

## INFORMATION SHEET 1. – Risk categorisation guidelines

### Category A

#### Protection against the specified infectious diseases is required

##### Direct physical contact with:

- patients/clients
- deceased persons, body parts
- blood, body substances, infectious material or surfaces or equipment that might contain these (eg soiled linen, surgical equipment, syringes)

##### Contact that would allow the acquisition or transmission of diseases that are spread by **respiratory means**.

##### Includes persons:

- whose work requires frequent/prolonged face-to-face contact with patients or clients eg interviewing or counselling individual clients or small groups; performing reception duties in an emergency/outpatients department;
- whose normal work location is in a clinical area such as a ward, emergency department, outpatient clinic (including, for example, ward clerks and patient transport officers); or
- who frequently throughout their working week are required to attend clinical areas, eg food services staff who deliver meals.

All persons working with the following high risk client groups or in the following high risk clinical areas are automatically considered to be **Category A**, regardless of duties.

##### High risk client groups

- Children less than 2 years of age including neonates and premature infants
- Pregnant women
- Immunocompromised clients

##### High risk clinical areas

- Ante-natal, peri-natal and post-natal areas including labour wards and recovery rooms
- Neonatal Intensive Care Units and Special Care Units
- Paediatric wards
- Transplant and oncology wards
- Intensive Care Units
- Emergency Departments
- Operating theatres, and recovery rooms treating restricted client groups
- Ambulance and paramedic care services
- Laboratories

All health care students are **Category A**.

### Category B

#### Does not require protection against the specified infectious diseases as level of risk is no greater than that of the general community

- Does not work with the high risk client groups or in the high risk clinical areas listed above.
- No direct physical contact with patients/clients, deceased persons, blood, body substances or infectious material or surfaces/equipment that might contain these.
- Normal work location is not in a clinical area, eg administrative staff not working in a ward environment, food services staff in kitchens.
- Only attends clinical areas infrequently and for short periods of time eg visits a ward occasionally on administrative duties; is a maintenance contractor undertaking work in a clinical area.
- Although such persons may come into incidental contact with patients (eg in elevators, cafeteria, etc) this would not normally constitute a greater level of risk than for the general community.

## INFORMATION SHEET 2. – Checklist: Evidence required from Category A applicants

### Evidence required to demonstrate protection against the specified infectious diseases

- Acceptable evidence of protection against specified infectious diseases includes:
  - a written record of vaccination signed by the medical practitioner, and/or
  - serological confirmation of protection, and/or
  - other evidence, as specified in the table below.
  - NB:** the health facility may require further evidence of protection, eg serology, if the vaccination record does not contain vaccine brand and batch or official certification from vaccination provider (eg clinic/practice stamp)
- TST screening is required if the person was born in a country with a high incidence of TB, or has resided for a cumulative time of 3 months or longer in a country with a high incidence of TB, as listed at:**  
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth/Infectious/a-z.asp#T>.
- In certain specialised clinical settings, for example, in transplant, oncology or neonatal wards, the health facility may require serological evidence of protection (in addition to evidence of vaccination or other evidence) to ensure that the risk to vulnerable patients is minimised.

Disease	Evidence of vaccination	Documented serology results	Other acceptable evidence
<b>Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> One <u>adult</u> dose of diphtheria/ tetanus/ pertussis vaccine (dTpa). <b>Not ADT.</b>	<b>Serology will not be accepted</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>
<b>Hepatitis B</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> History of completed age-appropriate course of hepatitis B vaccine. <b>Not “accelerated” course.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Anti-HBs greater than or equal to 10mIU/mL	<input type="checkbox"/> Documented evidence of anti-HBc, indicating past hepatitis B infection
<b>Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 doses of MMR vaccine at least one month apart	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive IgG for measles, mumps and rubella	<input type="checkbox"/> Birth date before 1966
<b>Varicella (chickenpox)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 doses of varicella vaccine at least one month apart (evidence of one dose is sufficient if the person was vaccinated before 14 years of age)	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive IgG for varicella	<input type="checkbox"/> History of chickenpox or physician-diagnosed shingles (serotest if uncertain)
<b>Tuberculosis (TB)</b>		<b>Not applicable</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tuberculin skin test (TST)
<b>See note 2 above for list of persons requiring TST screening</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>	Note: interferon-gamma release immunoassay (IGRA) is not generally accepted. In the event that an IGRA has been performed, screening by TST will be required if the IGRA result is negative or equivocal. Persons with positive TST/IGRA must be fully assessed by a TB service within 3 months of commencement of clinical duties or clinical placement and must be asymptomatic when commencing clinical duties or clinical placement.	
<b>Influenza</b>	<b>Annual influenza vaccination is not a requirement, but is strongly recommended</b>		

### INFORMATION SHEET 3. – Specified infectious diseases: risks, consequences of exposure and protective measures

The following table provides a brief description of the infectious diseases specified in this policy directive and links to further information, including risks of infection, consequences of infection and, where relevant, management in the event of exposure.

Fact sheets on each of the listed diseases are available in an A-Z list on the NSW Health website at: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/infectious/index.asp>

The *Australian Immunisation Handbook (current edition)* is available online at: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/Handbook-home>

<b>Hepatitis B (HBV)</b>	Blood-borne viral disease. Can lead to a range of diseases including chronic hepatitis B infection, cirrhosis and liver cancer. Anyone not immune through vaccination or previous infection is at risk of infection via blood or other body fluids entering through broken skin, mucous membrane, injection/needlestick, unprotected sex or from HBV positive mother to child during birth. Specific at risk groups include: health care workers, sex partners of infected people, injecting drug users, haemodialysis patients. Management in the event of exposure: see <a href="http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/hepb.html">http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/hepb.html</a> .
<b>Diphtheria</b>	Contagious, potentially life-threatening bacterial infection, now rare in Australia because of immunisation. Spread via respiratory droplets and discharges from the nose, mouth or skin. Infectious for up to 4 weeks from onset of symptoms. Anyone not immune through vaccination or previous infection is at risk. Diphtheria toxin (produced by the bacteria) can cause inflammation of the heart muscle, leading to death. Management in the event of exposure: see <a href="http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/diphtheria.html">http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/diphtheria.html</a> .
<b>Tetanus</b>	Infection from a bacterium usually found in soil, dust and animal faeces. Toxin from the bacterium can attack the nervous system. Although the disease is now fairly uncommon, it can be fatal. Not spread from person to person. Generally occurs through injury. Neonatal tetanus can occur in babies of inadequately immunised mothers. Mostly older adults who were never adequately immunised. Management in the event of exposure: see <a href="http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/tetanus.html">http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/tetanus.html</a> .
<b>Pertussis (Whooping cough)</b>	Highly infectious bacterial infection, spread by respiratory droplets through coughing or sneezing. Cough that persists for more than 3 weeks and, in children, may be accompanied by paroxysms, resulting in a “whoop” sound or vomiting. Anyone not immune through vaccination is at risk of infection and/or transmission. Can be fatal, especially in babies under 12 months of age. Management in the event of exposure: see <a href="http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/pertusis.html">http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/pertusis.html</a> .

<p><b>Measles</b></p>	<p>Highly infectious viral disease, spread by respiratory droplets - infectious before symptoms appear and for several days afterwards. Serious complications such as ear infection, pneumonia, or encephalitis can occur in up to 1/3 of cases. At risk are persons born during or after 1966 who haven't had 2 doses of MMR vaccine, babies under 12 months of age, before they have had a 1<sup>st</sup> dose and children over 4 years of age who have not had a 2<sup>nd</sup> dose. Management in the event of exposure: see <a href="http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/measles.html">http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/measles.html</a>.</p>
<p><b>Mumps</b></p>	<p>Viral disease, spread by respiratory droplets. Now relatively uncommon in Australia because of immunisation. Anyone not immune through vaccination or previous infection is at risk. Persons who have the infection after puberty can have serious complications, eg swelling of testes or ovaries; encephalitis or meningitis may occur rarely. Management in the event of exposure: see <a href="http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/mumps.html">http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/mumps.html</a>.</p>
<p><b>Rubella (German Measles)</b></p>	<p>Viral disease, spread by respiratory droplets and direct contact. Infectious before symptoms appear and for several days afterwards. Anyone not immune through vaccination or previous infection is at risk. In early pregnancy, can cause birth defects or miscarriage. Management in the event of exposure: see <a href="http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/rubella.html">http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/rubella.html</a>.</p>
<p><b>Varicella (Chicken pox)</b></p>	<p>Viral disease, relatively minor in children, but can be severe in adults and immunosuppressed persons, leading to pneumonia or inflammation of the brain. In pregnancy, can cause foetal malformations. Early in the infection, varicella can be spread through coughing and respiratory droplets; later in the infection, it is spread through contact with fluid in the blisters. Anyone not immune through vaccination or previous infection is at risk. Management in the event of exposure: see <a href="http://www.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/Handbook-varicella">http://www.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/Handbook-varicella</a>.</p>
<p><b>Tuberculosis (TB)</b></p>	<p>A bacterial infection that can attack any part of the body, but the lungs are the most common site. Spread via respiratory droplets when an infected person sneezes, coughs or speaks. At risk are those who spend time with a person with TB infection of the lung or respiratory tract or anyone who was born in, or has lived or travelled for more than 3 months in, a high TB incidence country. Management in the event of exposure: see <a href="http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/tuberculosis.html">http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/tuberculosis.html</a>.</p>
<p><b>Seasonal influenza (Flu)</b></p>	<p>Viral infection, with the virus regularly changing. Mainly affects the lungs, but can affect the heart or other body systems, particularly in people with other health problems, leading to pneumonia and/or heart failure. Spread via respiratory droplets when an infected person sneezes or coughs, or through touch, eg handshake. Spreads most easily in confined and crowded spaces. Anyone not immune through annual vaccination is at risk, but the elderly and small children are at most risk of infection. Management in the event of exposure: see <a href="http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/influenza.html">http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/guideline/influenza.html</a>.</p>