Health Risk to the College Community Procedure

Mohawk College is committed to responding effectively to extraordinary situations involving health risks that could potentially have adverse effects on the Mohawk College community. This procedure outlines an approved approach for responding to risks or potential risks associated with Public Health regulated reportable communicable disease to prevent the spread of communicable diseases to others.

1. Application and Scope
   This procedure applies to reportable communicable diseases and is not intended to address a pandemic. A pandemic is an infectious disease outbreak of a large scale, with spread of contagion provincially, nationally or globally and is dealt with under the College’s Pandemic Plan. The following procedure applies to all Mohawk College campuses including IAHS.

2. Definitions

   “Communicable Disease” refers to an illness affecting humans that is caused by an organism or microorganism and is transmitted directly or indirectly from an infected person, an animal or the environment to a susceptible person.

   “Direct Contact Transmission” occurs when pathogens are transferred directly from an infected person.

   “Indirect Contact Transmission” involves the transfer of pathogens from a contaminated intermediate source (ex. Door handle, table surface, and object), contaminated instruments or hands.

   “Reportable Communicable Diseases” are communicable diseases that are defined by the Health protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 559/91 as reportable. Under the Act, the College is required to contact the Medical Office of Health at Public Health Services any suspected cases of reportable diseases involving staff and students. This list is available at Public Health Services “Reportable Diseases Intake.”

3. Procedures for Confirmed or Suspected Cases of Communicable Disease
   The following procedure applies in all circumstances of potential cases of communicable disease or exposure to a confirmed or suspected case of communicable disease:

   1. The staff member or student will be directed to immediately seek off-site medical attention from their family doctor or medical clinic as appropriate. The staff member or student must not seek assistance from a hospital or emergency room or use public transportation to prevent the possible transmission of communicable disease.

   2. The staff member or student must remain off-campus until a doctor’s note is obtained indicating that the individual is free of communicable disease and/or is non-transmissible before returning to the College.
• Staff members must report their absence in accordance to departmental procedures.
• Students will provide a doctor’s note to the Director of Health Services (or designate) who will inform other parties as appropriate.

3. In situations where a communicable disease case is confirmed, Public Health will contact the Director of Health Services (or designate) who will receive direction on appropriate next steps. Where the confirmed case involves a staff member, the Director of Health Services will triage Public Health to the Director, Human Resources Consulting Services and Labour Relations (or designate) as required.
• In situations where Public Health does not contact the College the Director of Health Services (or designate) or Director, Human Resources Consulting Services and Labour Relations (or designate) will contact Public Health for information.
• The Director the McMaster Student Wellness Centre (or designate) and the Director of Health (or designate) will communicate any reportable communicable diseases related to the IAHS campus staff and student health.

4. Where a staff member or student suspects that another member of the College community is or may be infected with a communicable disease they must report it to the Director of Health Services as soon as possible in accordance with the Health Protection and Promotion Act of Ontario.

5. Health Risks involving Third Party On-Campus Vendors
In situations where the health risk originates in or has the potential to extend to the Mohawk College Residence, Mohawk Students Association, David Braley Athletic Recreation Centre or Food and Retail locations Public Health will contact the appropriate supervisor.

6. Health Risks that Originate from the External Community
For threats that originate from or extend to the community external to the College, the Director of Health Services (or designate) will receive direction from Public Health and facilitate information for the College and comply any precautions and/or procedures that are specified. If the health risk involves a staff member, the Director of Health Services will triage Public Health to the Director, Human Resources Consulting Services and Labour Relations (or designate) as required.

7. Student Participation in Clinical and Field Placements
Students enrolled in specific programs or courses may participate in care of patients with communicable diseases as a part of fulfilling academic requirements. The College and partnering institutions are responsible for ensuring that students are appropriately screened and instructed in infection control as it relates to communicable diseases.

8. Communication

Internal Communication
The Director of Health Services or Director, Human Resources Consulting Services and Labour Relations will keep the Dean of Students and Chief Human Resources Officer informed of the situation. The Dean of students will inform members of the Mohawk Executive Group of confirmed cases of communicable disease as appropriate without compromising the individual’s privacy.
Depending on the severity of the risk to the College community, other members of the Senior Leadership Team will be notified. The President will be responsible for keeping the Board of Governors informed of any serious health risk to the College community and responses that are required.

**Communication to College Community**
If the health risk is serious enough to warrant College-wide communication with staff and students, the Director, Communications (or designate) will work in collaboration with the Director of Health Services or Director, Human Resources Consulting Services and Labour Relations, Occupational Health and Safety Consultant and a member of Security Services to script a message that informs the College community of the risk and precautions to be followed in a manner that minimizes unnecessary concern or panic. Messages regarding the health risk will be sent using standard College communication channels. Incidents of serious concern will be communicated in memo form.

The College, in conjunction with Public Health, will give students, staff and faculty appropriate information as needed, on reportable communicable infections or diseases.

**Communication to Media**
The Director, Communications (or designate) will assume responsibility for any communication with the media regarding the health risk and response on behalf of the College.

9. **Attachments**
Appendix A- Universal Precautions
Attachment 3- Procedure Flowchart
Attachment 2- Communication Flowchart
Attachment 3- Contact Information

10. **Specific Links**
CS-1403-2008 Emergency Response Policy
ERP802 Internal Crisis Communication Procedure
Appendix A
Universal Precautions

Universal Precautions have been developed by Public Health to help prevent the spread of communicable disease. Universal Precautions will help protect against and prevent infection. The idea behind Universal Precautions is that all people are potential carriers of any number of infectious germs. As we don’t always know when a communicable disease or infection is present, it is recommended that you use Universal Precautions in your routines at all times. This will help to protect you, your co-workers and others.

Universal Precautions include:

- Washing hands for 60 seconds using soap and warm running water and drying hands well, both before and after contact.
- Covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze, then washing your hands. Don’t pass your germs on to others.
- If required, locating emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation devices in areas where the need for resuscitation is predictable.
- Using disposable paper products in routine situations, whenever possible (e.g. from Kleenex to disposable towels).
- Not sharing toiletry items, especially toothbrushes or razors, under any circumstances. Dispose of razors carefully.
- Covering all open skin lesions (cuts, nicks, scrapes, wounds etc.) of any person.
- Using refuse containers provided to ensure the correct disposal of soiled items.
- Washing sinks out thoroughly with warm soapy water and rinsing well.
- Using disposable gloves at all times when handling blood or body fluids; being particularly careful if you have open sores on your hands (e.g. eczema, pulled hangnails, cuts or scrapes).
- Wearing disposable gloves when handling laundry contaminated with blood or body fluids.
- Being very careful when providing personal care, such as hair, nail and related services involving close personal contact, as there is a risk of infected blood coming in contact with open tissue (e.g. cuts, nicks or scrapes). When providing personal care services be sure to apply the above good hygiene practices including sterilizing any instruments (e.g. scissors) before using with another supported individual.
- Wearing protective gloves, clothing and eye coverings when performing procedures involving more extensive contact with blood.
- Handling all sharp instruments with extraordinary care and disposing sharp instruments in puncture-resistant containers.

Basic sterilization and disinfectant procedures are recommended as adequate to sterilize and disinfect equipment and areas contaminated with blood or other body fluids. Disinfectant and sterilization procedures include:

- Cleaning reusable instruments, then sterilizing by boiling in water for 10 minutes.
• Storing any clothing, bedding etc. that has been soiled with blood or other body fluids in a plastic bag and washing it with bleach. Remember that while soiled linen and clothing may be contaminated, the risk of actually transmitting disease from this source is negligible; however, it is safer to take precautions.

• Scrubbing boots and leather goods soiled with blood or other body fluids with soap and hot water to remove contamination.

• Using a 1:10 bleach solution or other approved disinfectant to clean soiled surfaces.

• Mops should be thoroughly rinsed in disinfectant afterwards.

All evidence indicates that blood-borne and sexually transmitted diseases are not transmitted during the preparation and serving of foods and beverages. However, when preparing and serving food, the practice of good personal hygiene and standard food sanitation procedures should always be followed.
Public Health will contact Director Health Services and the College will abide by prescribed procedures.

Staff member or student is directed to seek off-site medical attention.

Remain off-campus until cleared by a physician.

Staff?  
Staff member/staff is ill or has been exposed to suspected/confirmed case of communicable disease

Student?  
Provide doctor’s note to Director, HR Consulting Services

Provide doctor’s note to Director of Health Services

Confirmed Case?  
Public Health will contact Director Health Services and the College will abide by prescribed procedures.

End
Attachment 2
Communication Flowchart

Public Health notifies the Director of Health Services or Director, HR Consulting Services of confirmed case of communicable disease.

Director of Health Services or Director, HR Consulting Services informs Dean of Students, Chief Human Resources Officer and members of the Mohawk Executive Group of situation.

Low risk?  High risk?

No further communication required  President will inform Board of Governors of situation

Director, Communications will work with Director of Health Services to script a message to inform College community via MOCOmotion

Media involvement?

Director, Communications will respond on behalf of the College
Attachment 3
Contact Information

Contact Information

Public Health Services
Telephone: 905-546-2063
Fax: 905-546-4078

Louisa Drost, Director of Health Services
905-575-1212 EXT. 2435
louisa.drost@mohawkcollege.ca

Linda Grgurich, Director, Human Resources Consulting Services and Labour Relations
905-575-1212 EXT. 2228
linda.grgurich@mohawkcollege.ca

Geoff White, Occupational Health and Safety Consultant
905-575-1212 EXT 2225
geoff.white@mohawkcollege.ca

Third Party Contact Information

Health Centre
Fennell Campus, Room C109
135 Fennell Avenue West, L9C 0E5
Telephone: 289-237-6538