Policy Regarding Communicable Diseases and Occupational Health for Applicants to and Students of the Faculty of Medicine Academic Programs

APPLICANTS
1. The Faculty of Medicine will inform applicants that:
   a. they will be required to take part in the care of patients with various communicable diseases including hepatitis, TB, and AIDS, during their studies;
   b. they will be trained in methods of preventing spread of communicable diseases (including body substance precautions);
   c. there is a risk that they may contract a communicable disease during the course of their studies;
   d. they have a responsibility to prevent the spread of communicable diseases to others;
   e. they will be required to comply with Faculty immunization requirements;
   f. students with a communicable disease may pursue their studies only as long their continued involvement does not pose a health or safety hazard to themselves or to others;
   g. students will be required to comply with provincial communicable disease surveillance protocols developed under the Public Hospitals Act, Regulation 965;
   h. students may be required to give body fluid specimens if they are exposed to or contract certain diseases while working in health facilities
2. Applicants with tuberculosis, hepatitis B, hepatitis C or HIV infection are required, upon acceptance, to inform the relevant Associate Dean (for Undergraduate Medical, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Radiation Sciences programs, the Associate Dean, Student Affairs; for Postgraduate students, the Associate Dean, Postgraduate Medical Education). Strict confidentiality concerning the applicant's state of health will be maintained.

STUDENTS WITH A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE
This policy applies to undergraduate and postgraduate students registered in the Faculty of Medicine University of Toronto.
1. All students are expected to be in a state of health such that they may participate in the academic program, including patient care, without posing a risk to themselves or to others. Students with a communicable disease may pursue their studies only as long as their continued involvement does not pose a health or safety hazard to themselves or others. Such a health or safety hazard, if protracted, may preclude them from participation in clinical work essential to the satisfactory completion of their program of study.
2. Students who acquire a communicable disease are required to seek medical opinion.
3. In addition to complying with local hospital regulations, students with tuberculosis, hepatitis B, hepatitis C or HIV infection must notify the Associate Dean who may consult with the Board of Medical Assessors, or other experts, as appropriate.
4. The health status of the students shall remain confidential.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN CARE OF PATIENTS WITH COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
1. Students are required to participate in the care of all patients assigned to them, including patients with communicable diseases, to a level commensurate with their level of training. Such participation is necessary for the student's learning as well as for satisfactory completion of academic requirements.
2. All students are expected to understand and adhere to infection control policies, including the principles of body substance precautions, when participating in the examination and care of all patients, regardless of the diagnosis.
3. Students are responsible for conducting themselves in a manner that is consistent with the health and safety of themselves and others and shall be given appropriate training to do so. Students who fail to meet these responsibilities may, depending on the circumstances, face sanctions under the provisions of the Standards of Professional Behaviour for: Medical Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students; Occupational Therapy Students, Physical Therapy Students, or Radiation Sciences Students.
4. Students are required to comply with the immunization policies of the Faculty.
STUDENTS WHO ARE EXPOSED TO A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE OR ADVERSE EXPOSURE IN THE COURSE OF THEIR STUDIES

Students who incur an injury or other medically related incident, including an incident that may have placed them at risk of acquiring a communicable disease, during the performance of activities as a part of their education program, must immediately seek medical attention. The incident must be reported by the student, at the earliest opportunity, to the appropriate Academy Director or Head of Training Program or Department Chair and to the relevant Associate Dean, if appropriate. Complete documentation of the incident will be made by these officers. The Associate Dean will assure that appropriate counselling is provided.

CO-RESPONSIBILITY WITH HOSPITALS

The Faculty of Medicine and the teaching hospitals each are responsible for ensuring that students are adequately instructed in infection control as it relates to communicable diseases. This will include the following:

1. The Faculty will provide an introductory program on body substance precautions, infection control and occupational health and inform students as to their responsibilities with respect to infection control and occupational health.
2. Affiliated teaching hospitals are required to comply with the Communicable Disease Surveillance Protocols for Ontario Hospitals developed under the Public Hospital Act, Regulation 965. Compliance with these Protocols requires the hospitals to provide instruction in infection control precautions and occupational health.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

All students will receive appropriate instruction with respect to adverse exposures (e.g., chemicals and radiation) which they may encounter during their program.

"While students are not covered by the Occupational Health and Safety Act or its regulations, the University is also committed to fulfilling its responsibilities concerning the health and safety of its students." (University of Toronto Health and Safety Management Policy June 1993.)

"Where students are paid to perform work, for example teaching assistants, or summer students, they become workers under the (Occupational Health) Act. In addition, students and others such as post-doctoral fellows, who are performing work on University premises not for pay, but for educational and other proper purposes, are considered by the University to have rights and responsibilities under the Health and Safety Program that are identical to those of workers." (University of Toronto Occupational Health and Safety Management System Jan 1996.)

"Faculty members are regarded as supervisors when they have charge of a place (such as a laboratory) where work is done on a paid or unpaid basis or when they have some degree of authority over employees, undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, colleagues, visiting scholars, volunteers, visitors or others." (ibid.)

"Every manager and supervisor is responsible for: fulfilling the requirements of the University's Health and Safety Program; taking every reasonable precaution to protect and promote the health and safety of those persons reporting directly and indirectly to him/her; complying with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and regulations and the rules and procedures developed under the University Health and Safety Program." (ibid.)

EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC COMMUNICABLE DISEASES INCLUDED IN THIS POLICY

Blood-borne pathogens
HIV / Hepatitis B, C, D.

Enteric pathogens
Salmonella / Shigella / Campylobacter / E-coli 0:157/ verotoxin producing Giardia Amoebiasis

Other
Influenza / Hepatitis A / Meningococcal disease/ Measles / Mumps /Rubella / Tuberculosis / Varicella