Against Infectious Diseases.

The University is required by the NSW Health Department to make the attached material concerning "Occupational Assessment, Screening and Vaccination Against Infectious Diseases" available to all commencing students who will be attending clinical placements in facilities operated by the Department at any time during their degree program. As you will see, the Department has a policy that requires all health care workers, including students, who undertake training or field work in the NSW health care system, to have a documented screening and vaccination history consistent with the requirements identified in the NSW Health Policy Directive *Occupational assessment, screening and vaccination against specified infectious diseases*.

The University has been advised by the Department that "participation in screening and vaccination according to the Policy is a prerequisite for students for clinical placement in the facilities of NSW Health". **Students not in possession of a completed "Vaccination Record Card for Health Care Workers/Students" (formerly called Adult Vaccination Record Card) will be denied access to the facilities of NSW Health.** Please refer to the website:

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth/immunisation/ohs/> for detailed information on all requirements of the Department policy directive

In order to ensure that all commencing students affected by the Department's policy are informed of the above requirements, and to ensure sufficient time to assemble the screening and vaccination history, the University has agreed to distribute the relevant documentation during enrolment. In addition to this letter the documentation includes:

- Information from the NSW Health Department.
- A "Vaccination Record Card for Health Care Workers/Students" which you are required to **complete and retain for the duration of your degree program.**

As stated above the University's involvement in the "Occupational Screening and Vaccination Against Infectious Diseases" program is limited to the provision of this letter and the attached material to the students concerned.

The University Health Service, located in the Wentworth Building, will be able to assist you with the testing and vaccinations required (telephone (02) 9351 3484 for an appointment).

Should you require any further information or clarification please contact your faculty as follows:

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences:

Ms Sigrid Eliassen, Manager, Student Services – Phone: 9351 6675

Faculty of Dentistry:

Ms Ai Lin Nio, Curriculum Services and Operations Manager - Phone: 9351 8312

Faculty of Education and Social Work:

Ms Maria McQuilty, Manager, Student Administration – Phone: 9351 4301

Faculty of Health Sciences:

Ms Marcelle Alam, Clinical and Professional Fieldwork Supervisor – Phone: 9351 9833

Sydney Medical School:

Mr Ken Chow, Manager Medical Program Administration Unit - phone: 9351 5471

Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery:

Ms Maria Carlisle, Clinical Education Officer - Phone 9351 0525

Faculty of Science:

Ms Suzanne Winch, Administration Manager (Operations) - Phone: 9114 0856

Faculty of Pharmacy:

Ms Narelle Da Costa, Student Services Officer (Undergraduate) – Phone 9036 9293

Ms Alma Torlakovic, Student Services Officer (Postgraduate) - Phone 6036 9552

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INFORMATION SHEET 4. – Important requirements for students in relation to assessment, screening and vaccination

Dear Student

Transmission of vaccine preventable diseases in healthcare settings has the potential to cause serious illness and avoidable deaths in patients, staff, students and other users of the health system as well as others in the community. NSW Health's policy directive on *Occupational assessment, screening and vaccination against specified infectious diseases* requires all facilities in the NSW public health system to ensure that existing staff, new recruits, students and other clinical personnel are assessed, screened and vaccinated against the infectious diseases specified in the policy directive.

A number of information sheets and forms have been developed to help you to understand and comply with the requirements of this policy. These sheets are provided as a guide. Further information is available in the full policy.

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|----------------------|---|
| Information Sheet 1. | Risk Categorisation Guidelines |
| Information Sheet 2. | Checklist: Evidence Required from Category A Applicants |
| Information Sheet 3. | Specified Infectious Diseases – Risks, Consequences of Exposure and Protective Measures |
| Form 2. | Tuberculosis (TB) Screening Assessment Tool |
| Form 3. | Student Undertaking/Declaration |

You are advised to take these Information Sheets with you, along with your *Health Care Worker/Student Vaccination Record Card**, when you consult your local doctor for vaccination(s). You are also advised to undertake all vaccinations and screening (if required) as soon as possible, as fulfilling some of these requirements may take several months to complete. (*Copies available from the Better Health Centre Publications Warehouse on Telephone: (02) 9887 5450 or Fax: (02) 9887 5452.)

All students must complete each part of Form 2: Tuberculosis (TB) Screening Assessment Tool and Form 3: Student Undertaking/Declaration Form and return these forms to their educational institution's clinical placement coordinator as soon as possible after enrolment. (Parent/guardian to sign if student is under 18 years of age.) Students will not be permitted to attend clinical placement if they have not submitted Form 2 and Form 3. Your educational institution will forward a copy of these forms to the health service for assessment.

Failure to complete the requirements of the policy directive within the specified timeframes will result in suspension from attending clinical placements in the NSW Health system and may jeopardise your course of study.

Further information can be obtained from www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth/immunisation/ohs/).

If you have any queries about the above requirements, you should, in the first instance, speak to your course coordinator.

INFORMATION SHEET 1. – Risk categorisation guidelines

Category A

Protection against the specified infectious diseases is required

Direct physical contact with:

- patients/clients
- deceased persons, body parts
- blood, body substances, infectious material or surfaces or equipment that might contain these (eg soiled linen, surgical equipment, syringes)

Contact that would allow the acquisition or transmission of diseases that are spread by **respiratory means**.

Includes persons:

- whose work requires frequent/prolonged face-to-face contact with patients or clients eg interviewing or counselling individual clients or small groups; performing reception duties in an emergency/outpatients department;
- whose normal work location is in a clinical area such as a ward, emergency department, outpatient clinic (including, for example, ward clerks and patient transport officers); or
- who frequently throughout their working week are required to attend clinical areas, eg food services staff who deliver meals.

All persons working with the following high risk client groups or in the following high risk clinical areas are automatically considered to be **Category A**, regardless of duties.

High risk client groups

- Children less than 2 years of age including neonates and premature infants
- Pregnant women
- Immunocompromised clients

High risk clinical areas

- Ante-natal, peri-natal and post-natal areas including labour wards and recovery rooms
- Neonatal Intensive Care Units and Special Care Units
- Paediatric wards
- Transplant and oncology wards
- Intensive Care Units
- Emergency Departments
- Operating theatres, and recovery rooms treating restricted client groups
- Ambulance and paramedic care services
- Laboratories

All health care students are Category A.

Category B

Does not require protection against the specified infectious diseases as level of risk is no greater than that of the general community

- Does not work with the high risk client groups or in the high risk clinical areas listed above.
- No direct physical contact with patients/clients, deceased persons, blood, body substances or infectious material or surfaces/equipment that might contain these.
- Normal work location is not in a clinical area, eg administrative staff not working in a ward environment, food services staff in kitchens.
- Only attends clinical areas infrequently and for short periods of time eg visits a ward occasionally on administrative duties; is a maintenance contractor undertaking work in a clinical area.
- Although such persons may come into incidental contact with patients (eg in elevators, cafeteria, etc) this would not normally constitute a greater level of risk than for the general community.

INFORMATION SHEET 2. – Checklist: Evidence required from Category A applicants

Evidence required to demonstrate protection against the specified infectious diseases

- Acceptable evidence of protection against specified infectious diseases includes:
 - a written record of vaccination signed by the medical practitioner, and/or
 - serological confirmation of protection, and/or
 - other evidence, as specified in the table below.
 - NB:** the health facility may require further evidence of protection, eg serology, if the vaccination record does not contain vaccine brand and batch or official certification from vaccination provider (eg clinic/practice stamp)
- TST screening is required if the person was born in a country with a high incidence of TB, or has resided for a cumulative time of 3 months or longer in a country with a high incidence of TB, as listed at:**
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth/Infectious/a-z.asp#T>.
- In certain specialised clinical settings, for example, in transplant, oncology or neonatal wards, the health facility may require serological evidence of protection (in addition to evidence of vaccination or other evidence) to ensure that the risk to vulnerable patients is minimised.

Disease	Evidence of vaccination	Documented serology results	Other acceptable evidence
Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough)	<input type="checkbox"/> One <u>adult</u> dose of diphtheria/ tetanus/ pertussis vaccine (dTpa). Not ADT.	Serology will not be accepted	Not applicable
Hepatitis B	<input type="checkbox"/> History of completed age-appropriate course of hepatitis B vaccine. Not “accelerated” course.	<input type="checkbox"/> Anti-HBs greater than or equal to 10mIU/mL	<input type="checkbox"/> Documented evidence of anti-HBc, indicating past hepatitis B infection
Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 doses of MMR vaccine at least one month apart	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive IgG for measles, mumps and rubella	<input type="checkbox"/> Birth date before 1966
Varicella (chickenpox)	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 doses of varicella vaccine at least one month apart (evidence of one dose is sufficient if the person was vaccinated before 14 years of age)	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive IgG for varicella	<input type="checkbox"/> History of chickenpox or physician-diagnosed shingles (serotest if uncertain)
Tuberculosis (TB)	Not applicable	Not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> Tuberculin skin test (TST)
See note 2 above for list of persons requiring TST screening		Note: interferon-gamma release immunoassay (IGRA) is not generally accepted. In the event that an IGRA has been performed, screening by TST will be required if the IGRA result is negative or equivocal. Persons with positive TST/IGRA must be fully assessed by a TB service within 3 months of commencement of clinical duties or clinical placement and must be asymptomatic when commencing clinical duties or clinical placement.	
Influenza	Annual influenza vaccination is not a requirement, but is strongly recommended		

INFORMATION SHEET 3. – Specified infectious diseases: risks, consequences of exposure and protective measures

The following table provides a brief description of the infectious diseases specified in this policy directive and links to further information, including risks of infection, consequences of infection and, where relevant, management in the event of exposure.

Fact sheets on each of the listed diseases are available in an A-Z list on the NSW Health website at: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/infectious/index.asp>

The *Australian Immunisation Handbook (current edition)* is available online at: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/Handbook-home>

Hepatitis B (HBV)	Blood-borne viral disease. Can lead to a range of diseases including chronic hepatitis B infection, cirrhosis and liver cancer. Anyone not immune through vaccination or previous infection is at risk of infection via blood or other body fluids entering through broken skin, mucous membrane, injection/needlestick, unprotected sex or from HBV positive mother to child during birth. Specific at risk groups include: health care workers, sex partners of infected people, injecting drug users, haemodialysis patients. Management in the event of exposure: see http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/hepb.html .
Diphtheria	Contagious, potentially life-threatening bacterial infection, now rare in Australia because of immunisation. Spread via respiratory droplets and discharges from the nose, mouth or skin. Infectious for up to 4 weeks from onset of symptoms. Anyone not immune through vaccination or previous infection is at risk. Diphtheria toxin (produced by the bacteria) can cause inflammation of the heart muscle, leading to death. Management in the event of exposure: see http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/diphtheria.html .
Tetanus	Infection from a bacterium usually found in soil, dust and animal faeces. Toxin from the bacterium can attack the nervous system. Although the disease is now fairly uncommon, it can be fatal. Not spread from person to person. Generally occurs through injury. Neonatal tetanus can occur in babies of inadequately immunised mothers. Mostly older adults who were never adequately immunised. Management in the event of exposure: see http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/tetanus.html .
Pertussis (Whooping cough)	Highly infectious bacterial infection, spread by respiratory droplets through coughing or sneezing. Cough that persists for more than 3 weeks and, in children, may be accompanied by paroxysms, resulting in a “whoop” sound or vomiting. Anyone not immune through vaccination is at risk of infection and/or transmission. Can be fatal, especially in babies under 12 months of age. Management in the event of exposure: see http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/pertussis.html .

<p>Measles</p>	<p>Highly infectious viral disease, spread by respiratory droplets - infectious before symptoms appear and for several days afterwards. Serious complications such as ear infection, pneumonia, or encephalitis can occur in up to 1/3 of cases. At risk are persons born during or after 1966 who haven't had 2 doses of MMR vaccine, babies under 12 months of age, before they have had a 1st dose and children over 4 years of age who have not had a 2nd dose. Management in the event of exposure: see http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/measles.html.</p>
<p>Mumps</p>	<p>Viral disease, spread by respiratory droplets. Now relatively uncommon in Australia because of immunisation. Anyone not immune through vaccination or previous infection is at risk. Persons who have the infection after puberty can have serious complications, eg swelling of testes or ovaries; encephalitis or meningitis may occur rarely. Management in the event of exposure: see http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/mumps.html.</p>
<p>Rubella (German Measles)</p>	<p>Viral disease, spread by respiratory droplets and direct contact. Infectious before symptoms appear and for several days afterwards. Anyone not immune through vaccination or previous infection is at risk. In early pregnancy, can cause birth defects or miscarriage. Management in the event of exposure: see http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/rubella.html.</p>
<p>Varicella (Chicken pox)</p>	<p>Viral disease, relatively minor in children, but can be severe in adults and immunosuppressed persons, leading to pneumonia or inflammation of the brain. In pregnancy, can cause foetal malformations. Early in the infection, varicella can be spread through coughing and respiratory droplets; later in the infection, it is spread through contact with fluid in the blisters. Anyone not immune through vaccination or previous infection is at risk. Management in the event of exposure: see http://www.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/Handbook-varicella.</p>
<p>Tuberculosis (TB)</p>	<p>A bacterial infection that can attack any part of the body, but the lungs are the most common site. Spread via respiratory droplets when an infected person sneezes, coughs or speaks. At risk are those who spend time with a person with TB infection of the lung or respiratory tract or anyone who was born in, or has lived or travelled for more than 3 months in, a high TB incidence country. Management in the event of exposure: see http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/tuberculosis.html.</p>
<p>Seasonal influenza (Flu)</p>	<p>Viral infection, with the virus regularly changing. Mainly affects the lungs, but can affect the heart or other body systems, particularly in people with other health problems, leading to pneumonia and/or heart failure. Spread via respiratory droplets when an infected person sneezes or coughs, or through touch, eg handshake. Spreads most easily in confined and crowded spaces. Anyone not immune through annual vaccination is at risk, but the elderly and small children are at most risk of infection. Management in the event of exposure: see http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/influenza.html.</p>

FORM 2. – Tuberculosis (TB) assessment tool

- A New Recruit/Student will require TST screening if he/she was born in a country with a high incidence of TB, or has resided for a cumulative time of 3 months or longer in a country with a high incidence of TB, as listed at: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth/Infectious/a-z.asp#T>.
- The **Health Service** will assess this form and decide whether clinical review/testing for TB is required. Indicate if you would prefer to provide this information in private consultation with a clinician.
- **New recruits** will not be permitted to commence duties if they have not submitted this *Form* and *Form 1: New Recruit Undertaking/Declaration* to the employing health facility. Failure to complete outstanding TB requirements within the appropriate timeframe(s) may affect the new recruit's employment status
- **Students** will not be permitted to attend clinical placements if they have not submitted this *Form* and the *Form 3: Student Undertaking/Declaration* to their educational institution's clinical placement coordinator as soon as possible after enrolment. Failure to complete outstanding TB requirements within the appropriate timeframe(s) will result in suspension from further clinical placements. **The educational institution** will forward the original or a copy of these forms to the health service for assessment.

Clinical History

Cough for longer than 2 weeks Yes No

Please provide information below if you have any of the following symptoms:

Haemoptysis (coughing blood) Yes No

Fevers / Chills / Temperatures Yes No

Night Sweats Yes No

Fatigue / Weakness Yes No

Anorexia (loss of appetite) Yes No

Unexplained Weight Loss Yes No

Assessment of risk of TB infection

Were you born outside Australia?

Yes No

If yes, where were you born?

.....

Have you lived or travelled overseas?

Yes No

Country	Amount of time lived/ travelled in country
.....
.....
.....

Have you ever had:

Contact with a person known to have TB?

If yes, provide details below Yes No

Have you ever had:

TB Screening

Yes No

If yes, provide details below and attach documentation

If you answered **YES** to any of the questions above, please provide details (attach extra pages if required).

I declare that the information I have provided is correct

Name _____

Phone or Email _____

Student ID (or date of birth) _____

Educational institution (student) _____

Health Service/Facility (new recruit) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

FORM 3. – Student Undertaking/Declaration

All students must complete each part of this *Form 3: Student Undertaking/Declaration Form* and the *Form 2: Tuberculosis (TB) Screening Assessment Tool* and return these forms to their educational institution's clinical placement coordinator as soon as possible after enrolment. (Parent/guardian to sign if student is under 18 years of age.)

Students will not be permitted to attend clinical placements if they have not submitted *Form 3: Student Undertaking/Declaration Form* and *Form 2: Tuberculosis Assessment Tool*.

Failure to complete outstanding hepatitis B or TB requirements within the appropriate timeframe(s) will result in suspension from further clinical placements and may jeopardise the student's course of study.

The educational institution will:

- ensure that all students whom they refer to a health service for clinical placement have submitted these forms, and
- forward the original or a copy of these forms to the health service for assessment.

The health service will:

- assess these forms along with evidence of protection against the infectious diseases specified in this policy directive.

Part 1 I have read and understand the requirements of the NSW Health Occupational Assessment, Screening and Vaccination against Specified Infectious Diseases Policy Directive.

Part 2 I undertake to participate in the assessment, screening and vaccination process and I am not aware of any personal circumstances that would prevent me from completing these requirements.

OR

I undertake to participate in the assessment, screening and vaccination process, however I am aware of medical contraindications that may prevent me from fully completing these requirements and am able to provide documentation of these medical contraindications. I request consideration of my circumstances.

Part 3 I have evidence of protection for: pertussis diphtheria tetanus
 varicella measles mumps rubella

Part 4 I have evidence of protection for hepatitis B.

OR

I have received at least the first dose of hepatitis B vaccine (documentation provided) and undertake to complete the hepatitis B vaccine course (as recommended in the *Australian Immunisation Handbook*, current edition) and provide a post-vaccination serology result within six months of commencement of enrolment.

Part 5 I have been informed of, and understand, the risks of infection, the consequences of infection and management in the event of exposure (refer *Information Sheet 3: Specified Infectious Diseases: Risks, consequences of exposure and protective measures*) and agree to comply with the protective measures required by the health service.

I declare that the information I have provided is correct

Name _____

Phone or Email _____

Date of Birth or Student ID _____

Educational institution _____

Signature _____ Date _____