HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis Policy

1. Authorisation
   This policy was reviewed by the Dawson Street Childcare Cooperative Committee of Management, at the Committee meeting on June 16th, 2008.

2. Review Date
   This policy will be reviewed in June 2009.

3. Scope
   This policy applies to parents/guardians, the Committee, the staff and volunteers involved in the operation of Dawson Street Childcare Co-Operative.

4. Background and Legislation
   Viruses such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis are health issues which concern everyone. HIV/AIDS has aroused community anxiety, often because of misinformation and ignorance.

   DSCCC, by providing this policy, is:
   
   • Endorsing a caring and supportive approach to this issue.
   • Helping to inform parents and staff about the facts of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis.
   • Assuring users of DSCCC, that DSCCC is aware of its responsibilities of providing a safe environment for staff, children and parents.
   • Assuring the community that the service is carrying out its responsibilities in relation to government legislation concerning HIV/AIDS, the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Health Act. This includes protecting against discrimination and ensuring confidentiality for staff and users in relation to the HIV/AIDS and hepatitis status of persons concerned.
   • Fulfilling obligations under all relevant State and Commonwealth legislation.

Legislation

   Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985
   Equal Opportunity Act 1995
   Health Act 1958

5. Definitions

   AIDS: Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome.
   DHS: Department of Human Services
   HIV: The virus that causes AIDS, which is known as Human Immuno Deficiency Virus.
   Hepatitis: This is a general term for inflammation of the liver, which can be caused by alcohol, drugs (including prescribed medications) or viral infections. There are several types of viral hepatitis namely A, B, C, D, E and G.
   Infection Control: The name given to a combination of basic hygiene measures to prevent the spread of infection.
6. Policy Statements

Anti Discrimination

- No employee, prospective employee, employer, parent/guardian or child will be discriminated against or harassed on the grounds of having, or being assumed to have, a HIV or hepatitis infection.
- Being infected with HIV is not grounds for exclusion of a child, parent/guardian, staff member or employer.
- DSCCC will ensure that all staff and volunteers understand the concepts of discrimination and harassment, and will implement comprehensive grievance procedures that provide effective processes for resolving grievances, at all levels of the organisation.

Confidentiality

Information regarding HIV/AIDS and the hepatitis status of any child, parent/guardian, or staff member will remain confidential and all reasonable steps will be taken to develop and implement systems to protect the privacy of that person.

Infection control and the provision of a safe work place

- DSCCC will provide all staff with information on their responsibilities towards service users and people in their care in relation to this policy.
- DSCCC shall at all times follow proper infection control procedures to minimise the risk of the transmission of blood borne viruses such as HIV and hepatitis.
- No child, staff member or parent/guardian will be denied First Aid at any time.
- DSCCC will ensure that First Aid equipment for protection against the risk of infection from blood borne viruses will be available and used at all times.
- DSCCC will provide, as far as practicable, a healthy and safe environment.
- Staff are required to take reasonable care to protect their own health and safety and that of others in the workplace at all times.

Information and education

DSCCC will provide access to information for parents/guardians, the Management Committee, the staff and volunteers involved in the operation of DSCCC:

- The basic facts on preventative measures for HIV/AIDS and hepatitis.
- Where they may access further information.
- Support services as required.

7. Procedures

7.1 Infection Control

All body fluid spills and abrasions are a potential hazard. Therefore infection control procedures will be used when dealing with these in order to provide maximum protection from the potential hazard.

The following statements are based on the principle that all people are potentially infectious and that infection control procedures will be practised at all times:

- Staff will have access to materials as required that will enable them to implement infection control procedures. [This will include bleach, latex gloves etc. Disposable latex gloves will be available in the First Aid cabinet at all times.]
- A step-by-step procedure on infection control (Appendix 1) will be displayed and complied with by DSCCC. Both existing staff and new staff as part of their induction will be made aware of this procedure.
- The service will have available a booklet/publication on infection control. (Information on publications on infection control is contained in Appendix 2 attached to this policy.)

7.2 Responding to Exposure
Full details of any exposure to a body fluid spill and abrasion must be recorded in the Accident, Injury and Illness Book for children and the Incident/Injury Register for staff, students and volunteers

Following any incident which a staff member believes may have resulted in exposure to HIV/AIDS or hepatitis, the staff member should seek the advice of a qualified medical practitioner immediately, to assess the need for testing and report this to the Director who will treat this information as confidential.

7.3 Exclusion of Children with Hepatitis

As the DHS School Exclusion Table requires the exclusion of children and staff with acute hepatitis A or B, parents/guardians and staff must inform DSCCC if their child attending the service or the staff member has contracted either of these diseases.

7.4 Confidentiality

There is no obligation, legal or otherwise for anyone to inform an employer, service provider, or service of their own or their child’s HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C or other blood borne virus status, consequently:

- Such information must not be disclosed without informed consent of the individual [or guardian for a person under the age of 18 years].
- The only reason a parent would inform the teacher of the child’s blood-borne disease status would be for the benefit of the child.
- Staff or committee members, in receipt of verbal or written information relating to the HIV/AIDS or blood borne disease status and condition of any child or staff member, must take all reasonable precautions to protect the child or staff member’s privacy.
- All such information must be kept securely [under lock and key] within the service; access to this information must only be by the person who has been informed. Information relating to the blood borne status will be destroyed once the person leaves the employment of, or ceases to attend DSCCC.
- No routine or mandatory blood borne disease testing may be carried out on children or staff.
- No testing may be carried out without the informed consent of the individual and provision of pre and post-test counselling, by an accredited counsellor or qualified medical practitioner. [Contacts for accredited counsellors are listed under 9 Resources and Support.]

7.5 Complaints

Any grievances or complaints relating to this policy will be addressed through DSCCC’s Complaints Policy.
8. Key Responsibilities and Authorities

Responsibilities

DSCCC is responsible for implementing the policy.

The staff are responsible for:

- Implementing infection control procedures at all times.
- Recording any exposure to a body fluid spill or abrasion in the appropriate book or register.
- Notifying the DSCCC Management Committee if they believe they have been exposed to HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis at DSCCC.

The Management Committee and staff are responsible for keeping confidential any information which is received in relation to the HIV/AIDS or hepatitis status of a child, family or staff member.

9. Resources and Support

Training

All staff will receive infection control training at induction.

Staff in conjunction with the Management Committee, will review their training needs in relation to infection control on an annual basis.

Organisations offering training for staff are provided in Appendix 2.

Related documents

DSCCC Occupational Health & Safety Policy

Publications

A list of relevant publications is listed in Appendix 2.

10. Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes set out under 6 Policy Statement, the Committee will:

- In consultation with staff, review the infection control procedures and adherence to them at least annually.
- If appropriate, conduct a survey in relation to aspects of the policy or incorporate relevant questions within the general parent/guardian survey.
- Take into consideration feedback, regarding infection control and the policy, from staff, parents/guardians and Committee members and adjust infection control procedures, or provide additional information on the subject, if appropriate.

11. Review

The Management Committee have requested that a review of this policy will be conducted in twelve months time, in June 2009.

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<tr>
<th>Date Reviewed</th>
<th>Details of Changes (if any)</th>
<th>Date of Next Review</th>
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<td>June 2008</td>
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Appendix 1: Step by Step Procedure for Infection Control Relating to Blood-Borne Viruses

Blood spills
Equipment and procedures for managing blood spills and providing first aid for patients who are bleeding are detailed below:

Anyone working with children, who may need to respond to an incident involving blood, needs to cover cuts, sores or abrasions they may have on their hands and arms with waterproof dressings, while at the service.

Cleaning and removal of blood spills

Equipment
Disposable gloves
Disposable plastic bags
Warm water and detergent
Disposable towels

Bleach. Strength should be 10,000 parts per million, approximately to one quarter of a cup of household bleach to one cup of water. Ensure that bleach has not passed its use by date and that it is mixed fresh on each occasion.

Procedure
• Put on disposable gloves.
• Saturate disposable towel in bleach solution.
• Cover the spill with the towel.
• Leave the towel in place for 10 minutes.
• Place towel in disposable plastic bag.
• Wash area with warm water and detergent.
• Place gloves into disposable plastic bag.
• Seal bag and dispose of it appropriately taking into consideration health and safety issues.
• Wash hands in warm soapy water.
• Soak any utensils used in bleach solution for 30 minutes, then wash in warm to hot soapy water and rinse.

Care needs to be taken to ensure that children do not have access to the bleach saturated towel.

Providing first aid for children who are bleeding

Equipment
Antiseptic
Disposable plastic bags
Disposable gloves
Waterproof dressings
Disposable towels
Warm water and detergent

Procedure
• Adult treating child to cover any uncovered cuts, sores or abrasions on arms and hands with waterproof dressings.
• Put on disposable gloves.
• Wash wound under warm running water and apply antiseptic to wound.
• Apply waterproof dressing to the wound if necessary.
Dawson Street Child Care Co-operative Policy Manual

- Remove gloves and place in disposable plastic bag, tie securely.
- Seal bag and dispose of it appropriately taking into consideration health and safety issues.
- Wash hands in warm soapy water.
- Contaminated clothing or sick room linen should be removed and stored in leak-proof disposable plastic bags until they can be washed as follows using gloves:
- Rinse in cold water.
- Soak in 1:10 bleach solution (1 Part bleach 10 parts water) for 30 minutes, then rinse off bleach.
- After soaking, wash clothes and sick room linen separately from other laundry, at a high temperature on a long cycle.

Safe disposal of discarded needles/syringes

Equipment and procedures for the safe disposal of discarded needles and syringes are detailed below:

**Equipment**
- Disposable gloves.
- Long handled tongs.
- Disposable plastic bags.
- ‘Sharps’ syringe disposal container or plastic container with a screw-top lid.

**Procedure:**
- Put on disposable gloves.
- Do not try to recap the needle.
- Place the disposal container on the ground next to the syringe.
- Pick up the syringe as far from the needle end as possible, using tongs if not easily accessible.
- Place the syringe, needle point down, in the disposal container and screw the lid back on firmly.
- Repeat this procedure to pick up all syringes and/or unattached needles.
- Remove gloves and place in disposable plastic bag.
- Seal and dispose of the plastic bag.
- If tongs are used, soak in bleach solution for 30 minutes, then wash in hot soapy water and rinse.
- Wash hands in warm, soapy water.

*Under no circumstances should work experience students or children be permitted to pick up needles/syringes.*

Syringe disposal containers or syringes must not be put in normal waste disposal bins.

Syringe disposal containers may be disposed of by:
- Telephoning the Disposal Help Line on 1800 552355 for the location of the nearest needle exchange outlet or public disposal bin.
- Contacting the local hospital.
- Contacting the Risk Reduction Unit at the Department of Human Services on 03 9637 4000.
- Contacting the environmental officer (health surveyor) at the local municipal/council offices; also for any further concerns about syringe disposal.

**Needle stick injuries**

The Department of Human Services has indicated that the risk of infection from needle stick injury is low and should not cause alarm.

The following procedures should be observed in case of needle stick injury:
Flush the affected part with running water and detergent.

Wash in warm, soapy water.

Dry area, apply antiseptic to the wound and cover with a waterproof dressing if necessary.

Report the injury to the President.

See a doctor as soon as possible and report the circumstances of the injury.

This procedure is based on advice provided by the Department of Education, Employment and Training and the Department of Human Services.
Appendix 2: Relevant Publications and Training Providers

Publications

Department of Human Services
Health Protection Section (03) 9637 4184, GPO Box 1670N Melbourne 3000
- AIDS Your Questions Answered
- Public Health – Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B – the facts
- Hepatitis C – the facts

Youth Family and Community Services
- DHS Children’s Services Licensing Operational Guide (Chapter 4 Health and Welfare of Children)

Government Info Shop (03) 9670 4224
(This is the Victorian outlet for AUSINFO)
190 Queen Street Melbourne.
- HIV & Hepatitis B in the Workplace

Information Victoria 1300 366 356
356 Collins Street Melbourne.
- Health (General Amendment) Act 1988.

Equal Opportunity Commission Victoria (03) 9281 7111 1800 134 142
380 Lonsdale Street Melbourne.
- HIV, AIDS & Hepatitis C Discrimination
- Discrimination against people living with HIV or AIDS
- Hepatitis C Discrimination.

Lady Gowrie Child Centre (03) 9347 6388
36 Newry Street North Carlton 3054
- Staying Healthy in Child Care
- HIV/AIDS and Child Care
- Managing the Risks in Children’s Services.

Community Child Care Co Op Ltd (NSW) (02) 9557 5599
Locked Bag 19 Newtown 2042
- HIV/AIDS and Child Care

AECA -Victorian Branch (03) 9427 8474
9-11 Stewart Street Richmond 3121
- Guidelines for Prevention and Control of Infection in Child Care Settings

Training for Staff

Red Cross 1800 811 700
171 City Road South Bank
- Inservices held across Victoria
First Aid Course level 2
Essential First Aid

St John’s Ambulance  13 13 94
98 York St. South Melbourne. (Headquarters)
Inservices held across Victoria
Emergency First Aid, level 2
Basic Life Support.

Accredited Counsellors
Contact Coordinator, HIV Service  (03) 9342 8834
Victorian Infectious Diseases Service
Royal Melbourne Hospital
Gratton Street Parkville
Postal Address: VIDS, 9 North C/- PO RMH 3050

Victorian AIDS Council  1800 134840
6 Claremont Street South Yarra 3141