

Communicable Disease and Vaccination Policy v4.0

Version	Date	Policy Author(s)	Review Date
Version 1.0	September 2021	Debbie Gardiner MBE, CCO	September 2022
Version 2.0	September 2022	Debbie Gardiner MBE, CCO	September 2023
Version 2.1	June 2023	Debbie Gardiner MBE, Managing Director	September 2023
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Version	Page No.	Paragraph / Bullet	Changes
Version 2.1	1		Debbie Gardiner MBE change of job title.
Version 3.0	3	Vaccination	2 nd bullet reduced text
		Incidents of Contact of Communicable Disease	5 th main bullet changed report to Managing Director to report to HR.
Version 4.0	2	Introduction Responsibility	Clarified high risk settings. Added new final bullet.
	3	Vaccination	Updated current status in England. Added RSV to example list. Added Breathe HR as a place to record approved absence.
		Incidents of Contact with CDs	Added to report occurrence to the AKG UK Head of Health & Safety & Facilities.
	4	Communication and Publication of Policy	Added that the policy is also saved on the Policy SharePoint site
		Various	Various minor changes throughout

Signed:

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Date:

Introduction

This policy is intended to minimise risks to employees from health issues associated with control of infectious communicable diseases and is particularly important in environments where risk exists and where the probability of exposure is more likely.

Additionally, it is set out to reduce risks to our clients, apprentices, learners and specifically service users in the Early Years and Residential Childcare settings.

Definitions

Diseases that are:

- Transmitted from one individual to another (also known as contagious diseases).
- Caused by micro-organisms, such as protozoa, fungi, viruses, and bacteria, that invade the body and cause a series of changes that lead to infection and damage to the body.
- Infectious diseases that can be transmitted by direct or indirect contact or through the air.
- Experience shows that the risk of infection is low for the majority of occupations, as direct contact with blood and body fluids does not occur regularly. Much depends on the nature of the exposure. Not all exposures result in infection.

Vaccines are:

- A preparation using a non-infectious element, or relative of a particular virus or bacteria and administered with the intention of halting the progress of an infection or completely preventing it.

Responsibility

- AKG Learning will provide information, training and instruction on communicable disease issues arising from work activities and will monitor and evaluate as required. It is an employee's responsibility to report communicable disease concerns as they arise, following the procedure contained within this policy.
- Senior management have ultimate responsibility to ensure arrangements have been put in place to protect employees from foreseeable risks, line managers are responsible for implementing the agreed arrangements.

- First aiders and appointed persons receive training from certified awarding bodies, and as such are informed during the training process of the risk of being exposed to communicable disease whilst carrying out their duties; however, small the risk would be.
- The following precautions can be taken to reduce the risk of infection:
 - Adhere to the latest guidance concerning COVID-19 (including the latest advice for first aiders) – whilst this has reduced in risk in the UK, we are now learning to live with it and awareness is still key.
 - Cover any cuts or grazes on the skin with a waterproof dressing.
 - Wear suitable disposable gloves when dealing with blood or any other bodily fluids.
 - Use suitable eye protection and a disposable apron where splashing is possible.
 - Wash hands thoroughly in line with NHS hand washing guidance, after each procedure.
 - Be alert to the symptoms of winter viruses such as Influenza and Norovirus.

Vaccination

The need for an employee to be vaccinated will be determined by the risk assessment(s) for each vocational area, within AKG Learning. Vaccination should only be regarded as a supplement to reinforce other control measures. Vaccines, for people that are eligible for a vaccine, they will be free through the NHS. For those who aren't eligible there will most likely be a cost, which the company may cover (please speak to your line manager prior to booking). At present there are no mandatory vaccinations requirement in England.

- We will always follow government guidance and ensure communication on the requirements are clear.
- Government advice remains to take all vaccines that you are eligible for, this could include COVID-19 boosters, Influenza, Respiratory Syncytial virus (RSV) and Shingles.
- The company will support you by giving paid time off for vaccinations, this must be agreed in advance with your line manager, be recorded in your Outlook calendar and on Breath HR and not disrupt teaching and learning for our learners.
- We encourage colleagues to take up vaccines when offered and to consult a medical professional if they have any concerns relating to doing so.

Incidents of Contact with Communicable Disease

This section applies to all colleagues, but most specifically to first aiders.

- Prompt medical advice is important - treatment might be appropriate following infection but to be effective, it may need to be started quickly.
- If you are contaminated with blood or other bodily fluids, the following action must be carried out without delay:
 - Wash any fluids off your skin with soap and running water.

- If your skin is broken, encourage the wound to bleed, do not scrub or suck the wound, rinse thoroughly under running water.
- Wash out splashes in the eyes using tap water or an eye wash bottle, and the nose or mouth with plenty of tap water – do not swallow the water.
- Record the source of contamination.
- Take advice from a trained medical professional or the nearest Emergency Department.
- Following medical treatment, the employees line manager must complete the Accident /Incident form and report this occurrence to the, AKG UK Health, Safety & Facilities team at healthandsafety@akguk.co.uk.
- Referral to an Occupational Health specialist may be necessary but such referral may only be made with the consent of the employee concerned.
- Return to work must be subject to the explicit approval of a medical practitioner; written approval must be available to the HR department.
- A full investigation of the incident is necessary, and any deficiencies identified to facilitate corrective action.
- Lessons learnt from the incident must be communicated.
- GDPR requirements will be adhered to.

Legal references

- Under the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), there is a legal duty to report certain incidents and dangerous occurrences to the relevant enforcing authority. Incidents such as a puncture wound from a needle, known to contain blood contaminated with a blood borne virus or reportable disease must be reported as a dangerous occurrence.
- This policy will be kept up to date and amended accordingly to reflect business needs and legislative changes.

Communication and Publication of Policy

- This policy has been published on Breath HR and the Policy SharePoint site; all colleagues have access to it, and it is covered as part of the induction training for new team members.

Linked Policies and Documents

- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy