



GENERAL INFECTION CONTROL PROCEDURE

1. COMMITMENT

The University has a duty to provide and maintain a safe working environment for the entire University community comprising students, academic staff, general staff and visitors, and to ensure that the risk of acquiring infections is kept to a minimum.

2. PRIORITIES

Although many risks are similar to those encountered in the general community, there may be higher levels of risk of infection, or a greater chance of spreading infections, in the following areas:

- Faculties and Departments where direct or indirect patient contact occurs
- Some laboratory settings
- Childcare and Vacation Care facilities
- Halls of Residence and other student accommodation
- Areas involved with catering (University Union & Halls of Residence)
- Staff who travel overseas
- Students and staff who work with or care for experimental animals
- Buildings and grounds staff involved in cleaning and maintenance
- Security staff and first-aid officers

This procedure will remain in keeping with the legislation affecting the University of Newcastle, Occupational Health & Safety, Anti-Discrimination, Public Health and other relevant areas, and with NSW Health Policies and Circulars, Hunter New England Area Health Service Policies, and NH&MRC Guidelines.

3. ACCOUNTABILITY

Deputy Vice Chancellors, Pro Vice Chancellors and Heads of School of the University of Newcastle are responsible for ensuring that appropriate resources are provided to establish programs required under this procedure and for monitoring their implementation.

It is the responsibility of each Faculty and Division to determine the infection control requirements of its students, staff and visitors. Deputy Vice Chancellors, Pro Vice Chancellors and Heads of School must ensure that the risks students and staff may encounter are assessed, and that appropriate education, immunisation and management programs are developed and implemented.

Staff and students have an obligation to comply with these programs, and to report situations and occurrences that present a risk of infection.

4. RESOURCES

The University Health Service will assist Faculties and Divisions in development and implementing infection control procedures by providing information and immunisation programs.

The University Health Service will liaise and cooperate with the Public Health Unit of the Hunter New England Area Health Service in the management of outbreaks of infectious diseases on any of the University Campuses. This assistance may include treatment and follow up of patients, and immunisation of contacts, as well as acting as a source of information for concerned students and staff members.

5. COMMUNICATION

The University health Service will notify the Public Health Unit of the Hunter New England Area health Service of the diagnosis of any notifiable condition:

- AIDS
- Leprosy
- Syphilis
- Measles
- Tuberculosis
- Adverse event following immunisation
- Acute Viral Hepatitis
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Gastroenteritis among people in an institution
- Food borne illness in two or more related cases

In the case of Tuberculosis, where it is extremely important that confidentiality is maintained, the University Health Service will liaise and cooperate with the Department of Respiratory Medicine, John Hunter Hospital. This procedure has been developed in consultation with priority areas, and with reference to the OH&S Committee.

6. EVALUATION

Where it is apparent that infection may have arisen in the course of the University's activities, both this policy and the relevant infection control program(s) shall be reviewed.