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Owner: *Sherie Goldbach: Infection Prevention Registrar*
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Reporting of Communicable Diseases

I. Description

Requirements for reporting communicable diseases

II. Rationale

In accordance with NC Public Health law [N.C.G.S. section 130A-135; 10A NCAC 41A.0101] certain suspected or confirmed communicable diseases are to be reported to the local health department by the patient's physician-of-record. This includes inpatients and outpatients.

III. Policy

A. Communicable Disease Reporting

1. By law it is the treating physician's responsibility to complete the Communicable Disease (CD) Report Form and any additional surveillance forms in an accurate and timely manner.
2. The CD Report Form indicates which diseases must be reported immediately by telephone, within 24 hours by telephone, or within 7 days by mailing the Form. The CD Report Form can be found online at http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/docs/dhhs_2124.pdf , or on the UNC HCS Intranet (see also Attachment 1 to this Policy). A chart identifying the diseases and the required reporting time also is attached to this Policy as Attachment 2.

NOTE: Case definitions and surveillance forms can be found in the Communicable Disease Manual, which is available online at the NC Public Health, Communicable Disease Control website:

<http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/lhds/manuals/cd/toc.html>

3. In addition to the required reporting by the physician, Laboratories are also required to report:
 - a. Infection with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV-1).
 - b. All positive smear and culture results for M. tuberculosis. Specimens that are smear positive for acid-fast bacilli (AFB) but are subsequently found to contain mycobacteria other than tuberculosis should also be reported.
 - c. Isolation or other specific identification of certain additional agents of communicable diseases specified at 10A NCAC 41A.0101(c), or their products.
4. Reporting of communicable diseases to the health department does not constitute a breach of

patient confidentiality. It is specifically allowed pursuant to The Privacy Rule (HIPAA) and North Carolina law.

B. Telephone Reporting

1. Certain communicable diseases require a phone call to the local health department in order to meet the immediate (e.g., anthrax, smallpox) or 24 hour (e.g., tuberculosis, meningococcal disease, whooping cough) notification requirements.
2. For local health department phone numbers, go to the NC Association of Local Health Director's website: <http://www.ncalhd.org/directors/>. Additionally, the State Health Department can be reached anytime at (919) 733-3419.
3. Diseases requiring a phone call to the local health department also require a completed CD Report Form.

C. Communicable Disease (CD) Report Forms

1. CD Report Forms may be obtained online at http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/docs/dhhs_2124.pdf or on the UNC Health Care Intranet website →Hospital Departments→Infection Control→Communicable Disease Report Card (attached hereto as Attachment 1). The form located on the UNC HCS Intranet website includes instructions on how to return the Form (see the upper right-hand corner of the Form).
2. Upon making or suspecting any of the diagnoses listed on the CD Report Form, the patient's physician will obtain and complete the form.
3. The completed CD Report Form should be returned to Hospital Epidemiology via fax (984-974-7719) or tube station (#704). To return via tube station, place the form in an envelope and address it to Hospital Epidemiology, Tube Station #704. If neither is feasible, the Form may be returned to Hospital Epidemiology via campus mail (CB#7600, 1001 West Wing).
4. Hospital Epidemiology will mail or fax all form(s) received to the Orange County Health Department.
5. Hospital Epidemiology will complete disclosure tracking on all CD Report Forms received.
6. Community-based practices may obtain CD forms from the health department website listed above and should return the completed forms directly to their local health department.

D. Implementation

1. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all medical staff, Hospital Epidemiology, Microbiology Laboratory, Mycobacteriology Laboratory, and Immunology Laboratory.

IV. References

North Carolina General Statutes, sections 130A-133 through 148

North Carolina Administrative Code, Title 10A, Chapter 41, Subchapter A (Communicable Disease Control)

Attachments:

- 1: Reportable Disease Form (from 1/16 Revision of the NC Communicable Disease Report Form)
- 2: 10A NCAC 14A.0101: Reportable Diseases and Conditions

Applicability

UNC Medical Center

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