

Institutional Handbook of Operating Procedures
Policy 03.07.07

Section: Human Resources	Responsible Vice President: Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer
Subject: Health and Wellness	Responsible Entity: Human Resources

I. Title

Vaccination of Healthcare Workers to Protect Patients from Vaccine Preventable Infections

II. Policy

The Employee Health Clinic (EHC) will provide occupational healthcare services to UTMB Health employees for work-related diseases and injuries. The EHC will receive direction from, and interact closely with, the Department of Infection Control Healthcare Epidemiology (ICHCE) to decrease the risk for acquisition of communicable diseases by UTMB Health employees and to protect patients from vaccine preventable diseases. Health care workers at UTMB Health shall meet Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for vaccination or have immunity as documented from blood titer.

III. Responsibilities

A. Responsibility of EHC

1. Assures up-to-date immunization status and health records for employees.
2. Documents immunization status in the vaccination section of the occupational health record and provides consultation regarding vaccinations, immunity titers, and prophylaxis.
3. Conducts an annual evaluation of at-risk employees or employees who could pose a risk to patients.
4. Reports any reported or known work-related infection to ICHCE.
5. Reports infection hazards to the appropriate department.
6. Assures that reported communicable diseases in employees are reported to ICHCE who will report to the local Health Department as required.
7. Assures regulatory compliance of vaccination and tuberculous (TB) policies through regular review, revision and development of additional policies to meet compliance.
8. Maintains a database of all employees' immunization status and of healthcare workers and certain categories of researchers who have had IGRA TB testing upon hire or PPD skin test if unable to do IGRA testing.
9. Coordinates completion of an annual symptom TB screening questionnaire.
10. Determines the vaccinations required to be a health care worker based on the risk presented by the health care worker to patients in the worker's routine course of duties and direct exposure to patients as determined by the recommendations of ICHCE.
11. Reviews data regarding IGRA and annual TB symptom questionnaires for employees and takes appropriate corrective action as necessary.
12. Reviews and reports the data regarding employee immunization, compliance, and annual symptom TB questionnaire and influenza vaccination compliance to the appropriate regulatory committees. Works with hospital management to increase compliance if necessary.

13. Advises appropriate action, including prophylaxis, after exposure of employees to communicable diseases.

B. Responsibility of UTMB Health System Leadership

1. Supports the Employee Health Program in mitigation of risk from communicable disease.
2. Encourages employee participation in programs by allowing employees to receive vaccinations or participate in other infectious disease evaluations during working hours.
3. Communicates compliance information to managers and advocates participation (i.e. influenza vaccination, immunizations, and TB testing upon hire and annual review of symptom questionnaire).

IV. Vaccines

- A. New employees deemed to be health care workers must report required immunization records and TB testing status to the Employee Health Clinic and receive a clearance from Employee Health prior to direct patient care, entering a patient's room, or meeting patients face-to-face within six feet in the course of their duties.
- B. Employees will be evaluated by EHC to assure immunization compliance.
- C. Employees who are health care workers must have immunity against influenza; measles, mumps, and rubella; varicella; and pertussis and be screened for Hepatitis B vaccinations. Employees will be provided immunization against Hepatitis B upon request. Employees who work in clinical microbiology must have documentation of Hepatitis B vaccination.
- D. Employees who decline vaccination for the medical conditions identified as contraindications or precautions by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (see matrix below in the Appendix) must use any required protective medical equipment in order to protect others in the workplace. For annual influenza only, compliance to the policy may be obtained by completing a declination and adhere to the required masking during flu season as determined by Infection Control Healthcare Epidemiology which will be kept in the employee vaccination portion of their occupational medical record maintained by the EHC.
- E. UTMB Health will not discriminate or retaliate against an individual who is exempt from the required vaccinations due to contraindications or precautions identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or by the State of Texas Declination for vaccination. The required use of protective medical equipment, such as gloves and masks, may not be considered a retaliatory action.

V. Screening

- A. All new hires designated as health care workers must be cleared by Employee Health as a part of the onboarding process before employment. An immunization history or proof of immunity is required.
- B. [Criteria for screening for specific diseases is available for review.](#)

VI. Definitions

Health care workers: individuals who may present or be at risk of, transmission of vaccine preventable diseases, because they provide direct patient care, enter a patient's room, or meet patients face-to-face within six feet in the course of their duties.

Vaccine preventable diseases: diseases included in the most current recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization, Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Proof of immunity: documentation of previous immunizations or serologic evidence of immunity.

Written flu declination: a signed document indicating the reason for declining the influenza vaccine and agreement to wear a mask during influenza season.

VII. Related UTMB Policies and Procedures

[UTMB Epidemiology Policy 01.08: Employee Furlough Due to Occupational Exposure to Infectious Diseases](#)

[UTMB Epidemiology Policy 01.17: Influenza Vaccination](#)

[UTMB Epidemiology Policy 01.28: Rubeola \(Measles\), Mumps, Rubella Immunization Program](#)

[UTMB Epidemiology Policy 01.34: Varicella-Zoster Virus Infection Control Program](#)

[UTMB Epidemiology Policy 01.45: Pertusis Infection Control Program](#)

UTMB Epidemiology Policy 1.21: Tuberculosis (TB) Control Program

VIII. References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Update: Prevention of Hepatitis A after exposure to Hepatitis A virus and in International Travelers. Updated Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). MMWR 2007;56(41):1080-1084.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Prevention and Control of Meningococcal Disease: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). MMWR 2005;54(RR-7):1-21.

Siegel JD, Rhinehart E, Jackson M, Chiarello L and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee, 2007 Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/pdf/isolation2007.pdf>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Updated Recommendation from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) for Revaccination of Persons at Prolonged Increased Risk for Meningococcal Disease. MMWR 2009;58(37):1042-1043.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Licensure of a Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine (Menveo) and Guidance for Use--Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), 2010. MMWR 2010;59(9):273.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Immunization of Health-Care Personnel: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). MMWR 2011; 60(RR07):1-45.

IX. Dates Approved or Amended

<i>Originated: 10/03/2012</i>	
<i>Reviewed with Changes: 8/17/2016</i>	<i>Reviewed without Changes</i>
10/18/2016	

X. Contact Information

HR – Employee Health
(409) 747-9172

APPENDIX

Vaccine & PPD Roadmap for HCWs working in Clinical Areas

Vaccine	Influenza	MMR OB / PEDI OR / Day	Varicella (If non disease)	TDAP	Hep B (or sign disclosure)	Menin- gococcal	PPD
RN/LVN	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
PCT/OSA/PSS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
HUC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
MD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
PT/OT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
RT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Department Tech*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Micro Med Tech	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓

* Technicians include anyone who provides a service to a patient in the patient's exam room or on the unit (i.e. EKG Tech/Pharmacy Tech/EEG Tech)

X = Recommended
✓ = Required