



COLLABORATION BETWEEN EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL PROGRAMS

Employee Health (EH) programs collaborate with infection prevention and control (IPC) programs to manage many IPC aspects of health care personnel (HCP) safety. HCP includes, but is not limited to, staff, providers, contractors, volunteers, and students. EH programs oversee facility adherence to the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#) regulations that protect HCP from exposure to infectious diseases and promote a healthy workforce in all care settings including hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers, and long-term care facilities. Collaboration between EH and IPC programs varies across care settings. In hospitals, these functions are typically managed by separate departments, whereas in long-term care facilities and ambulatory surgery centers, the IPC program may also oversee EH responsibilities.

EH programs collaborate with IPC programs to:



- Develop, implement, or evaluate EH policies and procedures
- Monitor, follow-up, or provide guidance on occupational exposures and HCP illnesses
- Support screening, immunization, and tuberculosis (TB) control programs
- Educate HCP on IPC safe work practices

Health Care Personnel Screening



EH programs ensure all HCP complete required pre-employment and ongoing health screenings.

Pre-employment screening may include:

- Review of vaccination and immunity status for vaccine-preventable diseases
- Vaccination history for facility-specific vaccination programs (e.g., [hepatitis B, influenza, COVID-19, etc.](#))
- [TB baseline screening and risk assessment](#) (TB baseline screening involves a TB risk assessment, symptom evaluation, and TB testing, which may be either a TB blood test, TB skin test, or chest x-ray)
- Review of health conditions that may increase the risk of acquiring or transmitting infections

Ongoing monitoring includes:

- TB screening protocols that are based on the annual facility TB risk assessment results
- Maintaining HCP compliance with annual facility vaccination programs (e.g., influenza, etc.)
- Reporting and evaluation of any infectious symptoms or exposures

Immunization Program



EH programs implement vaccination programs that follow recommendations from the Pennsylvania Department of Health and other reputable organizations for HCP.

Vaccines include:

- Hepatitis B (required as per [OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard](#))
- Influenza
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
- Varicella
- Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap)
- Meningococcal
- COVID-19

Additional vaccines may be offered based on role or risk. Documentation of immunity or vaccination is maintained by EH. Declinations must be documented and reviewed annually.

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Exposure Management



EH programs, often in partnership with the IPC programs, evaluate all HCP exposures to infectious agents or potentially infectious materials.

Post-exposure follow-up includes:

- Immediately perform first aid (wash, flush, or irrigate exposed area), report the incident to a supervisor, and seek medical care
- Assess risk of exposure
- Ensure laboratory testing and prophylaxis, when indicated
- Coordinate counseling, documentation, and follow-up testing
- Implement work restriction decisions, if applicable

Examples of exposures include:

- Needlestick or sharps injuries
- Contact with blood or body fluids on mucous membranes or non-intact skin
- Exposure to airborne or droplet pathogens such as TB, influenza, or varicella

Work Restrictions



Work restrictions are implemented by EH to prevent the transmission of infection from HCP to patients and/or visitors. All decisions should be made in coordination with the IPC program or the facility Infection Preventionist and should follow current federal and state guidance.

Restrictions may include:

- Staying home when symptomatic (e.g., fever, cough, vomiting, diarrhea)
- Temporary reassignment for infectious diseases when indicated
- Clearance by EH before returning to work after illness or exposure
- Review of health conditions that may increase the risk of acquiring or transmitting infections

Education and Training



EH topics are included in new hire and annual facility HCP training programs.

Topics may include:

- Bloodborne pathogens, exposure prevention, and post-exposure response protocols
- Reporting illness and exposures
- Sick leave/work restriction process or policy review

Confidentiality and Recordkeeping



EH programs maintain confidential medical records for all HCP. These records are kept secure and shared only with authorized personnel according to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and OSHA requirements.

Records may include:

- Pre-employment and periodic screenings
- Immunization documentation
- Exposure reports and follow-up results
- Work restriction and clearance documentation
- Documentation of successful reporting of any mandatory reportable exposures or illnesses