

POLICY FOR DENTAL HYGIENE STUDENTS REGARDING BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

NHTI Dental Hygiene Program is committed to addressing issues related to bloodborne pathogens, such as Hepatitis B (HBV), Hepatitis C (HCV), Tuberculosis (TB), and Human Immunodeficiency (HIV) in order to protect clients, students, faculty and staff. This also includes protecting the rights of individuals who may have a bloodborne infectious disease.

Students are required to treat all clients assigned and as a result may be exposed to bloodborne pathogens and infectious diseases while providing clinical services. Students are provided with instruction on infectious diseases, mechanisms of disease transmission, and infection control procedures to reduce the risk of disease transmission from client to client, client to operator and operator to client. Students shall adhere to universal precautions and follow accepted OSHA and CDC guidelines while performing all clinical procedures both on campus and at outside clinic affiliations.

Having provided the students with this information to prevent the spread of infectious diseases and to protect themselves from contracting these diseases, the dental hygiene faculty and outside clinical supervisors will assume no responsibility for the personal health of their students. The ultimate responsibility for the prevention of self contamination from infectious diseases rests solely with the individual students.

NHTI Dental Hygiene Clinic is a safe place to provide and receive dental care. There is no significant risk of contracting bloodborne disease through the provision of dental treatment when appropriate infection control procedures are followed. Therefore the purpose of this policy is to minimize the risk of transmission of bloodborne pathogens and other environmental hazards in the NHTI Dental Hygiene Clinic.

Immunizations

Before working in clinic, students are advised to be vaccinated for the Hepatitis B virus. If a student declines receiving the Hepatitis B vaccine, the student must sign a waiver, the "Vaccination Declination Form", which states that the student takes responsibility for their own personal health. This form will be kept for any student declining the vaccination.

Standard Precautions

Standard precautions is an approach to infection control by routine and consistent use of appropriate barrier protection such as gloves, lab coats, mask and protective eyewear to prevent skin and mucous membrane transmission of microorganism resulting from contact with blood or body fluids. Universal precautions shall be observed to prevent contact with potentially infectious materials. Under circumstances in which differentiation between body fluid types is difficulty or impossible, all body fluids shall be considered potentially infectious materials.

Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens

Students who are exposed to bloodborne pathogens in their clinical course or outside rotation are expected to follow the procedures set forth in the NHTI Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan located in this Dental Hygiene Program Manual.

Communication of Hazardous Material

Label and signs shall be affixed to containers or regulated waste containing blood or other potentially infectious material. Labels required shall be fluorescent orange or orange-red with lettering or symbols in a contrasting color. Red bags or containers may be substituted for labels. Labels required shall have the standard BIOHAZARD sign.

Enforcement of Policy

Any student who engages in unsafe and/or careless clinical practices, which creates risk to the health of clients, students and staff, shall be subject to disciplinary action. This involves a faculty review of the student's action or behavior and the student may be suspended immediately from the program.