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	Owner: <i>Sherie Goldbach: Infection Prevention Registrar</i>
	Policy Area: <i>Infection Prevention</i>
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Applicability: <i>UNC Medical Center</i>	

Influenza Immunization of Healthcare Personnel

I. Description

Describes a strategy for providing a safer environment for patients and healthcare personnel (HCP) through influenza vaccination

II. Rationale

To protect patients, employees, employees' family members, and the community from influenza infection through annual immunization of all UNC Health Care System (UNC HCS) employees, medical staff, students, volunteers, vendors who are contractually required to comply with UNC HCS's immunization policy, and any School of Medicine employees identified as providing service in one of the UNC Health Care System facilities.

III. Policy

A. Annual Influenza Immunization

All UNC HCS employees, medical staff, students, volunteers, School of Medicine employees identified above, and vendors who are contractually required to comply with UNC HCS's immunization policy (collectively, "healthcare personnel") must be immunized against influenza each year unless an exemption has been granted pursuant to this policy.

Influenza vaccine is available free of charge to all UNC HCS employees and volunteers. The vaccination program is coordinated through several UNCH Occupational Health Service (OHS) programs beginning on September 10th (pending availability of vaccine). Immunizations must be completed by November 12th unless on leave. Healthcare personnel who return from leave after November 12th by 8am must be immunized within one calendar month after return to work if within the influenza virus season (determined by ongoing transmission of influenza in community which is typically until late April/May).

School of Medicine employees may obtain the influenza vaccine through the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill Department of Environment, Health and Safety (UNC-EHS) (www.ehs.unc.edu).

Individuals who are not eligible to obtain the vaccine through OHS or UNC-EHS, or choose not to do so, should provide proof of immunization to the appropriate oversight department (e.g., UNC HCS Occupational Health Service for UNC HCS employees and volunteers; University Employee Occupational Health Clinic (UEOHC) for School of Medicine employees; Purchasing Department for covered vendors, etc.). Proof of immunization may include a receipt or note from a physician, licensed independent practitioner (e.g., physician's assistant), or pharmacist.

B. Exemptions

1. Exemptions for immunization may be granted only for medical contraindications or religious beliefs. Exemptions for personal reasons will not be accepted. Exemptions will be evaluated on an individual basis each year as follows:
 - Religious exemptions must be re-submitted annually. Volunteers are not allowed to religiously exempt from annual influenza immunization.
 - Medical contraindication exemptions are submitted one time and are kept on file for employees and do not need to be re-submitted annually.
2. Healthcare personnel requesting exemption due to medical contraindications must provide proof of medical contraindications (such as a letter and medical records from their private physician) to their occupational health provider (UNC HCS Occupational Health Service for UNC HCS employees and volunteers; University Employee Occupational Health Clinic (UEOHC) for School of Medicine employees). Standard criteria for medical exemption will be established based upon recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).
3. Each request for medical exemption will be evaluated on an individual basis by the Medical Review Officer/Medical Director of UNC HCS Occupational Health Service or UEOHC , as appropriate, and the individual requesting the exemption will be notified of the decision to grant or deny the request.
4. Healthcare personnel claiming exemption due to religious beliefs must sign a written statement confirming that such immunizations are not consistent with their religious beliefs or tenets.

C. Infection Control Procedures

Healthcare personnel will conform to UNC Health Care policy for reporting symptoms consistent with influenza-like disease/upper respiratory tract infections and adhering to work restrictions if ill.

D. Maintaining Immunization Record

UNC Occupational Health Service will maintain a record of influenza immunization for UNC HCS employees and volunteers. UNC UEOHC will maintain records for all School of Medicine employees, and UNC Campus Health will maintain records for all students covered by this policy. Any other persons who are required to be immunized pursuant to this policy must provide written proof of immunization (e.g., vendors, volunteers, or interns, for example), and documents will be stored with other similar records for those individuals.

E. Dates of Immunization

Immunizations will begin in September (pending availability of the vaccine). All employees and others included under this Policy must be vaccinated or granted an exemption prior to November 12th by 8am.

F. Compliance

Supervisors and managers are responsible for the proper administration of this policy according to the guidelines found herein. Failure to appropriately administer this policy will result in corrective action for the responsible leaders up to and including dismissal.

Compliance with this policy is a condition of employment for UNC HCS employees and a condition of access to UNC HCS facilities for others covered under the policy. Non-compliant School of Medicine employees who are credentialed by UNC HCS will have their privileges suspended until the end of influenza season. Non-compliant School of Medicine employees who are not credentialed but are covered under this policy will be denied access to all UNC HCS facilities that provide patient care until the end of influenza season.

All UNC Health Care personnel receiving a flu shot from facilities/institutions other than UNC Health Care may be included in a sample of personnel selected to show proof of flu vaccination (proof of flu vaccination is achieved by HCP going to the UNC Health Care flu website and completing an online attestation form). Health Care personnel without proof of vaccination will need to receive a second dose of vaccine before the established and approved flu season end date.

Influenza vaccination rates for external reporting will be reported in accordance with current [CDC and NQF guidance](#).

Attachments:

No Attachments

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
Policy Stat Administrator	Patricia Ness: Nurse Educator	10/2018
	Thomas Ivester: CMO/VP Medical Affairs	10/2018
	Emily Vavalle: Director, Epidemiology	10/2018
	Sherie Goldbach: Infection Prevention Registrar	10/2018

Applicability

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