

# **HRP23: Infectious disease and blood-borne pathogens - preventable by vaccination**

## **Section 1 - Purpose and Scope**

(1) This Procedure aims to ensure Southern Cross University (SCU) management, employees, students, and others know the risks associated with infectious disease or blood-borne pathogens that are preventable by vaccination in the workplace and relevant management strategies for the risk mitigation process.

(2) This Procedure applies to all University employees, students and others.

(3) This Procedure applies across all SCU work units, campuses, and controlled entities, including on-site, remote, and online work environments.

## **Section 2 - Definitions**

(4) Infectious diseases preventable by vaccination include:

- a. measles, mumps & rubella;
- b. varicella (chicken pox);
- c. pertussis (whooping cough);
- d. hepatitis B;
- e. tetanus and
- f. Any other disease identified as a risk, associated with research activities or international travel.

(5) 'Blood-borne pathogens' includes the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and other blood-borne viruses.

(6) The areas or employee roles in which there is an increased risk include any of the following:

- a. working with infectious organisms;
- b. working with human blood or body fluids;
- c. clinical work with humans;
- d. working with non-human primates or other animals;
- e. first aid Officers;
- f. facilities workers;
- g. cleaners;
- h. security staff; and
- i. employees travelling overseas on approved SCU business.

(7) Zoonotic Disease is an infectious disease that can be transmitted from animals to humans including but not limited to:

- a. Q Fever;

- b. Hendra;
- c. Lyssavirus;
- d. Rabies and
- e. Avian Influenza.

## Section 3 - General Principles

### Risk Management Process

(8) SCU will follow the risk management process outlined in [WHSMP02: Hazard Identification, Risk and Opportunity Management](#), this process includes:

- a. Hazard identification
- b. Risk assessment
- c. Risk control
- d. Review of control measures

### Consultation

(9) Consultation is critical for effective risk management and is outlined in [WHSMP07: Consultation, Communication and Participation](#).

### Vaccination

(10) Employees at risk of exposure to vaccine preventable disease during the course of their work must:

- a. comply with vaccination requirements for their role; and
- b. a Vaccination Record Form completed by their GP.

### Risk of Exposure and Vaccination Requirements

(11) Employees and students within the following groups have been identified as being at risk of exposure to infectious disease or blood-borne pathogens during the course of their work or student placement. Vaccinations are only required for employees and students who are exposed to the identified risk.

| Group  | Identified Risk  | Required Vaccinations  |
|--|--|--|
| SCU Health Clinic Practitioners  | Direct contact with blood or body substances and exposure to airborne contaminants from infected patients. | - Measles, Mumps, Rubella - Pertussis - Varicella - Hepatitis B * Strongly recommended annual Influenza Vaccine    |
| SCU Health Clinic administrative staff, Counsellors, Clinical Supervisors and others | Exposure to airborne contaminants from infected patients. Possible contact with blood or body substances.  | - Measles, Mumps, Rubella - Pertussis - Varicella * Strongly recommended Hepatitis B and annual Influenza Vaccines |
| Academic Work Unit based Technical and Teaching Staff                                | Direct contact with blood or body substances.  | - Hepatitis B * Strongly recommended annual Influenza vaccine  |
| Facilities and Maintenance Staff   | Indirect contact with blood and body substances. Increased risk of tetanus prone wounds.                   | - Tetanus - Hepatitis B * Strongly recommended annual Influenza Vaccine  |
| First Aid Officers   | Direct contact with blood or body substances.  | - Tetanus - Hepatitis B * Strongly recommended annual Influenza Vaccine  |

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|--|---|--|
| Students on Placements - in certain clinical settings where vaccinations are required  | Direct contact with blood or body substances.   | - Measles, Mumps, Rubella - Pertussis - Varicella - Hepatitis B - Tetanus - Diphtheria * Strongly recommended annual Influenza Vaccine Students may be required to undertake additional vaccination and/or screening as per the policy directives of the host organisation eg.Tuberculosis |
| All staff and students who are identified by the relevant manager or supervisor as being exposed to blood, body substances, infectious diseases and/or zoonotic diseases | Direct contact with blood, body substances, infectious diseases and/or zoonotic diseases. | Relevant vaccinations as required following advice from relevant Manager/Supervisor and the Manager, Workplace Health and Safety.  |
| Staff undertaking approved international travel for work   |   | Complete the immunisation schedule as advised by International SOS.  |

## Declining Vaccination and Medical Contraindications

(12) Employees and students who decline vaccination must submit a written declination of informed non-consent. It is recommended these persons discuss any of their concerns with a General Practitioner before making this decision.

(13) Employees and students identified in this policy as being at risk of exposure and who choose not to receive the identified vaccine will be reallocated work where available. If no other work options are available an assessment will be conducted to determine their ability to perform the inherent requirements of the job.

(14) Employees and students who are unable to be vaccinated due to temporary or permanent medical contraindications are required to provide confirmation of this in writing from their General Practitioner or treating specialist.

## How to arrange vaccinations

(15) Vaccination/s are to be arranged through an appropriate vaccination provider eg. General Practitioner.

(16) Where immunisation is necessary for work requirements, the cost of immunisation of employees will be met by the Work Unit as long as the immunisation is undertaken. The Work Unit will reimburse the cost of vaccination less the Medicare rebate.

## Confidentiality and Discrimination

(17) SCU will ensure the confidentiality of personal information of employees and students. Stringent confidentiality procedures are enforced within SCU in respect of all personal information concerning infectious disease, vaccination status or an individual's medical history.

(18) It is illegal for anyone to discriminate against another person on the grounds that they have contracted a disease such as HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis.

## Complaints Procedure

(19) Where an individual believes they have been treated unfairly, or inappropriately, the appropriate policy should be applied:

- a. [Complaints Policy – Staff](#)
- b. [Complaints Policy – Students and Members of the Public](#)

## **Records**

(20) The treating General Practitioner is legally required to maintain confidential records of all immunisations and should be advised immediately of any adverse reactions from such immunisations.

(21) Evidence of immunisation is required to be provided by the employee to People and Culture and the relevant Work Unit.

(22) People and Culture is required to maintain confidential information on those employees who have had immunisations as part of their work.

## Status and Details

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Status</b>                | Not Yet Approved                                  |
| <b>Effective Date</b>        | To Be Advised                                     |
| <b>Review Date</b>           | To Be Advised                                     |
| <b>Approval Authority</b>    | Vice President (People and Culture)               |
| <b>Approval Date</b>         | 29th October 2025                                 |
| <b>Expiry Date</b>           | Not Applicable                                    |
| <b>Responsible Executive</b> | Kim Franks<br>Vice President (People and Culture) |
| <b>Head of Work Unit</b>     | Brendan Pearce<br>Director, Workplace Relations   |
| <b>Enquiries Contact</b>     | HR Services                                       |