AIDS Policy for Students

Policy/Procedure

The policy of Dickinson College on Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is based upon concern for the welfare of the total campus community and for the infected individual within the community. It is essentially one of education and awareness, using the best resources available to convey current information. The College’s education program will describe AIDS and will outline steps that all persons in the campus community can take to prevent it. It will assure the campus community that students with HIV do not pose a health risk to others by their presence in the residential, academic, or student employment setting. Thus, they will not be barred from participation in academic and campus activities or employment except on the basis of expert medical advice. Dickinson College assumes that persons who are, or who believe they are, at risk concerning HIV will want to take steps to protect their own health and to protect the welfare of the College community. Therefore, Dickinson College’s policy encourages students to discuss confidentially their concerns about HIV with the director of the Health Center. Students who know they are HIV positive should notify the director of the Health Center. The director will assess the need for further medical evaluation and referral. This policy is consistent with the recommendations of the American College Health Association and other medical groups and educational organizations that have proposed general policy guidelines concerning HIV and AIDS.

Guidelines for AIDS Policy for Students

The following guidelines expand upon Dickinson College’s goals for ongoing education of the College community and early identification and medical follow-up of the individual with HIV. Reported HIV cases will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Medical Director in consultation with local specialists, as necessary.

The College’s goal is prevention of the spread of HIV. HIV is a biological event, a disease caused by a virus often transmitted by certain sexual or drug use behaviors. Individuals with a positive HIV may transmit the virus through anal or vaginal intercourse, sharing of needles, tattooing or piercing with unsterilized equipment, exchange of bodily fluids, and possibly through oral-genital contact (oral sex). HIV is not transmitted by any form of casual interpersonal contact (such as touching, sneezing, coughing, sharing eating utensils, toilet seats, etc.). No known safety risks are created by the presence of persons with HIV in normal academic, employment, or residential settings. AIDS education programs provide the best way for the College community to be safe and healthy. Everyone needs current information to make informed decisions.

Educational Priorities

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1 As used in this policy statement, AIDS includes AIDS, AIDS-Related Complex (ARC) and a positive test for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).
2 The Task Force on AIDS of the American College Health Association, AIDS on the College Campus, ACHA, 2nd Edition, Special Report, 1989 was the primary resource for these guidelines.
A variety of educational strategies are used by the College, e.g., printed materials, discussions with groups and individuals to inform members of the campus community about healthy choices and living with HIV and AIDS. Data repositories of current literature are housed in the Health Center. Materials about HIV are incorporated into appropriate academic and extracurricular programs. Promoting safe behavior includes:

A. Stressing in programs that abstinence from high risk behavior is the only absolute was to prevent contracting HIV.

B. Discussing sexual behaviors that decrease the likelihood of transmission of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.

C. Providing literature about Public Health Service recommendations, such as:

   a. Toothbrushes, razors, and other items that could be contaminated with blood should not be shared.

   b. Students with HIV or who engage in high risk behaviors should not donate blood, plasma, other body tissues, organs, or sperm.

   c. Surfaces contaminated with blood should be cleaned with household bleach diluted 1:10 with water or with a commercial product which kills HIV (used by housekeeping).

   d. The student should advise medical, dental, and eye care providers of the presence of HIV.

   e. Although the efficacy of condoms in preventing infection with HIV is unproven, students should be informed that consistent use my reduce risk.

**Testing**

A. HIV antibody testing prior to a student’s admission to the College is not required nor must students respond to questions regarding a history of HIV.

B. Students requesting information about HIV testing should call the Health Center for an appointment. The Health Center has been certified by the State Health Department to provide confidential, free HIV testing. The staff is trained in counseling students about HIV and the testing procedure and the limitations of the test. If the student wishes to go elsewhere to be tested they may call the local State Health Department office at (717) 243-5151.

C. In order to better protect the campus community and provide medical care to the student with HIV, that student should inform the director of the Health Center as soon as possible upon discovery of having tested positive for the AIDS antibody (HIV).

**Confidentiality**
A. Privacy laws govern the confidentiality of medical records, including HIV-related information. Confidentiality of medical records is critical. Privacy laws outline under what circumstances personal medical information can be shared, and with whom. Please refer to the Health Center’s website for a full description of our privacy policies. Specific information concerning a student with HIV will not be shared with the faculty, administration, staff, other institutions, insurers or parents without written permission of the student, unless the student is putting him or herself or others at risk related to the student’s HIV status. If a clear risk is evident, action will be taken to protect the student and/or others as deemed necessary by the College in consultation with its health care advisers.

B. Documentation of a student’s HIV status in a student’s medical record shall be made consistent with the Health Center’s policies and procedures to protect confidentiality. Medical records include accurate information to facilitate continuity of high-quality care for the individual.

Medical Follow-Up

A. If the College is advised of a student’s positive HIV status, regular medical follow-up for the student with HIV is recommended. The College will assist in these aspects of a student’s needs, if the student chooses.

B. In order to coordinate meeting the health care needs of the student, the student with HIV may wish to identify his or her private health care provider to the director of the Health Center or the College physician. Detailed information will be given to the student regarding high risk behaviors.

C. A student with HIV will not be required to take live virus vaccinations.

D. Public Health reporting requirements for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are observed.

Residential/Academic/Work Considerations for the Student with AIDS

A. A student with HIV must properly govern his or her behavior in light of known risks of transmission of HIV based on current medical knowledge. A student whose behavior endangers others will, through appropriate procedures, be isolated or removed from the campus. The decision to restrict or exclude will be rendered on a case-by-case basis.

B. Residential housing decisions will be made without consideration of a student’s HIV status. There is no known risk to those sharing living facilities who follow the simple safety rules in this policy.

C. Roommate(s) and/or other students in residence halls will not be informed that a student has HIV unless the infected student chooses to do so.

D. A student with HIV will be allowed regular classroom attendance.

E. A student with HIV will be allowed to participate in College activities.
F. Dining Services and Facilities Management student workers need not be restricted from work unless there is evidence of infection or illness for which such workers are normally restricted. (See Center for Disease Control’s Morbidity, Mortality Weekly Report, Nov. 15, 1985; page 34.)

G. The student will have access to all facilities including the gymnasium, swimming pool, cafeteria, and HUB.

H. A student with HIV may participate in intercollegiate athletic programs, intramural and club sports following individual assessment by the College physician and appropriate precautions taken with regard to contact sports.

I. Special consideration will be afforded the student who has reported a positive AIDS antibody (HIV) test to help prevent the student’s exposure during prevalence of such communicable diseases as measles and chicken pox.

J. In accordance with OSHA regulations on Blood Borne Pathogens, employees (including student employees) determined to be at risk due to the nature of their work will receive training as outlined in the regulations, and will be offered Hepatitis B vaccine series. All other employees will be notified of the proper procedure to follow if a blood or body fluid spill occurs in their area.

Related Information

History/Revision Information

Responsible Office/Division:

Effective Date:

Last Amended Date:

Next Review Date:

Also Found In: Student Handbook