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| KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY College of Health and Human Sciences Physician Assistant Program POLICIES | Effective Date: January 1, 2020 |
| | ARC-PA Standards Addressed: A1.02g A3.08a-c |
| Responsible Party: Program Director | Revised: 11/22, 10/23 |
| Approved by: K-State PA Program Principal Faculty | |
| Subject: Infection Control, Safety and Personal Security | |
| PURPOSE: To keep students, faculty, staff, preceptors and SCPE-sponsoring institutions up-to-date on program and University policies and procedures for exposure to bodily fluids, provider safety, and personal security. | |
| ARC-PA Associated Standards: A1.02 - The sponsoring institution is responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> g) documenting appropriate security and personal safety measures for PA students and faculty in all locations where instruction occurs, A3.08 - The program <i>must</i> define, publish, make <i>readily available</i> and consistently apply policies addressing student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards before students undertake any educational activities which would place them at risk. Those policies <i>must</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) address methods of prevention, b) address procedures for care and treatment after exposure, and c) clearly define financial responsibility. | |
| POLICY STATEMENT: Exposure to infectious and environmental hazards (in partial compliance of Standard A3.08) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program has a commitment to protect the health and well-being of students, faculty, staff and patients. As part of their training, PA students may encounter exposure to infectious and/or environmental hazards. This may include being exposed to human donors, latex or other products such as gloves that may contain allergens, and exposure to communicable infectious disease which may be transferred via airborne, mucous membrane splashes or needle-stick exposures in the clinical setting. Examples of bloodborne pathogens and communicable disease may include tuberculosis, hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV. Women of child-bearing age may also have additional | |

considerations, such as minimizing exposure to infectious diseases, possible teratogens or chemical exposures or exposure to ionizing radiation.

- While the risk of transmission is small, the program has a number of processes in place to minimize risk.
- Prevention is the first step in student safety; therefore, students are required to show proof of appropriate immunity, or documented immunization, as part of their matriculation requirements and prior to the onset of actual patient contact.
- Instruction on procedures for care and treatment of exposures in the clinical setting will also be provided as part of orientation to the clinical education phase. Students should follow the process in place at their clinical training site and then notify the clinical director to complete an incident report form at the program.
- The student is financially responsible for any costs incurred secondary to infectious and/or environmental hazardous exposures.
- To request accommodation for latex allergy, the student must provide proof of allergy that must be submitted with the student's request to the [Student Access Center](#). For questions regarding documentation requirements, contact the Student Access Center at (785) 532-6441 or accesscenter@K-State.edu.
- Certain communicable diseases may also be reported to county or state health authorities, as required by law. A list of reportable diseases for Kansas may be found at [Reportable Diseases in Kansas \(PDF\)](#).
- The safety of all students, faculty, staff, patients and clinical personnel is of primary concern. PA students, staff and faculty must adhere to all established Kansas State University safety policies and all PA Program safety policies. Didactic students must notify their course director as soon as possible of any exposure to bodily fluids or potentially serious infectious diseases. Clinical students must notify their clinical preceptor and the PA Clinical Director as soon as possible of any exposure to bodily fluids or potentially serious infectious diseases. All faculty, staff and students will utilize **Standard Precautions** during all activities that present a risk of exposure to bodily fluids, potentially serious infectious diseases or chemical hazards. Failure to do so will be grounds for disciplinary action.
- During the didactic year of training, presentations are given on universal blood and body fluid precautions, infection control and prevention of the spread of communicable disease. These are included in orientation week activities. In addition to instruction on how to prevent exposures, students will receive instruction on what constitutes an exposure and the procedures for care and treatment after an exposure. In the event the exposure occurs on campus, students will be referred to the local emergency room or urgent care center for care. The academic director and student will complete an incident report, and notify the appropriate K-State official of the incident.
- In the event of respiratory or gastrointestinal illness, students are advised to follow

health provider recommendations to self-isolate at home until they are no longer potentially infectious to others.

Procedures

I. Standard Precautions

Definition: Standard precautions are the minimum safety and infection prevention practices that apply to **all** patient care, laboratory or technical skills training experiences in any setting where healthcare or healthcare training is delivered. These practices are designed to protect healthcare professionals (HCP) and prevent HCPs from spreading infections to others. Students will be instructed in Standard Precautions again in the Clinical Procedures course.

Standard Precautions include:

- **Hand hygiene.** Good hand hygiene is critical to reduce the risk of spreading infection. Current CDC guidelines recommend use of alcohol-based hand rub for hand hygiene except when hands are visibly soiled (e.g. dirt, blood, body fluids), or after caring for patients with known or suspected infectious diarrhea, in which cases soap and water should be used. Key situations where hand hygiene should be performed include:
 - Before touching a patient, even if gloves will be worn.
 - Before exiting the patient's care area after touching the patient or the patient's immediate environment.
 - After contact with blood, body fluids or excretions, or wound dressings.
 - Prior to performing an aseptic task (e.g. placing an IV, preparing an injection).
 - If hands will be moving from a contaminated-body site to a clean-body site during patient care.
 - After glove removal.
- **Use of personal protective equipment (PPE):**
 - *Exam gloves* will be worn when there is risk of contact with or when handling blood or body fluids or when there is a potential for contact with mucous membranes, non-intact skin or body orifice areas, or contaminated equipment.
 - *Facial masks, protective eyewear and/or gowns (as well as gloves)* will be worn when performing/assisting procedures with a risk of body fluid or other hazardous material splashes or sprays.
- **Safe injection practices:**
 - No recapping of needles unless required by the specific procedure being performed.
 - Use of self-sheathing needles and/or needleless systems when available.
 - All needles and other disposable sharps will be placed in designated puncture resistant containers as soon as possible after their use.
- **Safe handling of potentially contaminated surfaces or equipment:**
 - Environmental cleaning: Areas in which patient care activities are performed will be routinely cleaned and disinfected at the conclusion of the activity as outlined by the laboratory course director/instructor.

- Medical equipment safety. Reusable medical equipment must be cleaned and disinfected (or sterilized) according to the manufacturer's instructions. If the manufacturer does not provide guidelines for this process the device may not be suitable for multi-patient use.
- **Respiratory hygiene/Cough etiquette:**
 - Cover mouth/nose when coughing or sneezing.
 - Use and dispose of tissues.
 - Perform hand hygiene after hands have been in contact with respiratory secretions.
 - Consider using a mask to prevent aerosol spread. Consult with your clinical preceptor regarding specific clinical policy on when masks must be used.
 - Sit as far away from others as possible when ill with respiratory symptoms.
 - Compliance with all safety practices is a not just good procedure - it is a mark of your professionalism. **Persistent failure to observe and practice Standard Precautions may result in adverse/disciplinary action for unprofessional behavior and referral to the Progression, Promotion and Professionalism Committee.**

II. Safety Training

Students will be required to complete any clinical site-specific safety or security training requirements in preparation for supervised clinical practice rotations.

III. Post-exposure protocols

Should an exposure to blood and/or other body fluid or a needle stick injury occur, the procedure for obtaining appropriate medical care is as follows:

- 1) **When an exposure occurs:** Wounds and skin sites that have been in contact with blood or body fluids should be washed with soap and water; mucous membranes should be flushed with water. There is no evidence that the use of antiseptics for wound care or expressing fluid by squeezing the wound further reduces the risk for HIV transmission. However, the use of antiseptics is not contraindicated. Use of caustic agents, e.g., bleach, is not recommended.
- 2) The student should **notify his/her supervisor immediately**. The supervisor and student should fill out any "Incident Report" form in use by the clinical site as well as the form in use by the PA Program. This form should go with the student to his/her evaluation for treatment.
- 3) **Medical Evaluation:** It is very important that medical evaluation take place immediately because treatment decisions must be made within 2 hours of exposure. HIV prophylaxis for high-risk exposure appears most effective if started within 2–4 hours. It is also extremely important to evaluate the donor's risk status immediately.
- 4) **Medical Evaluation Facilities:** The student should report IMMEDIATELY to Lafene Health

Center if the exposure occurs on the Kansas State University Campus during regular working hours. If the exposure occurs at an off-campus clinical site, the student should follow the Infection Control policy of that facility. When Lafene Health Center is closed, the student should go IMMEDIATELY to the nearest emergency room associated with the clinic or office where the incident occurred for the initial evaluation. Follow-up protocol should also be completed with the facility initially providing care for the incident, Lafene Health Center, or with primary care physician.

- **Program Participation:** Continued participation in the activities of the PA program should not be affected by any injury or illness that occurs while enrolled *provided* the student continues to meet all Technical Standards and fulfill all defined requirements for program progression and is not directly infectious by way of routine contact. However, effects of infectious or environmental disease or disability may impact student learning activities and outcomes. Students must be able to meet published health requirements at all times in order to continue matriculation in the program, and to provide care at clinical sites. Based upon outcomes and degree of infectious or environmental hazard exposure, a student's continued participation in classroom and/or clinical activities as part of the PA program may be delayed or prevented. In the event that the student contracts a communicable disease which potentially poses a risk to patients or co-workers (e.g., tuberculosis), steps will be taken to prevent dissemination in accordance with public health and/or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention protocols.

- 5) **Insurance:** The student's insurance identification card should be shown when medical evaluation is needed. Students will be financially responsible for all costs incurred during compliance with this policy. See [Student Health Policy](#) for more information.

Universal Precautions

Students are responsible for complying with OSHA guidelines for universal precautions and the application of standard precautions at all times in the clinical setting. This includes the proper use of personal protective equipment (gloves, eyewear, etc.), following engineering and work practice controls (care of sharp objects and disposal of biohazard material), and other precautionary measures as suited to the environment.

Accident Reporting

For all incidents/injuries, students are required to complete the Incident/Injury Reporting Form (available on Canvas) and submit it to the Program Director or faculty advisor. This is secondary to following the incident reporting policy at the facility where the incident/injury occurred. This policy should include:

- Immediately report the incident to:
 - Your preceptor and the appropriate person identified in the employer's exposure control plan.

- Write down what happened, including:
 - The time, date and circumstances of the exposure.
 - Actions taken after the exposure.
 - Any other information required by the employer.
- Seek immediate follow-up care:
 - Clinician's Post Exposure Prophylaxis Hotline 1-888-448-4911 or <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emergency.html>

Campus Safety

Personal safety is of primary concern at Kansas State University, and security is enhanced by the Kansas State University Police Department, on a well-lit campus. Kansas State University students, faculty and staff share the responsibility of keeping our campus safe and together work hard to have resources in place. The university is guided by the [Principles of Community](#), which describes the type of safe, supportive and caring community K-State seeks to foster. In order to enhance your safety in the unlikely case of a campus emergency make sure that you know where and how to quickly exit your classroom and how to follow any emergency directives. The [Student Guide to Help and Resources: One Stop Shop](#) provides more information on personal safety on campus.

The institution addresses the safety of students on campus through the [Division of Public Safety](#) and [Office of Student Life](#).

- [Wildcat Walk](#): Escort services provided by the K-State Police Department 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- [Rave Guardian](#): An app is free to all K-Staters. It features one-click 911 calls, SafeWalk virtual safety escort, two-way text with campus police, campus alerts, and a call directory with additional resources.
- [K-State Alerts](#): KSU's emergency notification system to communicate quickly to students, staff, and faculty using text messaging, [alert beacons](#), public hallway monitors, social media, and automated phone calls regarding dangerous weather, suspicious persons, or campus lockdown.
- [SafeRide](#): Operated by Lyft, offers free or discounted late-night ride-sharing services for students.
- PA faculty & Staff, and PA students have 24-hour access to Ice Hall, where the PA program is housed. Doors will be locked after normal duty hours, at all times. **Doors are not to be propped open!**
- When leaving any area of program, ensure that the lights as well as appliances,

computers or other audiovisual equipment that have been used are turned off.

- Following use, restore areas to original order, ready for routine business the next day, including the proper disposal of trash.
- Failure to follow these rules may result in referral to the PPP Committee for disciplinary action and may also result in revocation of after-hours access privileges to the program.
- There are several safety phones beneath the blue light security poles located in the parking areas. Students should become familiar with their locations across campus.
- Safety and security for students on clinical rotations are addressed during the clinical year orientation. These rely on the personal safety and security measures in place for the staff at each clinical facility.
- Personal safety measures also include student instruction in the application of universal precautions and risks of bloodborne pathogens during the program's didactic phase prior to potential exposure.

The K-State PA program will ensure that appropriate OSHA training is provided to students prior to Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPE). The facility at which the SCPE takes place shall provide to K-State PA students access to the facility's rules, regulations, policies and procedures with which the K-State PA students are expected to comply, including the Facility's OSHA, personal and workplace security and personal safety policies and procedures, and shall address all appropriate safety measures for all K-State PA students and any K-State instructors on site. It will be the preceptor's responsibility to take reasonable steps to ensure personal safety and security of students during the SCPE. This is clearly communicated to preceptors and agreed upon in a signed Preceptor Commitment obtained prior to the SCPEs.