

School of Medicine Guidelines for Review and Management of Student's Infected with Bloodborne Pathogens

The School of Medicine (SOM) follows the “UMB Policy on Prevention and Management of Student and Employee Infection with Bloodborne Pathogens” (VI-11.00(A)). (<http://cf.umaryland.edu/hrpolicies/section6/t61100Asa.html>). Students are not required but are strongly encouraged to be tested for Bloodborne Pathogen infection and to disclose infected status to SOM.

The SOM MD program (Program) places students in circumstances which involve invasive procedures. Timely, voluntary disclosure to SOM of infected status by a student will permit SOM to assist in developing appropriate accommodations to provide maximum benefit to the student while ensuring the health and safety of students, patients, and others.

Students infected with a bloodborne pathogen are encouraged to disclose their infection status to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or Assistant Dean for Student Affairs. Disclosure of infection status itself cannot be the basis for academic dismissal which can only follow careful consideration of a student's situation in accordance with UMB policy and applicable laws.

The Student Affairs Dean receiving a student's disclosure will serve as a confidential coordinator to whom the student can go for advice on policies and procedures related to infection with bloodborne pathogens and for information about potential implications of the student's infection on the student's ability to complete the curriculum and choice of career after graduation. The SOM cannot provide advice on licensure and employment issues as the applicable policies and practices are determined and interpreted by entities other than SOM.

After a student discloses a bloodborne pathogen infection, the Student Affairs Dean will refer the matter for review to a Review Panel appointed by the Dean. The Student Affairs Dean may also take immediate interim action if circumstances indicate a possible health or safety risk that should be addressed without delay. Such interim action may include, by way of example, temporarily excusing the student from certain clinical activities.

The Review Panel will include at least one member having current familiarity with national recommendations for health professionals and health professional trainees with bloodborne pathogen infection. The Panel may request information and recommendations from the student's personal healthcare provider (with proper authorization from the student). The Panel will consider the health requirements of relevant affiliated training sites and will include the Baltimore VAMHCS Hospital Epidemiologist. The Panel will prepare findings and recommendations which may include:

1. No restriction on activities;

2. Reasonable accommodation, such as alterations to non-essential elements of the academic program;
3. Restrictions of activities, which may include prohibition on essential elements of the academic program.

If SOM makes a determination that a student cannot be reasonably accommodated, the student will not be qualified for the program and recommendation for dismissal will be made.

The findings and recommendations of the Review Panel will be transmitted in confidence to the student and to the Dean in the Office of Student Affairs serving as the student's coordinator. This Dean will develop a proposed plan of action (Plan) in consultation with the Review Panel and will present the matter to the Executive Vice Dean. The Plan may include ongoing terms and conditions to which the student must agree in advance and with which the student must comply with on a timely and regular basis in order to maintain enrollment. Such conditions may include, by way of example, submitting to health status testing on a regular basis and authorizing the student's health care provider to disclose and discuss test results with the Review Panel and other persons involved in coordinating and overseeing the student's case.

Final decisions regarding the student's Plan and enrollment status will be made by the Executive Vice Dean after review of all the circumstances.

The Executive Vice Dean's decisions are appealable in accordance with UMB "Student Grievance Procedures Regarding Accommodation Decisions."
(www.umaryland.edu/student/disabilities.html).

When SOM decides an infected student will remain enrolled, the Student Affairs Dean coordinating the student's case, acting in consultation with the Review Panel and the Executive Vice Dean as appropriate, will share the Plan in confidence with supervisory faculty and personnel who have a need to know the information.