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## Master of Physician Assistant Studies

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### Infection Control and Personal Safety Policy

- **Origin Date:** 3/2/2017
- **Last Evaluated:** 6/2021
- **Responsible Party:** Program Director
- **Minimum Review Frequency:** Annually
- **Approving Body:** Principal Faculty

#### Background and Purpose

Keeping 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.

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#### Policy Statement

It is the policy of the FGCU MPAS program to follow the guidelines and recommendations established by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regarding infection control and the use of Standard Precautions.

Before any educational activities occur, students will receive training regarding the nature of potential risks and the appropriate Standard Precautions and safety measures needed to minimize risk of potential exposure to blood-borne pathogens and other communicable 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.

## Infection Control

### Methods of Prevention

1. When providing patient care, whether actual patients during a supervised clinical practice SCPE experience, or simulated on campus, regardless of the real or perceived communicable disease status of the patient, all students should follow Standard Precautions.
2. 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 and prevent spreading infections to others.
3. Students will be instructed in Standard Precautions in the Physical Diagnosis I course with material reinforced in the Clinical Skills I course. Standard Precautions are further discussed during Introduction to Clinical Education seminar prior to beginning SCPEs.
  - a. Students are required to complete all instructional components prior to beginning laboratory sessions.
  - b. Students are assessed in their understanding and application of Standard Precautions by the course instructors in Physical Diagnosis I and Clinical Skills I.
4. Students will be required to complete any clinical site-specific safety or security training requirements in preparation for supervised clinical practice rotations.

### Procedures for Care

Standard Precautions include:

1. Hand hygiene.
  - a. Good hand hygiene is critical to reduce the risk of spreading infection.
  - b. 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.
  - c. Key situations where hand hygiene should be performed include:
    - i. Before touching a patient, even if gloves will be worn.
    - ii. Before exiting the patient's care area after touching the patient or the patient's immediate environment.
    - iii. After contact with blood, body fluids or excretions, or wound dressings.
    - iv. Prior to performing an aseptic task (e.g. placing an IV, preparing an injection).
    - v. If hands will be moving from a contaminated-body site to a clean-body site during patient care.
    - vi. After glove removal.
2. Use of personal protective equipment (PPE):
  - a. 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.
  - b. 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.
3. Safe injection practices:
  - a. No recapping of needles unless required by the specific procedure being performed.
  - b. Use of self-sheathing needles and/or needleless systems when available.

- c. All needles and other disposable sharps will be placed in designated puncture resistant containers as soon as possible after their use.
- 4. Safe handling of potentially contaminated surfaces or equipment:
  - a. 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.
  - b. 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.
- 5. Respiratory hygiene/Cough etiquette:
  - a. Cover mouth/nose when coughing or sneezing.
  - b. Use and dispose of tissues.
  - c. Perform hand hygiene after hands have been in contact with respiratory secretions.
  - d. Consider using a mask to prevent aerosol spread. Consult with your clinical preceptor regarding specific clinical policy on when masks must be used.
  - e. Sit as far away from others as possible when ill with respiratory symptoms.

## Post-exposure protocols

1. 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:
  - a. Wounds and skin sites that have been in contact with blood or body fluids should be washed with soap and water
  - b. Mucous membranes should be flushed with water.
  - c. Use of caustic agents, e.g., bleach, is not recommended.
2. The student should notify his/her instructor or preceptor immediately.
  - a. The preceptor and student should fill out any "Incident" form in use by the clinical site. 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 are time sensitive of initial exposure.
4. Medical Evaluation Facilities:
  - a. **If the exposure occurs on FGCU Campus**
    - i. Notify the course instructor of a possible exposure.
    - ii. The student should report IMMEDIATELY to Student Health Services if the exposure occurs on the FGCU Campus during regular hours.
    - iii. When Student Health Service is closed, the student should go IMMEDIATELY to the nearest emergency room (Coconut Point ED or Gulf Coast ED).
    - iv. Follow-up can be done at Student Health Services.
  - b. **If the exposure occurs at an off-campus clinical site**
    - i. Student notifies their supervisor/preceptor and IMMEDIATELY should follow the Infection Control policy of that facility.
5. Insurance: The student must present their insurance identification card when medical evaluation is needed.
  - a. Students are financially responsible for all costs incurred during compliance with this policy. (See Student Health Policy)

## Treatment After Exposure

1. Student must notify the MPAS Program in the event of an exposure incident within 24 hours.
2. Clinical students must notify their clinical preceptor, the Clinical Director, and PA Program office as soon as possible of any exposure to bodily fluids or potentially serious infectious diseases.
3. Students are to contact Student Health Services next business day for follow up care and further directions.
4. Students are required to complete the Non-Employee Incident Report within 24 hours of the exposure.
  - a. [https://www.fgcu.edu/ehs/files/non\\_employee\\_report.pdf](https://www.fgcu.edu/ehs/files/non_employee_report.pdf)

## Financial Responsibility

1. Students are financially responsible for all costs incurred during compliance with this policy. (See Student Health Policy)

## Personal Safety and Security

1. **On campus security and student safety**
  - a. The Florida Gulf Coast University Police Department provides safety and security for the campus.
  - b. The UPD mission is to serve and safeguard all students, faculty, staff and visitors on the campus of Florida Gulf Coast University through the effective and efficient delivery of law enforcement services. Further information and services offered may be found at the website <http://www.fgcu.edu/UPD/> .
  - c. University Police Contact Number:
    - i. On-Campus Phone Ext. 1900
    - ii. Off-Campus Phone (239) 590-1900
  - d. EMERGENCY (On-Campus Phone) Dial 9-1-1
  - e. EMERGENCY (Off-Campus Phone) MEDICAL/FIRE Dial 9-1-1
  - f. Escort: An escort by UPD staff is available during the evening hours or night-time hours on campus. By calling 590-1900 an officer or Police Service Aide will be sent to your car, housing, or other academic building.
  - g. Code Blue Poles
    - i. These emergency telephones are mounted on 9-foot steel columns, are wheelchair accessible, include instructions in Braille and have a highly visible push button on an illuminated telephone faceplate. A single touch on the push button summons campus officers, allows dispatchers to hear what is going on, pinpoints the exact location of the trouble, and triggers the bright blue police-type strobe light on top of the phone.
    - ii. Code Blue Poles are located in all parking lots, Student Housing, and in the Academic Core areas. If you experience an emergency, this is a way to call for assistance. When activated, you are immediately connected with the FGCU Police Department dispatcher.

## 2. Off-campus security and student safety

- a. The Clinical Director, or designated faculty, will assess and complete a Clinical Rotation Site Visit Report evaluating the safety and security procedures for each SCPE and clinical affiliate location. The safety and security of the off-campus facility will be examined for the overall safe environment and atmosphere for students.
- b. Students will be required to complete any clinical site-specific safety or security training requirements in preparation for supervised clinical practice rotations.
  - i. Appropriate OSHA and site training is provided to students prior to SCPEs.
  - ii. The facility at which the SCPE takes place shall provide MPAS students access to the facility's rules, regulations, policies and procedures.
  - iii. MPAS students are expected to comply with the facility's workplace security and personal safety policies and procedures.
  - iv. MPAS students shall address all appropriate safety measures with preceptors/instructors on site.
  - v. It is the preceptor's responsibility to take reasonable steps to ensure personal safety and security of students during the SCPE.
- c. The preceptor, or other designed official, will orient all MPAS students and faculty to the safety and security procedures of the instructional facility.
  - i. Students and faculty at off-campus sites will follow standard security procedures of their respective clinical rotation site.
- d. Students and faculty must be aware of their surroundings at all times. It is important to familiarize yourself with the safety procedures at the clinical site.
  - i. Contacting (i.e. phone numbers) security departments at each off-campus facility.
  - ii. Security departments may offer services such as escorting to vehicles, assistance with vehicle breakdown, etc.
- e. In the event of an emergency, the student or faculty must contact site security officers and/or call 9-1-1 immediately for further assistance.

## Associated ARC-PA Standards

1. **A1.02g** "The sponsoring institution is responsible for addressing appropriate security and personal safety measures for PA students and faculty in all locations where instruction occurs."
2. **A3.07** The program must define, publish, make readily available and consistently apply:

- a. A policy on immunization and health screening of students. Such policy must be based on then current Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations for health professionals and state specific mandates.
  - b. Written travel health policies based on current CDC recommendations for international travel for programs offering elective international curricular components
3. A3.08 The program must define, publish, and make readily available and consistently apply policies addressing student exposures to infectious and environmental hazards before students undertake any educational activities which would place them at risk. Those policies must:
  - a. Address methods of prevention
  - b. address procedures for care and treatment after exposure, and
  - c. clearly define financial responsibility

**Next Scheduled Review Date:** 6/2022

**Last Modified:** 6/2021

Results of modification:

- 6/2019 – Off-campus security descriptions to be consistent with clinical affiliates.
- 6/2021 – Updated ARC-PA 5<sup>th</sup> Standards