

<b>VRC Policies/ Procedure</b>	<b>Subject:</b> TB, Hep B, Flu shot requirements <b>Department Affected:</b> All <b>Issued by:</b> Human Resources Department <b>Ref:</b>	<b>Date:</b> 12/15/2016
<b>Effective:</b> 12/15/2016	<b>Approved by:</b> Allen Nalbandian M.D.	Revisions Annual Last Revision:

## **TB testing**

CDPH recommends at the time of employment, testing for tuberculosis shall consist of a purified protein derivative intermediate strength intradermal skin test or any other test for tuberculosis infection recommended by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and licensed by the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA). If a positive reaction is obtained from the skin test, or any other test for tuberculosis infection recommended by the CDC and licensed by the FDA, the employee shall be referred to a physician to determine if a chest X-ray is necessary. Employees will need to be retested for TB annually. This impacts employees that have direct contact with patients, including technologists and front desk staff.

The clinic shall maintain a health record for each employee that includes reports of all employment-related health examinations.

These records shall be kept for a minimum of three years following termination of employment.

An employee known to have or exhibiting signs or symptoms of a communicable disease shall not be permitted to work until he or she submits a physician's certification that the employee is sufficiently free of the communicable disease to return to his or her assigned duties.

### **VRC requires annual TB testing of all employees**

## **Hepatitis B**

The CDC requires employers to offer the vaccination series to all workers who have occupational exposure. Examples of workers who may have occupational exposure include, but are not limited to, healthcare workers, emergency responders, morticians, first-aid personnel, correctional officers and laundry workers in hospitals and commercial laundries that service healthcare or public safety institutions. The vaccine and vaccination must be offered at no cost to the worker and at a reasonable time and place.

The hepatitis B vaccination is a non-infectious, vaccine prepared from recombinant yeast cultures, rather than human blood or plasma. There is no risk of contamination from other blood borne pathogens nor is there any chance of developing HBV from the vaccine.

The vaccine must be administered according to the recommendations of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) current at the time the procedure takes place. To ensure immunity, it is important for individuals to complete the entire course of vaccination contained in the USPHS recommendations. The great majority of those vaccinated will develop immunity to the hepatitis B

virus. The vaccine causes no harm to those who are already immune or to those who may be HBV carriers. Although workers may desire to have their blood tested for antibodies to see if vaccination is needed, employers cannot make such screening a condition of receiving vaccination and employers are not required to provide prescreening.

Employers must ensure that all occupationally exposed workers are trained about the vaccine and vaccination, including efficacy, safety, method of administration, and the benefits of vaccination. They also must be informed that the vaccine and vaccination are offered at no cost to the worker. The vaccination must be offered after the worker is trained and within 10 days of initial assignment to a job where there is occupational exposure, unless the worker has previously received the vaccine series, antibody testing has revealed that the worker is immune, or the vaccine is contraindicated for medical reasons. The employer must obtain a written opinion from the licensed healthcare professional within 15 days of the completion of the evaluation for vaccination. This written opinion is limited to whether hepatitis B vaccination is indicated for the worker and if the worker has received the vaccination.

### **VRC offers Hep B vaccine to all employees**

## **Flu Vaccine**

San Diego County has **issued a Health Officer Order mandating that all licensed acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, long-term care facilities, ambulatory and community clinics, and ambulance providers in San Diego County require their health care personnel (HCP) to receive an annual influenza vaccination or, if they decline, to wear a mask while in contact with patients or working in patient care areas during the annual influenza season.** This action will help to lower the risk of transmission of influenza to patients.

### **RATIONALE**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), influenza affects approximately 5 to 20 percent of the United States population each year. Influenza is estimated to cause over 200,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 to 49,000 deaths annually nationwide. Last year, San Diego reported 70 influenza-related deaths; the highest number in recent history. Persons with chronic medical conditions, infants and children, seniors, and pregnant women are at greater risk for severe influenza-related illnesses and deaths. All HCP are at risk for both contracting influenza and transmitting the virus to their vulnerable patients. Patients in our health care facilities are especially vulnerable to influenza. Therefore, vaccinations of HCP protect patients and reduce employee absenteeism during influenza season.

The CDC recommends that all HCP, including physicians, nurses, paramedics, emergency medical technicians, employees of nursing homes and chronic care facilities, students in these professions, and volunteers, should receive annual vaccination against influenza.

There are now two legislative actions in California requiring that general acute care hospitals and certain employers offer influenza vaccinations to employees: 1) California Health & Safety Code §1288.7(a), effective July 1, 2007 and affecting acute care hospital staff. 2) California Code of Regulations, Title 8, §5199 (c)(6)(D) and (h)(10), Aerosol Transmissible Diseases standard of CalOSHA; effective September 1, 2010 and affecting a broader range of

healthcare workers. If hospital employees decline vaccination, they are required to sign a declination statement in lieu of vaccination. While compliance rates with these State laws are high, actual HCP vaccination rates are not optimal and may be below the level necessary to reduce the spread of infection in our health care facilities. In San Diego County, during the 2012-13 influenza season, hospital rates of influenza vaccination of employees ranged from 57% to 99%. For selected categories of non-employees in some San Diego County hospitals, rates were as low as 17%. A recent study also showed higher coverage occurring in facilities with institutional requirements for influenza vaccination of employees.

The Healthy People 2020 targets a 90% seasonal influenza vaccination rate for all HCP. Despite the national recommendation and goal, HCP influenza vaccination rates are well below the Healthy People 2020 target. Also of note, the Joint Commission has now included the Healthy People 2020 objective for influenza vaccination coverage as a part of hospital accreditation requirements.

## **ORDER**

Pursuant to my authority under §120175 of the California Health and Safety Code, I, as the Health Officer of the County of San Diego, hereby order that licensed acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, longterm care facilities, ambulatory and community clinics, and ambulance providers in San Diego County implement a program requiring its health care personnel to receive an annual influenza vaccination or, if they decline, wear a mask for the duration of the influenza season, while in contact with patients or working in patient care areas.

## **PERSONS COVERED**

For the purposes of this Order, "health care personnel" are all persons, including paid and unpaid employees, contractors, students, and volunteers, who work in areas where patient care is provided in a licensed facility subject to this Order or who otherwise have direct contact with patients at such a facility.

## **DURATION OF ORDER**

This order is ongoing and applies to each influenza season unless the order is rescinded. The influenza season is defined as **November 1 to March 31** of the following year. In any given year, if influenza surveillance data demonstrate unusually early and/or late peaks, the Health Officer may extend the period during which the masking program shall apply for that year. In such case, the Health Officer shall communicate this change in writing to all affected facilities.

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HTISA) Public Health Services Division (local health department) shares with all healthcare professionals and facilities the goal of assuring that our local population receives safe and effective care. We trust that all settings subject to this Order will comply fully with it and will notify their HCP of its provisions. We hope that HCP in other facilities, such as private physicians' offices, will follow the strong recommendation that they voluntarily adopt the same protective procedures.

**VRC requires that all employees receive an annual Flu Vaccine. Employees that decline this vaccine are required to wear protective masks whenever they are in a patient care area.**