

Health and Safety Information for Students

The Health & Safety risks around student/patient interaction can be separated into 2 aspects:

1. Risk to patient: e.g. workers transferring infection
2. Risk to student from the patient or environment: e.g. contracting infection, injury from handling, abuse, environmental hazard

General Health & Safety

You may also be exposed to a range of other risks while working in the hospital. You will be given a brief orientation to the area that you will be working in to advise of any particular hazards and associated safety procedures. Some of the most common risks include:

Slip/trip/fall - Floors can often get wet or slippery. Wear sensible shoes with good grip on the sole and closed toes. If you notice any fluid on the floor take care and notify a hospital worker.

Moving & Handling - Moving patients or equipment can potentially cause injury. Only move or handle loads that you are confident that you can manage and follow any procedures in relation to moving and handling. You should never attempt to move patients or equipment if you are not skilled to do so; you should ask your clinical supervisor for advice, support or instruction.

Let your clinical supervisor know if you have a current physical problem that means you should be limited from moving & handling.

Infectious Disease - Infections are common in hospital and spread occurs via airborne (e.g. coughing/sneezing), direct contact (touch) or ingestion (eating). Wearing personal protective equipment can reduce the risk substantially and so please wear masks, gloves, gown/apron etc... if advised to by hospital employees. Also handwashing is the most important way of reducing the risk of contracting or spreading infection. Please wash your hands and/or use alcohol hand gel regularly.

Hospital employees are immunised against a range of diseases (including the following) to reduce risk to themselves and patients:

- Measles (MMR)
- Chicken Pox
- Hepatitis B
- Influenza
- Pertussis (whooping cough)

Aggression/Abuse - While this is not common it does occur in the health care field due to the emotionally tense nature of the work that is done and sometimes due to patients who are not in full control of their decision making and actions. As a student, your clinical supervisor will be directing and delegating your clinical load, and will be screening for risk of aggression. If you feel threatened/unsafe or are abused please keep calm and avoid responding to the perpetrator and seek help from hospital staff or sound an alarm if urgent assistance is required. Your supervisor will orientate you in relation to this.

Mental health and wellbeing – working in the health setting can have an impact on mental health and wellbeing. This may be due to exposure to potentially emotionally charged or challenging incidents while on placement. If you are having any concerns in relation to your mental health or wellbeing while on placement, please ensure you speak with your clinical supervisor and your Tertiary Education Provider (TEP) placement coordinator, and consider making use of the counselling services available via your TEP health service.

To manage occupational health risk it is important that you are not currently a carrier of any infectious disease or have a health condition that is likely to be a risk to patients. Therefore if you have a high temperature, cough, diarrhoea, vomiting, unexplained weight loss or other symptoms that may indicate you have a current infection, it is important that you do not come attend your placement workplace. Please contact your clinical supervisor and TEP placement coordinator as soon as possible if you are unwell.

Declaration

I confirm that I have read this document and that I understand that the hospital environment has hazards as outlined in this document.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Student contact details in case of emergency (e.g. Earthquake, Fire, Flood)

Emergency contact Name: Relationship:.....

Emergency contact Phone:

Alternative contact Name: Relationship:

Alternative contact Phone: