RANCHO LOS AMIGOS NATIONAL REHABILITATION CENTER

Infection Prevention and Control

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS EXPOSURE CONTROL PLAN

SUBJECT: BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Bloodborne pathogens are organisms found in the blood which can cause disease. These pathogens are also found in other body fluids. Health care workers face a significant risk as a result of occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens including Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV.

POLICY:
Refer to Administrative Policies:

1. Policy A408: Bloodborne Pathogens
2. Policy A408.1: Treatment of Employees Following Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens

HEPATITIS B VIRUS (HBV)

The HBV is a virus that infects the liver. Infection may range from no symptoms at all to flu-like symptoms (nausea, vomiting, fever) becoming so severe it may require hospitalization. The HBV may severely damage the liver, leading to cirrhosis and can cause death. HBV is a major infectious bloodborne hazard you face on the job.

- This disease is vaccine preventable
- 12,000 HCWs get hepatitis B each year; 250-300 of these result in death
- 76% of needle sticks occur with use of a syringe

HEPATITIS C VIRUS (HCV)

The HVC is also a virus that infects the liver. Symptoms of active infection are milder than those of HBV – or may not even be present. But, HCV is more likely to cause:

- a chronic carrier state
- cirrhosis, liver cancer or death

HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV)

HIV attacks the body's immune system, eventually causing the disease known as AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome). A person infected with HIV may carry the virus without developing symptoms for several years. Symptoms may include flu-like symptoms (fever, diarrhea, fatigue) and eventually may cause AIDS-related illnesses including opportunistic infection, neurological problems, and cancer.

- There is no vaccine available and there is no known cure. However, there are several new medications which slow/halt replication of the virus, thereby increasing the lifespan of most patients with HIV
- The disease itself is ultimately fatal
- The risk of transmission of HIV after needle stick exposure is <1%