TITLE OF POLICY
Student Exposure Policy

PURPOSE AND SCOPE
The purpose of this policy is to outline the policy and procedures to address PA student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards and to describe the mechanisms and resources for determining the effects of infectious and environmental disease or disability on medical student learning activities.

RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND REVIEW CYCLE
The Office of Student Affairs and Campus Health will review the policy on an as-needed basis and the UNC PAP Faculty Committee will approve it.

HISTORY OF APPROVAL AND UPDATES
Approved by the UNC PAP Faculty Committee on April 3, 2020.

DEFINITIONS
For the purpose of this policy, environmental diseases refer to noninfectious acute disorders associated with environmental exposures such as chemical or thermal burns or physical injuries such as falls.

POLICY
Methods of Prevention
The UNC PAP carries out the following measures of prevention:

• **Immunizations:** In order to reduce the risk of PA students of being exposed to infectious diseases, PA students are required to have immunizations as required by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, North Carolina law, and UNC Health.

• **Training:** The UNC CH Office of Environment, Health and Safety, and the UNC PAP require PA students, to complete training in infection prevention, bloodborne pathogens, tuberculosis awareness, emergency preparedness, hazard communication and safety, and fire safety prior to matriculation and the start of clinical rotations.

• **Annual Reminders and Publication of Procedures:** PA students receive annual orientation modules on needle stick procedures and blood borne pathogen exposure procedures. Additionally, policies and procedures are posted on the programs website, in the eMedley management system site and Student Handbook/SCPE Handbook.

Procedures for Care and Treatment after Exposure
Campus Health (CH) functions as the occupational health care provider for medical students at UNC Medical Center in Chapel Hill.

The components of care and treatment after exposure can be subdivided into three major areas:

• Blood borne pathogen exposures,
• Other communicable disease exposures, and
• Conditions requiring special consideration like pregnancy or immunosuppressive conditions.
• **Blood borne pathogen exposures**: Students who have tested positive for a bloodborne pathogen, such as HIV, HBV, or HCV, follow the policy outlined in “Environment, Health and Safety Manual – Chapter 06.07: Clinical Safety - Healthcare Personnel Who Are Infected With Hepatitis B Virus, Hepatitis C Virus, and/or Human Immunodeficiency Virus. This policy describes the effect on the student’s learning activities of testing positive for HBV, HCV, or HIV ([https://unc.policystat.com/policy/5928484/latest/](https://unc.policystat.com/policy/5928484/latest/))

• **TB exposure**: All UNC SOM students are required upon matriculation to have either a 2-step tuberculin skin test (TST) or an interferon-gamma release assay (IGRA) blood test prior to matriculation. In addition, students are required to have a either a TST or IGRA on an annual basis. Students who have tested positive for TB are evaluated at Campus Health, to determine whether the student has latent TB or active TB.

**Financial Responsibility for Care and Treatment**

• **UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill**: The costs of the initial evaluation and management of a blood borne pathogen exposure at UNCH is covered by UNCH for the source patient and the SOM for the PA student. A visiting student’s private insurance will be filed for labs drawn on the visiting student. UNC PA students should use the pharmacy benefit of their health insurance plan to pay for medications but may be reimbursed for the cost of the medication with documentation.

• **Outside Campuses/Sites**: PA students who are on rotation at a site greater than one hour away from the Chapel Hill campus will be managed per the occupational health system in place at that institution. Students are given information regarding the management of blood borne pathogen exposure during their orientation to the site. The costs of the initial evaluation and management of a blood borne pathogen exposure is typically covered by their respective occupational health offices for the source patient, and for the student. In some circumstances, the source patient’s insurance may pay for source patient testing. All costs associated with medications used for post exposure prophylaxis are typically filed using the pharmacy benefit of the student’s health insurance plan, but UNC PA students may be reimbursed for the cost of medications with documentation. In all cases, the exposure should be reported to the UNC Chapel Hill CHS for tracking purposes and when needed, to assist in the case.

**Effects of Infectious and/or Environmental Disease or Disability on Educational Activities**

• **Infectious Diseases**:
  - **Blood borne pathogens**: Students with HIV, hepatitis B, or other blood borne infections will be evaluated according to the University of North Carolina Policy on HIV-Infected and HBV-Infected Employees and Students Who Are Engaged in University Patient-Care Activities policy which can be found at [http://www.unc.edu/campus/policies/hiv_hbv.html](http://www.unc.edu/campus/policies/hiv_hbv.html)
  - **TB**: Students with latent TB may participate in patient care activities without restriction but may wish to consult with a health care professional regarding treatment as studies have shown that treatment can reduce the incidence of disease progression. Students with active TB should be treated and placed in isolation and will not be allowed to participate in clinical activities until they are determined to no longer be infectious. The
• Student may be referred to an infectious disease specialist, and if so, the physician will be required to comply with *Non-Involvement of Providers of Student Health Services in Student Assessment* if they are involved in medical student teaching and/or evaluation.

• **Environmental Disease:** Students with environmental diseases are evaluated at Campus Health (CH) to determine the impact, if any, on their learning activities. Depending on the nature of the student’s environmental disease, they may wish to consult with a specialist, and if so, the physician will be required to comply with *Non-Involvement of Providers of Student Health Services in Student Assessment*, if the health care provider is involved in PA student teaching and/or evaluation. Required limitations in learning activities will be communicated to the Director of Clinical Education and every effort will be made to minimize disruption of the student’s progress through the curriculum.

• **Disabilities:** Students with disabilities should contact the UNC CH Accessibility Resources & Services (ARS) Office regarding accommodations, if applicable. The Office of Student Affairs will work with the student and the ARS to determine, the impact, if any, on the student’s learning activities.

• **Phase Specific Information:**
  - **Pre-clinical Phase:**
    - Preclinical students with infectious and/or environmental diseases may request an administrative excuse for any required activity from the UNC PAP. The administrative excuse allows the students to make up missed work without penalty.
    - If the student needs to miss a significant amount of time, the student may receive a temporary grade of Incomplete for the course and a plan is worked out with the course director, the student’s advisor, or the Director of Pre-Clinical Education.

  - **Clinical Phase:**
    - Clinical students with infectious and/or environmental diseases may also request administrative excuses from the Office of Student Affairs.
    - In addition, clinical students who are unsure as to whether or not their condition should excuse them from a clinical setting for patient safety reasons may be screened by CHS according to the UNCH Infection Control Manual and they may be charged for this screening.
    - In general, students who are afebrile may continue to work in clinical settings, but students who are febrile will be given an administrative excuse and be allowed to make up missed work when they are well.