

OP 4	Occupational Exposure to Blood / Body Fluids Policy
Operational as of November 1st 2008	For review: October 31st 2009

1 Policy Statement

Ana Liffey Drug Project is committed to managing risks to its staff, locum workers and volunteers at work

2 Purpose

Ana Liffey Drug Project recognises its obligation and strives to ensure that there are proper working practices for staff, locum workers and volunteers in all aspects of their work. This policy defines those practices in the case of *occupational exposure to blood / body fluids*.

3 Scope

The definitions of 'body fluids' and 'exposure' are as follows.

BODY FLUIDS:

- Any blood or bloody body fluid/tissue, vaginal secretions, seminal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluids, peritoneal fluid, pericardial fluid, amniotic fluid, non-bloody saliva, tears, nasal secretions, sputum, sweat, vomitus, urine and feces

EXPOSURE means contact with mucosal membrane (eye, mouth or lining of nose) **or** contact with non-intact skin (chapped or abraded skin, skin with dermatitis or eczema) **or** contact arising from a biting incident. In the event of contact occurring as a result of a needle stick injury, refer to the organizational policy on occupational needle stick injury (OP 3).

4 Procedure

In the event of anyone being exposed to blood or body fluids *as per this policy*, the following procedure must be followed IMMEDIATELY.

4.1 Person exposed to blood / bodily fluids:

1. Don't panic. Seek assistance.
2. Treat the exposure appropriately:
 - a. If you are splashed on the skin wash the area well with soap and water.
 - b. If you have been bitten wash the area well with soap and water
 - c. If you are splashed in the eyes, mouth or nose rinse well with water
3. Ensure a manager is informed
4. A manager will accompany the person exposed to St. James' Hospital.

4.2 Remaining Staff:

1. Clean any spillage of bodily fluid using the Biohazard Kit. The process for this is:
 - a. Protect yourself by wearing appropriate gloves. Generally, this will be disposable gloves. If there is broken glass / other sharp material, treat

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- this as hazardous and wear needlestick gloves. If there is a risk of splashing, use the protective eye wear.
- b. Use the powder in the biohazard kit to treat the spill.
 - c. Clean up the spill using the scoop in the Biohazard Kit and absorbent kitchen towel.
 - d. Clean the surface using soap and water to remove any remaining blood or body fluids. Wipe up with absorbent kitchen towel.
 - e. Wipe contaminated surfaces with a disinfectant solution. Mixing 1 part of household bleach to 50 parts of water makes a good solution. Wipe up with absorbent kitchen towel.
 - f. Place the gloves, glasses (if used), broken glass / other sharp material (if present), kitchen paper and scoop in a biohazard bag and put in a sharps disposal unit.
 - g. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water
2. If possible, identify the donor (the individual whose blood / body fluids it was), meet with them and:
 - a. Inform them that there has been an incident involving blood / body fluids that may belong to them
 - b. Ask them if they will consent to share the following information:
 - i. HIV and HEP.C status (if known)
 - ii. Name
 - iii. Date of Birth
 - c. If the donor does not consent to sharing information on their HIV and HEP.C status such information **MUST NOT** be shared outside the organisation. This applies even where we have such information on file.
 3. Ask the donor if they are willing to give a blood sample at the hospital for the purposes of testing for Blood Borne Viruses (BBVs). Make it clear to them that they are in no way obliged to do this – it is their choice.
 4. If the donor is willing to be tested for BBVs, liaise with the manager at the hospital and see if it is feasible to bring them to A & E in James' St. Hospital immediately.
 5. Record the event in writing and pass this record on to a manager

4.3 At the hospital

The following procedure is likely:

- You may have to wait in A&E
- Hospital staff will explain the procedure to you
- Blood samples may be taken
- You may get a tetanus shot
- You may get other shots

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- You may be given an appointment for the GUIDE¹ clinic
- You may be given meds to take according to the hospital's protocol. These will probably be a short course of meds to cover you until you attend the GUIDE clinic.

4.4 Recording (for the person exposed)

If possible, the exposed individual should provide a written report of the incident to a manager within 24 hours. Alternatively, the person exposed may dictate a report of the incident to a manager. In either case, this incident statement should be signed and dated.

4.5 Support

The exposed individual's supervisor (if applicable) should offer regular and sustained support to the exposed individual following the incident. If the individual has no supervisor, this role will be carried out as directed by the Director. ALDP will ensure that any person who is exposed to blood / bodily fluids at work has access to external debriefing sessions, if required.

4.6 Management Issues

4.6.1 Process

Management should ensure the follow process is followed:

- ESCORT the exposed individual to the hospital
- SUPPORT the exposed individual as per this policy statement
- REPORT the incident appropriately and ensure that witnesses do likewise. This includes informing the hospital staff of the type of body fluid to which the individual was exposed. In the event that the exposed individual refuses assistance or medical attention, ensure that they sign a statement saying support was offered but refused.

4.6.2 Incident reporting

Management are obliged to report the incident to:

- ALDP's insurers
- The Health and Safety Authority, using Form IR 1.

¹Based in Hospital 5, St James Hospital, the GUIDE clinic (Department of Genito-Urinary Medicine and Infectious Disease) specialises in the care of people with sexually transmitted Infections (also called STI, or STDs), HIV and general infectious diseases (ID). GUIDE can be contacted on 01-4162315/6.