

 HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION <i>Quality Healthcare for All</i> POLICY	Department: Human Resources	Policy No. HR 0023A
		Supersedes Policy No.
Subject: HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL INFLUENZA PROGRAM	Approved By: <i>Donna McCleary</i> HHSC Board of Directors By: Donna McCleary, M.D. Its: Secretary/Treasurer	Approved Date: January 27, 2022
		Last Reviewed: October 11, 2021

I. PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines to protect patients, residents, staff, staff family members, students, volunteers, vendors, others affiliated with HHSC, and the community from Influenza infection. The spread of Influenza can be significantly decreased or prevented by a careful and comprehensive Program that involves immunization of Health Care Personnel, use of personal protective equipment such as face masks and hand washing. This policy provides a reasonable and comprehensive Program to reduce the spread of Influenza within HHSC's facilities and the community. This policy applies to all HHSC employees.

The CDC estimates that each year in the United States approximately 5 to 20% of the population are infected with Influenza and over 200,000 are hospitalized from seasonal Influenza-related complications. Influenza is unpredictable and can be severe. For example, CDC estimates that the burden of illness during the 2017–2018 season was high with an estimated 48.8 million people getting sick with Influenza, 22.7 million people going to a health care provider, 959,000 hospitalizations, and 79,400 deaths from Influenza. Due to its potential to become widespread and have serious consequences, the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends that all Health Care Personnel be vaccinated annually against Influenza. The CDC explains that the results of several studies indicate higher vaccination coverage among Health Care Personnel is associated with lower incidence of hospital-acquired Influenza infections.

II. DEFINITIONS:

“Health Care Personnel” means for purposes of this policy, all employees, medical and dental staff, volunteers, residents, interns, students, contracted personnel and vendors who may provide direct or indirect health care services at an HHSC facility or HHSC's Corporate Office.

“Face mask” means a loose fitting disposable device, with or without an eye-shield that creates a physical barrier between the mouth and nose of the wearer and the immediate environment.

“Influenza” – commonly referred to as the “Flu” means a contagious respiratory illness caused by the Influenza viruses. Influenza viruses are classified by their nucleoproteins and matrix proteins. The primary Influenza viruses that cause typical Influenza illness are classified as types A and B and are collectively referred to as “Influenza” or “Flu”. Influenza is primarily spread by airborne droplets but can also be spread through person-to-person contact or contact with contaminated surfaces. Individuals infected with Influenza are contagious beginning one (1) day before symptom onset and until five (5) to seven (7) days after symptom onset.

“Influenza-like-illness (“ILI”) means an acute respiratory infection that may include, but is not limited to, the following signs and symptoms: fever $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$ ($\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$) oral or equivalent, and cough or sore throat, or both (in the absence of a known cause other than Influenza).

“Influenza season” means, the period between October 1 and March 31, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”), although the exact timing and duration of the Flu season often varies. For tropical climates, Flu season may occur throughout the year. Due to Hawaii’s tropical climate and high volume of tourism, HHSC shall define “Influenza season” based on the Hawaii Department of Health’s Influenza Surveillance Program (“DOH Program”) data and the number of Influenza cases in each facility. For purposes of this policy, HHSC’s “Influenza season” may occur throughout the year and shall begin when each respective facility’s value for outpatient visits related to ILI reaches or exceeds 4%, or both, and shall end when the same value is below 4%, as determined by each individual HHSC facility.

“Facility Influenza Outbreak” means that regardless of whether it is Influenza season, the medical staff and infection control professionals at HHSC’s facilities may declare a Facility Influenza Outbreak when cases of Influenza in admitted patients or staff, or both, increase significantly within a short period of time suggesting transmission within the facility. The Facility Influenza Outbreak will be declared over when new cases related to the outbreak cease to be identified.

“Clinical Care Areas” means all areas of HHSC facilities that involve the care or provision of services to patients or residents including, but not limited to, hospitals, outpatient clinics and long term care facilities. Clinical Care Areas may include, but are not limited to, areas where patients or residents: (1) are evaluated, imaged, tested, or treated or (2) wait to be seen.

“Medical contraindication” means a contraindication is a condition or factor that serves as a reason to withhold a certain medical treatment due to the harm that it would cause the patient.

III. POLICY:

HHSC shall offer Influenza vaccinations to all Health Care Personnel free of charge. HHSC encourages all Health Care Personnel to obtain Influenza vaccinations. Receiving an Influenza vaccination shall be on a voluntary basis for all Health Care Personnel. For Health Care Personnel who do not have a medical contraindication and choose not to receive the Influenza vaccination, HHSC’s facilities shall provide education and information about Influenza and the Influenza vaccination.

In the event of a vaccination shortage, HHSC shall offer Influenza vaccinations to Health Care Personnel based on job function and risk of exposure to Influenza. Health Care Personnel whose job functions involve direct hands-on care with prolonged face-to-face contact with patients or residents, care for patients or residents at high risk for complications from Influenza or have the highest risk of exposure to patients or residents with Influenza, or any of the aforementioned, shall be given highest priority in the event of a vaccination shortage.

The medical staff and infection control professionals at HHSC’s facilities may declare a Facility Influenza Outbreak.

Health Care Personnel who: (1) cannot receive Influenza vaccination due to a medical contraindication or (2) choose not to receive the Influenza vaccination shall comply with their facility’s policy and procedures related to the use of face masks at all times in clinical care areas throughout the duration of Influenza Season or Facility Influenza Outbreak to ensure the safety of HHSC’s patients, residents, and employees. Health Care Personnel shall

continue to perform hand hygiene and adhere to proper etiquette when coughing and sneezing.

Any Health Care Personnel demonstrating ILI signs and symptoms while on duty shall be sent for medical evaluation or home in accordance with each respective HHSC facility's policies and procedures.

IV. AUTHORITY:

None

V. RELATED PROCEDURE(S):

See each respective HHSC facility's procedure as applicable.

VI. REFERENCE(S):

- CDC, "Estimated Influenza Illnesses, Medical visits, Hospitalizations, and Deaths in the United States — 2017–2018 influenza season" (Last viewed October 4, 2021), available at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/burden/2017-2018.htm>;
- CDC, "Key Facts About Influenza (Flu)", (last viewed October 4, 2021), available at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/keyfacts.htm>;
- World Health Organization; "Influenza (Seasonal)" Fact Sheet (last viewed October 4, 2021), available at [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/influenza-\(seasonal\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/influenza-(seasonal));
- State of Hawaii Department of Health, Disease Outbreak Control Division, influenza (Flu), available at http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/disease_listing/influenza-flu/. (last viewed October 4, 2021);
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration, "N95 Respirators, Surgical Masks, Face Masks, and Barrier Face Coverings", (last viewed October 4, 2021); available at <http://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/ProductsandMedicalProcedures/GeneralHospitalDevicesandSupplies/PersonalProtectiveEquipment/ucm055977.htm>;