



Bloodborne Pathogen and Infectious Disease Policy

Dental patients and dental health care personnel can be exposed to pathogenic microorganisms including cytomegalovirus (CMV), Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, herpes simplex virus types 1 and 2, HIV, mycobacterium tuberculosis, staphylococci, streptococci, and other viruses and bacteria that colonize or infect the oral cavity and respiratory tract. These organisms can be transmitted in dental settings through the following ways:

- Direct contact with blood, oral fluids, or other patient materials
- Indirect contact with contaminated objects such as dental instruments, equipment, or environmental surfaces
- Contact of conjunctival, nasal, or splatter which contain microorganisms generated from an infected person coughing, sneezing, or talking, and
- Inhaling airborne microorganisms

Infection through any of these routes requires that certain conditions exist. The existence of these conditions provides the chain of infection. An effective infection control strategy prevents disease transmission by interrupting one or more links in the chain

Students are required to treat all assigned patients; therefore, the potential exists for transmission of bloodborne and other infectious diseases during patient care services. The purpose of this Bloodborne Pathogen Policy (BPP) is to minimize the risk of transmission of bloodborne pathogens and to minimize the risk to environmental hazards.

Admission/Employment

The Calhoun Community College (CCC) Dental Hygiene Program will not discriminate against employees, students, applicants for admission or patients based solely on health status. Applicants who test positive for infectious disease or who are carriers of an infectious disease should seek counsel from their physician and the program director prior to application.

Immunizations

The risk for exposure to Hepatitis B is higher for Dental Health Care Providers (DHCP) than the general population; therefore, it is recommended that students start the vaccination process for Hepatitis B as soon as they receive acceptance into the program. A comprehensive medical history, physical examination, negative Tuberculin (Mantoux) skin test (negative chest x-ray if positive or contraindicated) and immunizations are additional requirements for dental hygiene students. The following immunizations, or proof of immunity, are required before beginning clinical courses.

- Hepatitis B
- MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
- Varicella
- TDAP (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis)
- COVID

A yearly flu vaccine is not required but is strongly recommended due to the ease with which the flu is spread and the close contact required for dental hygiene treatment.

Communication

Students, upon diagnosis of a communicable disease(s) (i.e., chicken pox, measles, flu, etc.), must contact the program director immediately. Based on current medical knowledge, the program director will make judgment of communicability and advise the student regarding attendance in class / clinic.

HIV Testing

Testing for HIV for dental health care providers (DHCP) and students is not required by the Dental Hygiene Program. However, health care workers and students who perform exposure-prone procedures on patients are encouraged to be tested voluntarily in order to know their HIV status.

Obligation to Report

Students in all health care programs must comply with Public Law #102-141, Section 633 and "The Alabama Infected Health Care Worker Management Act." The law requires that the HIV or HBV infected health care worker report to the State Health Officer his/her condition within 30 days of the time s/he is aware of his/her infection. The infected health care worker must realize that any physician providing care to any infected health care worker must notify the State Health Officer of the infected status within seven days of the time s/he diagnoses or provides such care.

A student will be allowed to continue his/her education as long as the medical condition permits patient care and other individual's health are not jeopardized or at risk. In the event that an individual poses a risk to others, the Dental Hygiene Program Director will assist the individual in obtaining counseling and advisement regarding their health and education.

Confidentiality

All information regarding the health status of an individual is confidential and protected by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1994 and the 1996 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. A copy of the Notice of Privacy Practices is made available to all patients.

Bloodborne Pathogen & Infection Control Training

The Dental Hygiene Program complies with all local, state and federal infection control policies including the application of Standard Precautions as stipulated by current CDC Guidelines. Students receive instruction on infection control protocol in courses throughout the curriculum

and must complete an infection control assessment each semester. Faculty and staff are required to attend bloodborne pathogen training each year. Compliance with safety practices is evaluated throughout the students' clinical experience to ensure a safe educational and work environment.

Enforcement of Practice Limitations or Modifications

Any student or DHCP who engages in unsafe and/or careless clinical practices that create risk to the health of patients, employees, or students shall be subject to disciplinary action. When such actions are brought to the attention of the Program Director, the student or DHCP may be suspended immediately from all patient care activities pending a full investigation of the matter.

Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens

Upon enrollment in the CCC Dental Hygiene program, each student shall receive training regarding the procedures and policies that have been adopted by the department to reduce occupational exposure. DHCP or students who are exposed to a bloodborne pathogen in the course of their clinical care are expected to follow the Post-Exposure Protocol set forth in the Program Manual.

The CCC Health Division is not responsible for any injury, exposure to blood borne or other pathogens, or illness of a student that is incurred during the extended clinical lab experience. Any expense for injuries sustained or illnesses contracted by the student during clinical lab will be the responsibility of the student. The student must notify dental hygiene faculty promptly of any harmful or potentially harmful incident at the time of occurrence and an incident report must be written. **Failure to report exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials could result in an "F" for the course and dismissal from the DH program.**