

Communicable Diseases

Purpose

- To minimise client exposure to staff with communicable diseases.
- To prevent the spread of communicable disease in the community.

Scope

- a. Applies to all staff working with clients or other team members.

Definitions

- a. Communicable Disease: An infectious disease transmissible (as from person to person) by direct contact with an affected individual or the individual's discharges or by indirect means (as by a vector).
- b. Notifiable diseases: Diseases that are notifiable to the Medical Officer of Health. A list of Notifiable Diseases is outlined in Schedules 1 and 2 of the Health Act 1956.

Responsibilities

a. All staff

- i. It is the responsibility of any staff member who acquires a communicable infection to notify their line manager as work restrictions may apply.

b. Clinical Nurse Leaders/Clinical Nurse Managers/Clinical Team Leaders (as delegated)

- i. Medical advice should always be sought for those communicable diseases not specifically detailed in Infectious Diseases and Staff Exclusion Table
- ii. Staff Members identified as having a communicable disease may need their GP and / or the Medical Officer of Health (MoH) notified with the individual's consent when required.

Procedure

- a. If a staff member is exposed to a communicable disease then the clinical risk to themselves and others needs to be determined. The following should be clarified with the staff member to ascertain level of risk:
 - i. Has the staff member got known immunity or completed the appropriate vaccination schedule for the communicable disease
 - ii. Was the staff member following protective procedures (e.g. wearing the correct PPE) at the time of exposure
 - iii. Has the staff member sought appropriate medical assessment following the exposure
 - iv. Has the staff member developed any symptoms of the communicable disease since exposure
 - v. Depending on the level of risk to the client or others, work restrictions may apply or time off work may be required.
- b. If a staff member has acquired a communicable disease then the clinical risk to others needs to be determined. To prevent the spread of infection to clients and others, certain work restrictions may apply to the staff member and appropriate procedures put in place to prevent the spread of infection to others.

Associated Documents

- a. Infectious Diseases and Staff Exclusions Table.

References

- a. [http://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/schedule_of_notifiable_diseases - updated October 2013.docx](http://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/schedule_of_notifiable_diseases_-_updated_October_2013.docx)

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