

NAG 5—Health and Safety

Infection Control Policy

Rationale

The Board has responsibilities arising from the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 to ensure the health and safety of all workers, students, visitors, and contractors while undertaking School activities in the workplace.

Infection and occupational health screening is also required by Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand Districts for staff working in hospitals and who have contact with patients.

This policy is in recognition that the Northern Health School (NHS) works with a number of students who may be immune-compromised, and/or susceptible to infections due to their health.

Purpose

- a) To provide and maintain a safe and healthy workplace for all employees, students, and other people in the workplace, by reducing the risk of infection to others, and
- b) To prevent and reduce the spread of communicable diseases and other associated infections between employees, students, visitors, and contractors, including appropriate isolation and infection control procedures.

Guidelines

- a) NHS provides resources for all staff, students, visitors, and contractors to practice good hygiene and infection control practices to control the spread of infections within NHS premises and facilities. This includes adequate personal hygiene and hand washing facilities, wearing of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when required, and appropriate cleaning contracts for cleanliness of equipment and facilities.
- b) If a NHS staff member or student has a contagious illness they are expected to stay at home until symptoms have either disappeared or they are advised by a medical professional they are no longer contagious.
- c) As NHS provides services in health settings, including hospitals, Ministry of Health and health sector guidance is prioritised and takes precedence over education sector guidance; or whichever provides the greatest level of infection prevention and public health measures.
- d) Evidence of immunity to, or immunisation for, vaccine-preventable communicable diseases as per the policy appendix are:
 - required as part of pre-employment screening for all new staff,
 - required from all existing staff, along with evidence of any medical reason for not being immunised, and
 - recorded in the school data base.
- e) Staff are responsible for keeping up to date on developments pertaining to communicable disease vaccinations and acting accordingly. This includes boosters and/or additional doses when required as set out in this policy appendix or the National Immunisation Schedule or local health guidelines.
- f) Evidence will, where requested, be provided to the relevant Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand District occupational health and safety department as part of obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

- g) The pupil admission form will include immunisation status as per the National Immunisation Schedule which will then be recorded in the school database.
- h) All students, staff, and visitors to any NHS site will comply with requirements under Section 70 of Health Act 1956, Covid 19 Public Health Response Act 2020, Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, and any other relevant legislation relating to public health measures and infection control.
- i) The Board will pay for any vaccinations or testing related to employment by School staff.
- j) When requested by a Medical Officer of Health during an outbreak, the Board may require any staff or students who do not have evidence of immunity to stay at home.

Adopted September 2022

Chairperson

Review Date September 2025

Policy appendix:

Schedule of immunisations required for NHS staff, as of 16 September 2022:

- Tetanus
- Diphtheria
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Polio
- Hepatitis B
- Measles/ Mumps/ Rubella
- Varicella (Chicken pox)
- No evidence of active tuberculosis
- Covid-19 first two doses plus first booster

The following immunisations are strongly encouraged:

- Shingles (over 65 years)
- Influenza
- additional Covid-19 boosters