

# **Policy and Procedures Requiring Immunizations and Regular Documentation of Healthcare Status for Medical Students Enrolled in Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine**

## 1.0 Background

The Code of Virginia (Section 23-7.5) requires all full-time students to provide documentation of their immunization status by a licensed health professional. Furthermore, Virginia Commonwealth University Health System, Medical College of Virginia Hospitals and Physicians has established an Infection Control Policy. The purpose of the policy is to establish guidelines to protect health care workers (HCWs) and patients from communicable diseases that might be acquired in the health care setting. These guidelines apply to all HCWs performing patient care duties at VCU Health System. Although medical students are not employees of the VCU Health System, they perform activities involving patient contact that is in concert with that provided by HCWs. Therefore, to protect the medical students and patients from communicable diseases, it is prudent that a policy be established recognizing the requirements of the Code of Virginia and consistent with that enforced by the VCU Health System.

## 2.0 Policy

- 2.1 At the time of matriculation, all medical students are required to present to University Student Health Services a Certificate of Immunization (see attached).
- 2.2 The Certificate of Immunization requires the following with specific amendments pertinent to medical students:
  - 2.2.1 Tetanus, diphtheria (Td) within 10 years.
  - 2.2.2 Hepatitis B series completed within six months of matriculation or serological confirmation of immunity or a signed Hepatitis B vaccine waiver. After completion of the series, serological confirmation of immunity is recommended, but not required. NOTE: Students must present documentation of a completed Hepatitis B series to University Health Services within six months of matriculation if the series was not completed prior to that time. If a student signs a Hepatitis B vaccine waiver, serological confirmation of status, including a Hepatitis B surface antigen, must be provided.
  - 2.2.3 Measles (Rubeola), two doses of vaccine required (after first birthday and 1967) or serological confirmation of immunity or date of disease.
  - 2.2.4 Mumps required after first birthday and 1967.

- 2.2.5. Rubella required after first birthday and 1969 or serological confirmation of immunity.
  - 2.2.6. Meningococcal vaccine or a signed Meningococcal vaccine waiver.
  - 2.2.7. Tuberculosis screening or history of prior positive TB skin test at the beginning of the M1 year and just prior to starting the M3 year.
- 2.3 As specified in Section 22.1-271.C.(II) of the Code of Virginia a physician or health department official may certify that administration of diphtheria, tetanus, pertusis (DPT), tetanus diphtheria (Td), oral polio vaccine (OPV), measles, rubella or mumps would be detrimental to the student's health allowing for a medical exemption.
- 2.4 Any student who objects on the grounds that administration of immunizing agents conflicts with his or her religious tenets or practices shall be exempt from the immunization requirements unless an emergency or epidemic disease has been declared by the Board of Health. An affidavit of religious exemption must be submitted on a Certificate of Religious Exemption (Form CRE-1) which may be obtained at any local health department, school division's superintendent's office or local department of social services.
- 2.5 All visiting medical students are required to complete a Certificate of Immunization returned to the Electives Office and copied to University Student Health Services prior to approval of the elective.
- 2.6 All students are strongly encouraged to receive the influenza vaccine annually.
- 2.7 Varicella screening is highly recommended for all medical students. A positive history of chickenpox is defined as a history of rash compatible with disease) or documented positive varicella antibody titer is acceptable. If the medical student is unsure of prior history of serostatus or has never had varicella, a titer will be obtained. For those individuals with negative titers, the varicella vaccine will be offered. This is a live attenuated vaccine that is contraindicated in those with known immunosuppression either by medication or by underlying medical condition; pregnant or suspected to be pregnant.

### 3.0 Procedure

- 3.1 All records on immunizations status and continued immunizations for matriculating, enrolled and visiting students shall be kept in University Student Health Services.
- 3.2 Prior to the beginning of the fall and spring semester of each academic year, the Office of Students Affairs shall provide a roster of all currently enrolled students to University Health Services. University Health Services will check this roster against their record of students' immunizations. If a student is deficient in completion or updating of his/her immunization status, University Health Services shall record this information in University Records and Registration precluding the student from registering that semester until the immunization status has been satisfied.