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POLICY

Requires influenza immunization on an annual basis for all personnel working/volunteering within a Penn Medicine facility.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to protect patients, employees, family members and the community from influenza infection through annual immunization of all Penn Medicine faculty, staff, employees, contracted clinical personnel*, and volunteers.

**Contracted clinical personnel are those who have direct contact with patients or their environment.*

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Penn Medicine faculty and staff as well as all contracted clinical personnel, students/trainees in clinical setting, clinical research personnel, and volunteers.

IMPLEMENTATION

HRIS assumes responsibility for distributing periodic compliance reports to update managers on the immunization rates and exemptions for staff who work in their respective areas. Penn Medicine managers and supervisors are responsible for the enforcement of this policy requiring influenza immunization on an annual basis unless exemption has been granted as described below:

PROCEDURES

- A. Annual Influenza Immunization:
 1. All faculty and staff working in a Penn Medicine facility must be immunized against influenza each year. This includes all personnel as defined under the scope of the policy.
 2. Influenza vaccine is available free of charge to all Penn Medicine employees. The vaccination program is coordinated through Occupational Medicine. Dates of the influenza vaccination program will be determined by Occupational Medicine and Healthcare Epidemiology, Infection Prevention and Control on an annual basis.
 3. If faculty and staff and personnel covered by this policy are vaccinated through services other than Penn Medicine and Occupational Medicine (i.e. private physician office, public clinics) they must provide proof of immunization to Occupational Medicine. Proof of immunization may include a physician's note, a receipt, or copy of consent.

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- B. Infection Control Procedures
1. Faculty and staff and personnel covered by this policy who have been granted an exemption will be required to wear a surgical mask or particulate respirator while at work during influenza season. All personnel will be required to strictly adhere to respiratory hygiene and hand hygiene practices, as well as isolation precautions.
 2. Influenza season typically occurs sometime between November through March. The exact dates for wearing respiratory protection will be determined annually when influenza is identified in the community where the hospital or organization is located. This will be determined by the Director of the Department of Healthcare Epidemiology, Infection Prevention & Control.
- C. Occupational Medicine will maintain a record of influenza immunizations and exemptions via Lawson (HRIS).
- D. All faculty and staff and personnel covered by this policy must adhere to the Penn Medicine Influenza Immunization Policy as a condition of employment or access to Penn Medicine facilities. They must be vaccinated or granted an exemption within two months of the start of the influenza vaccination program each year.
- E. All faculty and staff, contracted clinical personnel, students/trainees, clinical research personnel, and volunteers who have not been vaccinated or granted an exemption will not be permitted to work if urgent situation is declared. An urgent situation may be declared by the Chief Medical Officer in consultation with Occupational Medicine, Healthcare Epidemiology, Infection Prevention and Control and Human Resources. Determination of an urgent situation may be based upon one or more of the following conditions:
1. Influx in patient admissions attributable to influenza;
 2. Advisories by local or state Department of Health officials or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;
 3. Marked increase in employee absenteeism.
- F. Failure to comply with the immunization policy will result in a written warning. If an individual is not vaccinated or granted an exemption within 2 weeks of the warning, they will be subject to further disciplinary action up to termination of employment.
- G. If an unvaccinated individual fails to comply with the masking policy following a written warning, they are subject to further disciplinary action up to termination of employment..
- H. In the event of an influenza vaccine shortage, the situation will be evaluated by the Chief Medical Officer at the corporate level in collaboration with Occupational Medicine, Infection Control, Human Resources, Pharmacy and Administration. Influenza vaccine will be offered to faculty and staff and personnel covered by this policy based on job function and risk of exposure to influenza. Priority will be given to those who provide direct hands-on patient care with prolonged face-to-face contact with patients, care for patients at high risk for complications from influenza and/or have highest risk of exposure to patients with influenza, as well as to personnel who are at high risk for complications from influenza..

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I. Exemptions

1. Exemption to immunization may be granted for medical contraindications or religious beliefs.
2. Individuals requesting exemption due to medical contraindications must provide proof of medical contraindications such as a letter from their private physician. Medical contraindications include:
 - i. Documented adverse reaction to influenza vaccine
 - ii. Documented allergy to a vaccine component
3. Individuals requesting a religious accommodation must provide a letter from clergy supporting exception as documentation. Request must be consistent with prior vaccination history.
4. Standard criteria for medical exemption will be established based upon recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The standard criteria will be utilized at each hospital and service organization.
5. Each request for exemption, regardless of the reason, will be evaluated individually by occupational medicine at the hospital or service organization level.
6. If exemption is granted, the individual will be notified in writing within five (5) business days after presenting a request for exemption in person to occupational medicine.
7. If exemption is granted for a temporary condition, the individual must resubmit a request for exemption each year. If exemption is granted for a permanent condition (e.g. allergy or history of Guillain-Barre' after a previous influenza vaccine) the exemption does not need to be requested each year unless vaccine technology would change to eliminate issues regarding allergies.

SUPERSEDES: 01-01-01	ISSUED BY: Judy Schueler <i>Vice President</i> <i>Organizational Development and</i> <i>Chief Human Resources Officer</i>
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