

PATHWAYS ABILITIES SOCIETY

POLICY: UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Applies to: All Personnel, Volunteers and Persons Served

PREAMBLE

Pathways Abilities Society is committed to ensuring the safe keeping of all individuals and staff. Implementation of the following measures and procedures are required in order to uphold a safe and practiced level of Universal Precautions.

Universal Precautions is the practice of stopping the spread of germs to others because 90% of the time we are unable to tell if someone is infected. All human blood and certain human body fluids are potentially infectious for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis A, B and C and other blood borne pathogens.

HIV and Hepatitis A, B and C can be found in blood, semen, vaginal secretion, feces and breast milk. Other body fluids such as urine, vomit, nasal secretion, sputum and saliva may contain infectious germs that cause other diseases therefore all body fluids must be handled as if they are infectious.

Pathways Abilities Society recognizes its role as an educator. We are committed to keeping resources and up-to-date information on HIV, Hepatitis A, B and C available and accessible to all service recipients and employees. Questions or concerns may be directed to a supervisor or management personnel.

POLICY

All staff and volunteers must observe and adhere to the Universal Precautions for the prevention of infectious diseases procedures.

All Pathways Abilities Society locations will contain:

- Hazardous cleanup kits.
- Disposable gloves (also available in all Pathways Abilities Society vehicles).
- Additional devices which potentially prevent the spread of germs or diseases.

Pathways Abilities Society recognizes that we may provide services to individuals or employ persons or volunteers who live with an infectious or communicable disease. Pathways Abilities Society's primary responsibility is to ensure everyone is safe. An individual receiving services, employee or volunteer will not be discriminated against solely as result of becoming infected with an infectious or communicable disease. Infection will be treated like any other medical problem.

Knowledge of an individual's condition will not affect the delivery of services to that person. Refusal to serve the person will be treated according to the same disciplinary process as refusing to fulfill any other employment obligation.

Pre-existing conditions of any illness may preclude an employee from being eligible for enrollment in the organization's benefit plan.

Outbreak of Disease

There are two major types of illnesses that can contribute to an outbreak:

Respiratory infections (RI) –This illness is spread in the droplets sneezed or coughed from infected individuals that then come into direct or indirect contact with the mucous membranes of the eyes, mouth, nose or airway of another person (Interior Health, 2018).

RI Case is defined as a new or worsening cough and a fever greater than 38°C or a temperature that is abnormal for the person and at least one other symptom which may include muscle/joint pain, extreme fatigue, runny nose, sore throat, and/or headache.

A RI outbreak is defined as two or more cases of RI occurring in the same residency within a 7 day period amongst staff and/or residents.

Gastrointestinal (GI) infection – A viral or bacterial infection of the gastrointestinal tract causing any or all of the following symptoms: diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, fever, headaches and/or rashes. This infection is spread from person to person through direct or indirect contact via the fecal/oral route (Interior Health, 2018).

GI infection case is defined as one of the following conditions that cannot be attributed to another cause (e.g. laxative use, medication side effect, prior medical condition, diet). Two or more episodes of diarrhea or two or more episodes of vomiting in a 24 hour period, or one episode of both diarrhea and vomiting in a 24 hour period, or one episode of bloody diarrhea or positive culture for GI pathogen with a symptom of GI infection.

A GI outbreak is defined as three or more cases of GI illness in the same residential setting in a four day period.

See Universal Precautions and Infectious Diseases Procedure for instruction on what steps to take if an outbreak is declared.

Effective/Revision Date

April 28, 2003
October 29, 2008
September 12, 2011
December 21, 2012
March 26, 2018
June 24, 2020

Board Approved

Date Approved

April 28, 2003
October 29, 2008
September 12, 2011
December 21, 2012
March 26, 2018
June 24, 2020