



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

**Elson S. Floyd
College of Medicine**

Policy Title: Communicable Disease Exposure

Policy Number: EC.12.07.170815

Applies to: All WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine Medical Students

Date: 03/03/2020

1.0 Policy Statement:

It is the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine policy that medical students with communicable diseases are not permitted to engage in patient contact until conditions have resolved or are no longer a threat to the health or safety of the community.

2.0 Definitions:

Communicable disease: An infectious disease transmissible (as from person to person) by direct contact with an affected individual or the individual's discharges or by indirect means (as by a vector).

Pathogens: Bacteria, viruses, or other microorganisms that can cause disease.

Airborne Pathogens: The relevant pathogens may be viruses, bacteria, or fungi, and they may be spread through coughing, sneezing, raising of dust, spraying of liquids, or similar activities likely to generate aerosol particles or droplets.

Bloodborne Pathogen: Infectious microorganisms in human blood that can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B (HBV), hepatitis C (HCV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

Infectious Disease: Disorders caused by organisms – such as bacteria, viruses, fungi or parasites.

CDC Partial List: Diseases that preclude students from being allowed to have patient contact without prior medical clearance include but are not limited to:

- Active chickenpox (varicella), measles (rubeola), German measles (rubella), herpes zoster shingles (herpes zoster), acute viral hepatitis, and tuberculosis (TB)
- Group A streptococcal disease (strep throat) until 24 hours after initiation of treatment
- Draining or infected skin lesions

3.0 Responsible Parties:

Assistant Dean for Student Affairs

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4.0 Procedures

If a student is unsure whether they should participate in patient care, the student should contact the Office of Student Affairs, their Associate Dean for Clinical Education, and/or their Coordinator.

Students who contract a serious or communicable disease or develop typical signs/symptoms of an infectious illness should consider themselves to be contagious and should remove themselves from their academic and clinical experiences. Students should follow communication procedures outlined in the Attendance Policy.

Students who know or who have reasonable basis for believing they are infected with airborne or bloodborne pathogens, are expected to seek medical care. Medical students will be excused from educational activities in order to seek medical care and should follow procedures outlined in the Post Exposure Care Policy.

Students who are at high risk of infection from patients or other personnel because of their immune status or any other reason are encouraged to discuss their clinical responsibilities and educational activities with their personal health care provider. If the health care provider believes that there are certain assignments the individual should not accept due to personal health reasons, it is the student's responsibility to discuss these concerns with the Office of Admissions, Student Affairs, and Inclusion for reasonable accommodation considerations.

In some cases, students may be unable to participate fully in medical school responsibilities or meet the technical standards of the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine because of their illness. In these cases, students may seek assistance from the Office of Admissions, Student Affairs, and Inclusion to request receiving reasonable accommodations, to take a leave of absence, or to withdraw from the College of Medicine. The student's specific medical circumstance will be evaluated confidentially on a case-by-case and recommendations regarding the student's progress through medical school will be presented to them. In the event of a required short-term accommodation adjustment, the student will speak with the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs who will then collaborate with the Associate Dean for Curriculum and the Associate Dean for Assessment, Accreditation, and Evaluation to create and implement a modified learning plan designed to preserve the student's standing until the student is able to fully participate in the regular medical school curricular requirements. The student's Associate Dean for Clinical Education and Course Director(s) will be consulted if the short-term accommodation involves a Year 3 or Year 4 student.

5.0 Related Policies:

Medical Student Attendance Policy CU.06.04.170815

Post Exposure Care Policy EC.12.04.170815

Immunizations and Tuberculosis Screening Policy EC.12.05.170516

Medical Student Leave, Withdrawal and Readmission Policy EC.10.01.170912

Washington State Policy [RCW 18.130.175](#)

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6.0 Key Search Words

Communicable disease, exposure, infectious, patient care
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7.0 Revision History

Original Approval	Policy Number	Review/Revision
5/12/2016	SA.12.08.160512	8/15/2017
	EC.12.07.170815	11/5/2019
		03/03/2020

Responsible Office: Office of Admissions, Student Affairs, and Inclusion

Policy Contact: Assistant Dean for Student Affairs

Supersedes: SA.12.08.160512 Approved on 11/5/2019