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Document Type: Policy	Code: DHA/HRS/HPSD/HP-09	Version Number: 2
Document Title: Health Screening and Immunization of Healthcare Professionals.	Issue Date: 21/06/2023	Effective Date: 01/01/2024
Ownership: Public Health Protection Department (PHPD) and Health Regulation Sector (HRS).		
Applicability: All Healthcare Professionals licensed by Dubai Health Authority (DHA).		

1. Purpose:

- 1.1. The Health Screening and Immunization of Healthcare Professionals Policy aims to fulfil the following overarching Dubai Health Authority (DHA) Strategic Priorities (2022-2026):
- 1.1.1. Pioneering Human-centered health system to promote trust, safety, quality and care for patients and their families.
- 1.1.2. Make Dubai a lighthouse for healthcare governance, integration and regulation.
- 1.1.3. Leading efforts to combat epidemics and infectious diseases and prepare for disasters.
- 1.1.4. Pioneering prevention efforts against non-communicable diseases.
- 1.2. To standardize health screening and immunization requirements for all DHA licensed healthcare professionals.
- 1.3. To identify and manage healthcare professionals who may be a source of blood borne pathogens and communicable disease transmission.
- 1.4. To protect the public and patients from the risk of blood borne pathogens and communicable

disease transmission.

2. Scope:

2.1. Occupational health screening and immunization for all healthcare professionals licensed by DHA.

3. Definitions:

Blood Borne Pathogens: pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) and Hepatitis C Virus (HCV).

Committee for Exemption of Special Cases from Medical Fitness Test: Committee formed by DHA to ensure that the procedures of requesting exemption of special cases from medical fitness test are unified and standarderdzied at the concerned entities and the DHA, and in accordance with the legislation in force, including the Cabinet Decision No. (75) of 2022, on amending certain provisions of the Cabinet Decision No. (7) of 2008, regarding Medical Fitness Test for Expatriates coming to UAE for Work and Residency, and 2. As well, ensure that the decisions regarding the requests of exempting special cases from medical fitness test are taken promptly an in accordance with the provisions of legislation in force

Communicable Disease: illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxins that occurs through the direct or indirect transmission of the infectious agent or its products from an infected individual or via an animal, vector or the inanimate environment to a susceptible animal or human host.

Contraindications: conditions in a recipient that increases the risk for a serious adverse reaction.

Direct contact infections: infections that spread when disease-causing microorganisms pass from

the infected person to the healthy person via direct physical contact with blood or body fluids.

Indirect contact infections: infections that spread when an infected person sneezes or coughs, with aerolization of infectious droplets. If healthy people inhale the infectious droplets, or if the contaminated droplets land directly in their eyes, nose or mouth, they risk becoming ill. Droplets generally travel between three and six feet and land on surfaces or objects including tables, doorknobs and telephones. Healthy people touch the contaminated objects with their hands, and then touch their eyes, nose or mouth.

Health Facility: DHA licensed health facility that performs medical examinations on patients, diagnosing their diseases, treating or nursing them, admitting them for convalescence, or assuming any activity related to treatment or to rehabilitation after treatment, whether it is owned or managed by natural or juridical persons.

Healthcare Professional: DHA licensed healthcare professional working in a DHA licensed health facility and required to be licensed as per the applicable laws in the United Arab Emirates.

Interferon Gamma Release Assay: blood test that can be used to help in the diagnosis of latent TB.

Medical Fitness Center: Standalone facility where medical examination & testing carried to prove the fitness to practice the occupation, profession, clearance the individual from specific test or condition. The center shall have the resources and services to perform the activities such as laboratory and radiology.

Occupational Health Center: Designated medical center that provides standardized screening tests and issues Occupational Health Certificates for specified occupational categories as required

by the Federal Law.

DHA : Dubai Health Authority

HBV : Hepatitis B Virus

HCV : Hepatitis C Virus

HIV : Human Immunodeficiency Virus

HRS : Health Regulation Sector

IgG : Immunoglobulin

IGRA : Interferon Gamma Release Assay

MMR : Measles, Mumps, Rubella

MFD : Medical Fitness Department

OHS : Occupational Health Screening

PHPD : Public Health Protection Department

TB : Tuberculosis

Td : Tetanus and Diphtheria

Tdap : Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis

UAE : United Arab Emirates

VZV : Varicella Zoster Virus

4. Policy Statement

4.1. All DHA licensed healthcare professionals in the Emirate of Dubai shall adhere to health screening and immunization requirements in accordance to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Federal laws and local regulations.

- 4.2. All health facilities shall maintain up to date registry of healthcare professionals records on their health screening and immunization status.
- 4.2.1. Healthcare Professionals Fitness and Immunity Registry shall be reported on annual basis to hpfitandimmreg@dha.gov.ae
- 4.2.2. Health facilities shall maintain the registries for DHA inspection.
- 4.3. The health facility must ensure healthcare professionals have access to appropriate testing, counselling and immunization services.
- 4.4. All healthcare professionals (including the golden visa holders) shall undergo screening in medical fitness centers or occupational health centers upon pre-employment and then once every two years.
- 4.5. All healthcare professionals shall perform occupational health screening at a DHA licensed Occupational Health Center.
- 4.5.1. The Occupational Health Center will screen all healthcare professionals and undertake a physical examination and a mini-mental state examination for healthcare professionals over the age of 60 years.
- 4.6. The screening shall include the below listed investigations:
- 4.6.1. HIV Antigen/Antibody.
- 4.6.2. Tuberculosis screening (TB) by IGRA test and chest X-ray.
- 4.6.3. Hepatitis B Virus Surface Antigen (HBV S Antigen).
- 4.6.4. Hepatitis C Virus Surface Antibody (HCV Antibody).
- 4.6.5. Rubella-IgG Antibody.

4.6.6. Measles-IgG Antibody.

4.6.7. Varicella Zoster Virus (VZV)-IgG Antibody.

4.7. Screening is not needed if immunity is proven by previous test.

4.7.1. Healthcare professionals should submit a laboratory based evidence.

4.8. Healthcare professionals infected with TB, HBV, HCV and HIV will be subject to UAE Federal and local and Regulations Cabinet Resolution No. (5) of 2016.

4.8.1. The health facility shall refer any healthcare professionals found to be positive for any of the blood borne pathogens or infections including HBV, HCV and HIV to the Committee for Exemption of Special Cases from Medical Fitness Test for their review and decision.

4.8.2. Referral to the committee shall be done through official channels (mfexemption@dha.gov.ae).

4.8.3. A comprehensive medical report with proper baseline assessment and required labs/imaging according to underlying diagnosis shall be included in the referral.

4.8.4. If the healthcare professionals was granted the license, then the health facility management must ensure healthcare professional's clinical involvement is strictly followed as per the committee recommendations.

4.9. Vaccination and Immunization.

4.9.1. Mandatory vaccines for non-immune healthcare professionals:

- a. HBV
- b. Varicella

c. MMR

4.9.2. Hepatitis B antibody will be checked after the vaccination is completed.

a. If the Hepatitis B antibody is still <10 international units, then the healthcare professionals will be labelled as a non-responder.

4.9.3. Varicella vaccine and MMR vaccine will be offered to all non-immune healthcare professionals based on serology testing.

4.9.4. Recommended vaccines:

a. Annual influenza vaccine.

b. Pneumococcal Vaccine, if clinically indicated.

c. Tdap (if no prior dose) one time, and then Td or Tdap booster once every 10 years.

d. COVID-19 vaccine, as per guidelines.

4.9.5. In cases of proof of vaccination or a proof of passive immunity (IGg) antibodies resulted from a previous infection healthcare professionals will be exempted from mandatory vaccination.

4.9.6. Healthcare professionals evaluated with contraindications to receive the vaccines, shall provide evidence to the health facility and maintain it as reference for DHA's audit.

4.9.7. Health facility shall evaluate the healthcare professional's risk of exposure and provide necessary vaccines.

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