

## Hiv / Aids Policy for Bishop's University

*Prepared by the AIDS Policy Committee  
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by Health Services*

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### INTRODUCTION

It is the intent of this document to ensure the protection of individual human rights and civil liberties. Because of popular fears and misinformation regarding the disease, it is important to adopt a policy against which to measure and, if necessary, act upon any occurrences of concern relating to individuals known or suspected of having HIV/AIDS.

As part of its concern for the health and safety of the entire University community, Bishop's University has developed the following institutional and departmental guidelines on HIV/AIDS. These guidelines are based on the best currently available medical evidence which indicates the **students and employees with HIV/AIDS do not pose a health risk to other students or employees in a usual academic, work or residential setting.**

The University recognizes its responsibility to provide educational programs in order to protect the student body and employees from unreasonable risks of transmission of the disease. The University also recognizes that because of the complex medical, legal, and procedural issues raised by HIV/AIDS, the institution must analyze and respond to any cases of HIV/AIDS in light of these particular facts.

There is a reciprocal responsibility however, in that any students, faculty or staff who are aware that they have HIV/AIDS, are expected to conduct themselves with due regard for the health and well/being of others.

#### **What is AIDS?**

**AIDS** stands for Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. AIDS is the advanced stage of the disease caused by a virus called **HIV** - Human Immunodeficiency Virus.

#### **How do you become infected?**

High concentrations of HIV can be found in blood, semen and vaginal fluids of infected people. The virus is spread by:

##### **1. Sexual Intercourse**

Any person infected with HIV can transmit the virus to another person through vaginal and anal intercourse. Oral sex is considered a lower risk activity.

##### **2. Injection Drug Use**

Sharing needles or syringes for injecting drugs like cocaine or heroin can pass infected blood from one person to another. This is a very dangerous activity.

Instruments that puncture the skin like tattoo, ear-piercing and acupuncture equipment could be contaminated if not sterilized properly.

##### **3. An Infected Mother To Her Baby During Pregnancy Or At Birth**

Also, there are rare cases of transmission through the breast milk of an infected mother.

#### **Points of Interest**

- The risk of becoming infected by transfusions of blood or blood products is extremely low in Canada, because strict testing procedures have been in place for all blood donations since November 1985.

- Contact with infected blood through cuts, sores or accidental needle injuries has very rarely caused infection.
- In a very few instances, transplanted organs or sperm donations have spread infection, but now all tissue donors are tested to eliminate this risk.

### **What does not cause infection?**

The good news is that HIV infection cannot be caught through casual, everyday contact. Shaking hands, hugging, kissing, coughing, sneezing, public swimming pools, toilet seats, bed linen, eating utensils, food, mosquitos or animals do not cause HIV infection.

### **While HIV has been detected in low concentrations in other body fluids such as saliva, urine and tears, these have not caused infection.**

Donating blood is safe. You **cannot** get HIV by donating blood, as a new needle is used for every donor.

## **I. INSTITUTIONAL GUIDELINES**

Bishop's University is not a medical regulatory agency, nor does it desire to infringe upon the civil liberties of any member of its community. No student, staff or faculty member is obligated to disclose to the University whether he/she has been tested for AIDS, the presence of the HIV antibody, or to provide or disclose the results of such tests.

Bishop's University will encourage the development of educational programs about AIDS for students and employees and will not discriminate against any student, staff, or faculty who has HIV/AIDS.

- The University will not refuse admission or employment to any person for the sole reason that this person has HIV/AIDS.
- The University will make no attempt to identify students, faculty or staff who have HIV/AIDS.
- The University will undertake to provide information and educational services to faculty and staff.
- The University will not issue rebates or grant permission for course withdrawal/changes (after appropriate deadlines) for reasons of refusal to associate with a student, professor or instructor who is known or suspected to have HIV/AIDS.
- Students with HIV/AIDS-related illnesses will be accorded the same academic considerations as any other student. (i.e. deferred exams, extensions of deadlines, etc.)
- Similarly, the University will not condone the refusal of faculty or staff to instruct, associate with, or otherwise provide regular academic services to any student who is known or suspected to have HIV/AIDS.
- If situations related to HIV/AIDS arise and are causing concern, the University will analyze and respond to each case as required by its own particular facts.

## **II. DEPARTMENTAL GUIDELINES - Student Services**

### **Health Services**

- There will be no screening for HIV/AIDS on routine examinations unless requested by the student.
- Information relating to students with HIV/AIDS will be treated as confidential medical records. There will be no release of information without the expressed written permission of the patient.
- Any case of AIDS is automatically reported to the M.S.S.S. (Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux). The tracing of sexual contacts is the responsibility of the M.S.S.S.

### **Residences and Food Services**

The Residence Service has a responsibility to support an environment free of unreasonable risks for its residents. Thus, the department will participate in educational programs on HIV/AIDS for students.

- If a student with HIV/AIDS is known to be living in residence, no information regarding that student will be given to other students.
- Students with HIV/AIDS will not be restricted from cafeterias, snack bars, pubs or other common areas.
- Routine testing of food service workers for HIV/AIDS will not be undertaken.
- Food service workers who prepare or serve food or beverages will not be restricted

from work unless there is evidence of having contracted an infectious disease which would require any food service worker to be restricted. All food service workers should follow recommended standards and practices of good hygiene and food sanitation. (in particular, see Appendix "A")

- If situations arise that cause concern, decisions must be made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with appropriate departments or experts. The Health Services should be considered for consultation.

### **Student Counselling Service**

- A counsellor is available to discuss HIV/AIDS related concerns from students. All information remains strictly confidential.
- The Counselling Service will undertake to provide information to concerned students and student organizations regarding HIV/AIDS.

### **Athletics**

The Department of Athletics will provide educational programs on HIV/AIDS for its staff and students.

- Students with HIV/AIDS will not be restricted from gymnasium, swimming pools, saunas, or other recreational facilities.
- Similarly, faculty, staff, and the general public will not be restricted from these areas.
- Where there is an accident involving bleeding, first aid guidelines should be followed. If these guidelines are applied, there will be low risk of transmission of any infectious disease. (See Appendix A)

### **Classrooms and Laboratories**

- Students will be allowed to attend classes in an unrestricted manner as long as they are physically able to attend classes.
- Faculty and staff who have HIV/AIDS will not be restricted from work.
- Laboratory courses requiring exposure to blood, such as finger pricks for blood typing or examination, should use disposable equipment. No student will be required to obtain or process the blood of others.
- Blood, already screened, can be obtained from the Red Cross. Safe procedures for the decontamination of surfaces and objects soiled by blood should be adopted. (See appendix A).

## **APPENDIX A: Precautions for Staff and Students Exposed to Blood or Body Fluids**

The following procedures should be followed to minimize contact with blood and body fluids.

### **1. First Aid**

- Latex gloves should be worn before any contact is made with blood or other body fluids.
- If blood or other body fluids are splashed on the first-aider, he/she should wash the entire area immediately and thoroughly with soap and water.
- Any used gauzes or other material contaminated with blood or body fluids, should be placed into a separate bag. A solution of bleach (dilution 1:10) should be added to this bag. Secure the bag with a twist tie. After 20 minutes the items will be disinfected and could be added to the regular garbage.

### **2. Cleaning**

- Surfaces soiled by blood should be washed with a bleach solution (dilution of 1 in 10). If doing cleaning by hand such as wiping a surface, latex gloves should be worn. Disposable materials such as paper towels should be used. Mops should be rinsed in the bleach solution.
- Blood stained clothing or other material should be rinsed out in cold water using latex gloves and then laundered normally.
- Blood stained disposable articles, including gloves, should be placed in a plastic bag. A solution of bleach (dilution 1:10) should be added to the bag. Secure the bag with a twist tie. After 20 minutes the items will be disinfected and could be added to the regular garbage.

**If these procedures are followed, it would be almost impossible to acquire an infectious disease from blood or body fluids.**

