

COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY FOR HCOP PROFESSIONAL DOCTOR OF PHARMACY STUDENTS

Responsible administrator: Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs and Outreach

Last updated/reviewed: 8/17/2023

BACKGROUND

- COVID-19 infection is caused by an airborne coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) and is easily transmitted from one person to another. Infection with COVID-19 can result in acute illness that can last for 10 days or longer. COVID-19 infection has been associated with increased morbidity, including short-term and long-term medical complications.

COVID-19 and Experiential Training of HCOP's Professional Students:

- The Accreditation Council of Pharmacy Education (ACPE) who accredits HCOP's professional program requires ongoing experiential training of students in authentic patient-care environments. These courses are integrated throughout the professional curriculum, beginning in the first professional (P1) year. ACPE experiential training requirements include Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experiences (**IPPE**); Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences (**APPE**); and Interprofessional Education Experiences (**IPE**). Students complete this training in health systems, hospitals, hospital pharmacies, outpatient clinics, physician practices, inpatient pharmacies, community pharmacies, and other health care settings where pharmacy students are integrated into the direct care of patients.
- IPPE, APPE, and IPE comprise **33%** of HCOP's professional program and are integrated throughout the four-year professional curriculum.
- HCOP partners with health care facilities / organizations who have the required facilities, equipment, personnel, services, and patients to provide authentic IPPE, APPE, and IPE training for pharmacy students.
 - HCOP executes an affiliation agreement with these partners for pharmacy student experiential training.
 - It is HCOP's responsibility to ensure that all HCOP faculty and students who are assigned to an experiential practice site comply with the facility's rules, regulations, policies, procedures, compliance documentation, and training requirements.
 - This includes the student providing documentation of immunization status and infection control testing that are required by the organization.
 - HCOP is required by contract to collect and retain documentation of student compliance with each organization's requirements.

- Some experiential partners/affiliated training sites require documentation of the pharmacy student's **COVID-19 vaccination status** prior to accepting the assigned student.
 - Several experiential partners require pharmacy students to be fully vaccinated before arriving at the facility and will not accept unvaccinated or partially vaccinated students.
 - Other experiential partners require disclosure of the student's COVID-19 vaccination status so that appropriate infection control measures can be implemented for the non-fully vaccinated student:
 - adjusting the student's responsibilities and activities;
 - restricting student access to certain areas of the facility;
 - preventing interaction with patients who are at increased risk of COVID-19 related morbidity;
 - enforcing heightened personal protective equipment (PPE) or other infection control measures in specific settings;
 - implementing other measures that protect the student, as well as the organization's employees and patients.
 - It is important that faculty and staff within HCOP's Clinical Affairs and Outreach Division who are responsible for experiential training have access to the vaccination status of HCOP students so HCOP can ensure that vaccination policies of the experiential training sites are followed.

- As a health care training program, HCOP requires students to provide documentation of mandatory health testing required for health care providers (by the CDC and ADPH); immunization status for mandatory and recommended vaccines; and other compliance requirements mandated by AU, HCOP, or practice sites (such as HIPAA training, infection control training, etc.).
 - HCOP is contracted with CORE Higher Education Group for pharmacy education software that is used by the majority of US Schools and Colleges to house and manage experiential information including clinical site requirements; scheduling assistance; preceptor evaluation of students; student evaluation of practice sites; data management; and student compliance with AU, HCOP, and practice site requirements.
 - HCOP Pharm.D. students upload their immunization information into CORE where it is securely stored.
 - HCOP reviews/manages these data to ensure that we are compliant with all contractual requirements as outlined within our HCOP Pharmacy Student Training affiliation agreements executed with our experiential partners.
 - CORE is compliant with FERPA regulations.

POLICY

- As a health care program, AUHCOP encourages all pharmacy students to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to protect themselves, as well as their community, colleagues, and patients.
- All pharmacy students are encouraged to upload documentation of COVID-19 immunization status/immunization records when immunizations or boosters are received.
 - These data will be used to ensure AUHCOP compliance with site-specific infection control requirements; COVID-19 vaccination policies; and COVID-19 vaccination reporting procedures of our experiential training partners.
- AUHCOP will work to accommodate students who are unable to complete experiential training at a specific site due to the organization's COVID-19 vaccination policies.
 - HCOP will identify comparable experiential training opportunities that meet ACPE experiential training requirements.
 - HCOP cannot guarantee that the student's individual preferences will be accommodated.
 - Adjustments might be required in rotation order; experiential electives; locations of training; type of health care facility assigned; dates of training; dates of "off-block" rotations; and other scheduling considerations.

PROCEDURES:

- Auburn University Harrison College of Pharmacy's (AUHCOP) professional (Pharm.D.) students are encouraged to receive a COVID-19 vaccination.
- Effective **August 15, 2021**, Pharm. D. students are encouraged to provide documentation of COVID-19 vaccination status to HCOP's Experiential Programs Office (EPO) by uploading documentation in CORE. If students need assistance with CORE, they should contact EPO.
- COVID-19 vaccination will be the student's responsibility including any associated cost of vaccination.
- The student will be required to follow infection control practices during all simulated or live patient care activities (IPPEs, APPEs, working in any health care environment such as community or hospital pharmacies, HCOP endorsed/initiated health fairs, IPE events, other co-curricular activities, etc.) and when in the HCOP building or on the AU campus based on current CDC, ADPH, AU, HCOP, or affiliated practice site's policies.

POLICY MAINTENANCE:

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Clinical Services Advisory Committee (CSAC) and updated as necessary to ensure current standards and procedures are adhered to and that current CDC recommendations are being followed. The Executive Director of Experiential Programs and HCOP administration will continue to work with University administration to ensure appropriate compliance with this policy.

EPO Contact information:

Executive Director of Experiential Programs:

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