



Influenza Immunization Policy

Policy

It is the policy of Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center (WFBMC) to protect patients, employees, students, trainees, volunteers, and the community from influenza infection through annual immunization of all WFBMC employees, students, trainees, and volunteers.

Application

This policy applies to all WFBMC employees, students, trainees, volunteers, and other ‘persons of interest’ who are provided with badge access to any Medical Center facilities. For purposes of this policy:

- WFBMC includes North Carolina Baptist Hospital, Wake Forest University Health Sciences, and their subsidiaries.
- Employees include faculty, regular full-time, part-time, and PRN staff, House Officers, and contract staff.
- Students include medical students, physician assistant students, graduate students within the Medical Center, students of the Nurse Anesthesia Program, student interns, and administrative residents.
- Trainees refers to post-doctoral program trainees (Postdocs).
- Volunteers refers to all persons performing volunteer work in the Medical Center, including all volunteers in the Volunteer Services Department.
- Other Persons of Interest refers to all other persons who are provided with Medical Center badges to access facilities. This includes independent contractors and employees of vendors.

Practice

A. Annual Influenza Immunization

1. All persons covered by this policy must be immunized against influenza each year.
2. The annual influenza immunization program is coordinated by WFBMC Employee Health Services.
3. Dates for the annual influenza immunization program and timelines for compliance with the provisions of this policy will be established and communicated each year by the

Director of Employee Health Services, in consultation with the Medical Director of WFBMC Infection Control.

4. Influenza vaccine is provided free of charge to all WFBMC employees, students, trainees, and volunteers. All other persons covered by this policy may receive influenza vaccine from Employee Health Services for a fee or provide proof of influenza immunization from an outside source.
5. Covered persons who are vaccinated through services other than WFBMC Employee Health Services, such as a private physician office or public clinic, must provide proof of immunization to Employee Health Services. Acceptable forms of proof are a physician's note or immunization record identifying the type of vaccine administered, date of vaccination, vaccine manufacturer, lot number, and anatomical location.

B. Exemptions

1. Medical Exemptions

- a. Exemption to immunization may be granted for medical contraindications such as extreme allergy to eggs or a component of the flu vaccine or a history of Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS).
- b. Requests for exemption due to medical contraindications must be submitted through PeopleSoft Self Service by the deadline identified during each year's influenza campaign. Individuals requesting exemption due to medical contraindications must provide proof of medical contraindications, including a letter from their private physician.
- c. Requests for exemption due to medical contraindications will be evaluated by the Director of Employee Health Services applying criteria based upon recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other general medical information as indicated. Additional information may be requested by Employee Health Services if necessary to adequately evaluate a request for medical exemption.
- d. Responses to requests for medical exemption will be provided, in writing. Persons requesting exemption are considered compliant with policy during the time requests are under review.
- e. If exemption is granted for a temporary health condition, a new request for exemption must be made each year to which the condition applies. If exemption is granted for a permanent condition, such as allergy or history of GBS, the exemption does not need to be requested each year unless vaccine technology would change to eliminate issues regarding allergies.

2. Religious Exemptions

- a. Exemption to immunization may be granted based on individuals' religious beliefs. For purposes of this policy, "religious beliefs" include those that are theistic in nature, as well as non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as to what is right and wrong which are

sincerely held with the strength of traditional religious views. Personal preferences do not constitute religious beliefs.

- b. Individuals requesting exemption due to religious beliefs must provide a written request through PeopleSoft Self Service by the deadline identified during each year's influenza campaign. The written request must clearly explain why influenza immunization is contrary to the individual's religious beliefs.
 - c. Requests for exemption due to religious beliefs will be evaluated by the Director of Employee Health Services, in consultation with WFBMC Human Resources, applying standards established in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 relating to religious accommodations in the workplace. Additional information may be requested if necessary to adequately evaluate a request for religious exemption.
 - d. Responses to requests for religious exemption will be provided, in writing. Persons requesting exemption are considered compliant with policy during the time requests are under review.
3. Persons granted an exemption from immunization may be required to wear a surgical or isolation mask in patient care areas as necessary during the influenza season, pending an evaluation of risk to patients by the Director of Employee Health Services and the Medical Director of Infection Control.
- C. Employee Health Services will maintain records of all influenza immunizations.
 - D. In the event of an influenza vaccine shortage, relative to the population of WFBMC employees, students, trainees, and volunteers, Employee Health Services, in consultation with the Medical Director of Infection Control, will establish criteria for administration of available vaccine. Generally, priority will be given to employees who provide direct hands-on patient care and/or have high risk of exposure to patients with influenza. Employee Health Services is responsible to communicate when the vaccine is available to whom.
 - E. All provisions of this policy may also be applied to immunizations for non-seasonal influenza for which protection is not provided by the annual influenza vaccine, where it is determined that vaccinating employees, students, trainees, and volunteers is necessary to protect patients, employees, students, trainees, volunteers, and the community from infection. Application of this policy other than to annual influenza immunization will be determined by WFBMC Administration, in consultation with the Director of Employee Health Services and the Medical Director of Infection Control.
 - F. Employees or volunteers who fail to comply with the requirements of this policy will become ineligible to work at WFBMC.
 - G. Trainees, student interns, or administrative residents who fail to comply with the requirements of this policy will become ineligible to continue in their respective training programs at WFBMC.
 - H. Medical students, physician assistant students, graduate students within the Medical Center, or students of the Nurse Anesthesia Program who fail to comply with the requirements of this policy will be subject to dismissal from school.

- I. Other covered persons of interest who fail to comply with the requirements of this policy will have their badge access to Medical Center facilities discontinued.

Effective Date: September 23, 2009

Review Date:

Revision Date: _____, 2011

Approvals:

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