

Lancaster County Career and Technology Center-Dental Hygiene Program

Bloodborne Pathogen Policy

The Lancaster County Career and Technology Center (LCCTC) Dental Hygiene Program is committed to addressing issues related to bloodborne pathogens, such as Human Immunodeficiency (HIV), Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), and Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) in order to protect patients, students, faculty and staff, as well as protect the rights of individuals who may have a bloodborne infectious disease.

The LCCTC Dental Hygiene Clinic is a safe place to provide and receive dental care. Current and generally accepted epidemiological information supports the conclusion that there is no significant risk of contracting bloodborne diseases through the provision of dental treatment when appropriate infection control procedures are followed. A key element of infection control is the concept of standard precautions, introduced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as a means to reduce the risk of bloodborne pathogen transmission in healthcare settings. The primary principle behind standard precautions centers on the premise that medical history and examination cannot reliably identify all patients infected with bloodborne pathogens. All patients, therefore, must be regarded as potentially infectious. As such, applying standard precautions requires that infection control procedures are used for every patient.

The Dental Hygiene Program will not discriminate against faculty, staff, students, applicants, or patients based solely on health status. Concerned should be directed to the individual's medical provider.

Immunizations

The risk for exposure to HBV is higher for Dental Health Care Providers (DHCP) than the general population. A comprehensive medical history, physical examination, PPD test, and additional immunizations must also be completed as per institution's policies.

HIV Testing

Testing of DHCP and students for HIV is not required by the Dental Hygiene Program. However, health care workers and students who perform exposure-prone procedures on patients are encouraged to be tested voluntarily in order to know their HIV status.

Confidentiality

All information regarding the health status of an individual is confidential and protected by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1994 and the 1996 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

Bloodborne Pathogen and Infection Control Training

The Program complies with all local, state and federal infection control policies, as stipulated by current CDC Guidelines. Written policies and instruction on infection control protocol that minimize the risk of disease transmission are provided throughout the curriculum. Compliance of safety practices is evaluated throughout each student's clinical experience to ensure safe educational and work environment.

Enforcement of Practice Limitations or Modifications

Any student or DHCP who engages in unsafe and/or careless clinical practices which create risks to the health of patients, employees, or students shall be subject to disciplinary action. When such actions are brought to the attention of the Program Director, the students or DHCP may be suspended immediately from all patient care activities pending a full investigation of the matter.

Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens

Faculty, staff, students, and patients who are exposed to a bloodborne pathogen in the course of their clinical care are directed to follow the Program's Exposure Incident Policy.

Dental Hygiene Services

Current epidemiological evidence indicates that there is no significant risk of contracting bloodborne diseases through the provision of dental treatment when standard precautions are routinely followed. Therefore, all patients, regardless of health status will be provided dental hygiene services in the LCCTC Dental Hygiene Clinic. Standard precautions for all patients will be followed.