HIV/AIDs and Hepatitis

1. Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the Armadale Early Learning Centre Committee of Management, at the Committee meeting on 12/09/2006.

2. Review Date

This policy was last reviewed April 2011 and is to be reviewed every three years, or when deemed necessary. This policy is due to be reviewed April 2013.

3. Scope

This policy applies to the Committee, staff and families who use the service, and volunteers and students involved with the service.

4. Background and Legislations

4.1 Background

Viruses such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis are health issues which concern everyone. HIV/AIDS has aroused community anxiety, often because of misinformation and ignorance.

The service, by providing this policy is:

- Endorsing a caring and supportive approach to this issue.
- Helping to inform parents and staff about the facts of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis.
- Assuring users of the service, that the service is aware of its responsibilities of providing a safe environment for staff, children and parents.
- Assuring the community that the service is carrying out its responsibilities in relation to
- Government legislation concerning HIV/AIDS, the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Health Act. This includes protecting against discrimination and ensuring confidentiality for staff and users in relation to the HIV/AIDS and hepatitis status of persons concerned.

Fulfilling obligations under all relevant State and Commonwealth legislation

4.2 Legislations

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985
• Equal Opportunity Act 1995
• Health Act 1958

5. Definitions

AIDS: Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome.

DHS: Department of Human Services

DEECD: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

HIV: The virus that causes AIDS, which is known as Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus.

Hepatitis: This is a general term for inflammation of the liver, which can be caused by alcohol, drugs (including prescribed medications) or viral infections. There are several types of viral hepatitis namely A, B, C, D, E and G.

Infection Control: The name given to a combination of basic hygiene measures to prevent the spread of infection.

6. Policy Statement

6.1 Anti Discrimination
No employee, prospective employee, employer, parent/guardian or child will be discriminated against or harassed on the grounds of having, or being assumed to have, a HIV or hepatitis infection.

Being infected with HIV is not grounds for exclusion of a child, parent/guardian, staff member or employer.

The Committee will ensure that all employees and agents (such as members of the Committee) understand the concepts of discrimination and harassment, and will implement comprehensive grievance procedures that provide effective processes for resolving grievances, at all levels of the organisation.

6.2 Confidentiality
Information regarding HIV/AIDS and the hepatitis status of any child, parent/guardian, or staff member will remain confidential and all reasonable steps will be taken to develop and implement systems to protect the privacy of that person.

6.3 Infection control and the provision of a safe work place
The Committee will provide all staff with information on their responsibilities towards service users and people in their care in relation to this policy.

The service shall at all times follow proper infection control procedures to minimise the risk of the transmission of blood borne viruses such as HIV and hepatitis.
No child, staff member or parent/guardian will be denied First Aid at any time.

The service will ensure that First Aid equipment for protection against the risk of infection from blood borne viruses will be available and used at all times.

The Committee will provide, as far as practicable, a healthy and safe environment. Staff are required to take reasonable care to protect their own health and safety and that of others in the workplace at all times.

**6.4 Information and education**
The Committee will provide access to information for all staff, Committee members and users of the service about:

- The basic facts on preventative measures for HIV/AIDS and hepatitis.
- Where they may access further information.
- Support services as required.

**7. Procedures**

**7.1 Infection Control**
All body fluid spills and abrasions are a potential hazard. Therefore infection control procedures will be used when dealing with these in order to provide maximum protection from the potential hazard.

The following statements are based on the principle that *all people are potentially infectious* and that infection control procedures will be practised at all times:

- Staff and users will have access to materials as required that will enable them to implement infection control procedures. [This will include bleach, latex gloves etc. Disposable latex gloves will be available in the First Aid cabinet at all times.]
- A step-by-step procedure on infection control (Appendix 1) will be displayed and complied with at the service. Both existing staff and new staff as part of their induction will be made aware of this procedure.
- The service will have available a booklet/publication on infection control. (Information on publications on infection control are contained in Appendix 2 attached to this policy.)

**7.2 Responding to Exposure**
Full details of any exposure to a body fluid spill and abrasion must be recorded in the Accident, Injury and Illness Book for children and the Incident/Injury Register for staff, students and volunteers.

Following any incident which a staff member believes may have resulted in exposure to HIV/AIDS or hepatitis, the staff member should seek the advice of a qualified medical practitioner immediately, to assess the need for testing and report this to the President who will treat this information as confidential.
7.3 Exclusion of Children with Hepatitis
As the DHS School Exclusion Table requires the exclusion of children and staff with acute hepatitis A or B, parents/guardians and staff must inform the Committee if their child attending the service or the staff member has contracted either of these diseases.

7.4 Confidentiality
There is no obligation, legal or otherwise for anyone to inform an employer, service provider, or service of their own or their child’s HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C or other blood borne virus status, consequently:

• Such information must not be disclosed without informed consent of the individual [or guardian for a person under the age of 18 years].
• The only reason a parent would inform the teacher of the child’s blood-borne disease status would be for the benefit of the child.
• Any employee or Committee member, in receipt of verbal or written information relating to the HIV/AIDS or blood borne disease status and condition of any child or staff member, must take all reasonable precautions to protect the child or staff member’s privacy.
• All such information must be kept securely [under lock and key] within the service; access to this information must only be by the person who has been informed. Information relating to the blood borne status will be destroyed once the person leaves the employment of, or ceases to attend, the service.
• No routine or mandatory blood borne disease testing may be carried out on service users or staff.
• No testing may be carried out without the informed consent of the individual and provision of pre and post-test counseling, by an accredited counselor or qualified medical practitioner. (Contacts for accredited counselors are listed under Section 9 Resources and Support.)

7.5 Complaints
Any grievances or complaints relating to this policy will be addressed through the service’s Complaints Policy.

8. Key Responsibilities & Authorities
The Committee is responsible for implementing the policy.

The staff are responsible for:

• Implementing infection control procedures at all times.
• Recording any exposure to a body fluid spill or abrasion in the appropriate book or register.
• Notifying the President if they believe they have been exposed to HIV/AIDS or hepatitis at the service.
The Committee and staff are responsible for keeping confidential any information which is received in relation to the HIV/AIDS or hepatitis status of a child, family or staff member.

9. Circulation Plan

Who needs to know the policy and procedures exists?

- Parents whose children attend the AELC
- Staff and Committee members

9.1 Method

A copy of the Policy will be adopted by the Committee and will be available upon request, in the Policy Manual (located in the AELC foyer), and available on the AELC website www.armadaleelc.vic.edu.au.

10. Resources and Support

10.1 Training

- All staff will receive infection control training at induction.
- Staff in conjunction with the Committee, will review their training needs in relation to infection control on an annual basis.
- Organisations offering training for staff are provided in Appendix 2.

10.2 Publications

A list of relevant publications is listed in Appendix 2.

11. Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes set out under 6 Policy Statement, the Committee will:

- In consultation with staff, review the infection control procedures and adherence to them at least annually.
- If appropriate, conduct a survey in relation to aspects of the policy or incorporate relevant questions within the general parent/guardian survey.
- Take into consideration feedback, regarding infection control and the policy, from staff, parents/guardians and Committee members and adjust infection control procedures, or provide additional information on the subject, if appropriate.
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Appendix 1: Step by Step Procedure for Infection Control Relating to Blood-Borne Viruses

1. Blood spills

Equipment and procedures for managing blood spills and providing first aid for patients who are bleeding are detailed below:

Anyone working with children, who may need to respond to an incident involving blood, needs to cover cuts, sores or abrasions they may have on their hands and arms with waterproof dressings, while at the service.

1.1 Cleaning and removal of blood spills

1.1.1 Equipment

- Disposable gloves
- Disposable plastic bags
- Warm water and detergent
- Disposable towels
- Bleach. Strength should be 10,000 parts per million, approximately to one quarter of a cup of household bleach to one cup of water. Ensure that bleach has not passed its use by date and that it is mixed fresh on each occasion.

1.1.2 Procedure

1. Put on disposable gloves.
2. Saturate disposable towel in bleach solution.
3. Cover the spill with the towel.
4. Leave the towel in place for 10 minutes.
5. Place towel in disposable plastic bag.
6. Wash area with warm water and detergent.
7. Place gloves into disposable plastic bag.
8. Seal bag and dispose of it appropriately taking into consideration health and safety issues.
9. Wash hands in warm soapy water.
10. Soak any utensils used in bleach solution for 30 minutes, then wash in warm to hot soapy water and rinse.

Care needs to be taken to ensure that children do not have access to the bleach saturated towel.
1.2 Providing first aid for children who are bleeding

1.2.1 Equipment

- Antiseptic
- Disposable plastic bags
- Disposable gloves
- Waterproof dressings
- Disposable towels
- Warm water and detergent

1.2.2 Procedure

1. Adult treating child to cover any uncovered cuts, sores or abrasions on arms and hands with waterproof dressings.
2. Put on disposable gloves.
3. Wash wound under warm running water and apply antiseptic to wound.
4. Apply waterproof dressing to the wound if necessary.
5. Remove gloves and place in disposable plastic bag, tie securely.
6. Seal bag and dispose of it appropriately taking into consideration health and safety issues.
7. Wash hands in warm soapy water.
8. Contaminated clothing or sick room linen should be removed and stored in leak-proof disposable plastic bags until they can be washed as follows using gloves:
9. Rinse in cold water.
10. Soak in 1:10 bleach solution (1 part bleach to 10 parts water) for 30 minutes, then rinse off bleach.
11. After soaking, wash clothes and sick room linen separately from other laundry, at a high temperature on a long cycle.

1.3 Safe disposal of discarded needles/syringes

Equipment and procedures for the safe disposal of discarded needles and syringes are detailed below:

1.3.1 Equipment

- Disposable gloves.
- Long handled tongs.
- Disposable plastic bags.
• ‘Sharps’ syringe disposal container or plastic container with a screw-top lid.

1.3.2 Procedure

1. Put on disposable gloves.
2. Do not try to recap the needle.
3. Place the disposal container on the ground next to the syringe.
4. Pick up the syringe as far from the needle end as possible, using tongs if not easily accessible.
5. Place the syringe, needle point down, in the disposal container and screw the lid back on firmly.
6. Repeat this procedure to pick up all syringes and/or unattached needles.
7. Remove gloves and place in disposable plastic bag.
8. Seal and dispose of the plastic bag.
9. If tongs are used, soak in bleach solution for 30 minutes, then wash in hot soapy water and rinse.
10. Wash hands in warm, soapy water.

Under no circumstances should work experience students or children be asked or encouraged to pick up needles/syringes.

Syringe disposal containers or syringes must not be put in normal waste disposal bins. Syringe disposal containers may be disposed of by:

- Telephoning the Disposal Help Line on 1800 552355 for the location of the nearest needle exchange outlet or public disposal bin.
- Contacting the local hospital.
- Contacting the Risk Reduction Unit at the Department of Human Services on 03 9637 4000.
- Contacting the environmental officer (health surveyor) at the local municipal/council offices; also for any further concerns about syringe disposal.

2. Needle stick injuries

The Department of Human Services has indicated that the risk of infection from needle stick injury is low and should not cause alarm.

The following procedure should be observed in case of needle stick injury:

1. Flush the affected part with running water and detergent.
2. Wash in warm, soapy water.
3. Dry area, apply antiseptic to the wound and cover with a waterproof dressing if necessary.
4. Report the injury to the President.
5. See a doctor as soon as possible and report the circumstances of the injury.

This procedure is based on advice provided by the Department of Education, Employment and Training and the Department of Human Services.
Appendix 2: Relevant Publications and Training Providers

1. Publications

Department of Human Services:
Health Protection Section Ph: (03) 9637 4184, GPO Box 1670N Melbourne 3000
• AIDS Your Questions Answered
• Public Health – Hepatitis A
• Hepatitis B – the facts
• Hepatitis C – the facts

Youth Family and Community Services:
• DHS Children’s Services Licensing Operational Guide (Chapter 4 Health and Welfare of Children)

Government Info Shop:
Ph: (03) 9670 4224 (This is the Victorian outlet for AUSINFO), 190 Queen Street Melbourne.
• HIV & Hepatitis B in the Workplace

Information Victoria:
• Health (General Amendment) Act 1988.

Equal Opportunity Commission Victoria:
Ph: (03) 9281 7111 or 1800 134 142 Lonsdale Street Melbourne.
• HIV, AIDS & Hepatitis C Discrimination
• Discrimination against people living with HIV or AIDS
• Hepatitis C Discrimination.

Lady Gowrie Child Centre
Ph: (03) 9347 6388, 36 Newry Street North Carlton 3054
• Staying Healthy in Child Care
• HIV/AIDS and Child Care
• Managing the Risks in Children’s Services.

Community Child Care Co Op Ltd (NSW)
Ph: (02) 9557 5599, Locked Bag 19 Newtown 2042
• HIV/AIDS and Child Care

AECA -Victorian Branch
Ph: (03) 9427 8474, 9-11 Stewart Street Richmond 3121
• Guidelines for Prevention and Control of Infection in Child Care Settings
2. Training for Staff

Red Cross
Ph: 1800 811 700, 171 City Road Southbank
• In-services held across Victoria
• First Aid Course level 2
• Essential First Aid

St John’s Ambulance
Ph: 13 13 94, 98 York St. South Melbourne (Headquarters)
• In-services held across Victoria
• Emergency First Aid, level 2
• Basic Life Support.

3. Accredited Counselors

Contact Coordinator, HIV Service
Ph: (03) 9342 8834
Victorian Infectious Diseases Service
Royal Melbourne Hospital
Grattan Street Parkville
Postal Address: VIDS, 9 North C/- PO RMH 3050

Victorian AIDS Council
Ph:1800 134 840, 6 Claremont Street South Yarra 3141