Policy Summary Statement re: Students Infected with a Blood-Borne Pathogen

The University of Massachusetts is committed to a policy of non-discrimination and protecting the legal rights and privacy of students infected with blood-borne pathogens while also protecting the health of the public. A student who is infected may attend the University of Massachusetts, School of Medicine however certain restrictions may be imposed on the scope of the infected student’s training. Actual recommendations and advice to the student will depend on current findings and standards of practice.

All matriculated UMMS students will have their Hepatitis B immunity status confirmed as part of the School’s immunization policy. Although testing for hepatitis C and human immunodeficiency virus is not required for attendance at UMMS, it is the professional responsibility of any student who has risk factors for these diseases to make arrangements for serologic testing.

Students who are aware that they are infected with a blood-borne pathogen [including but not limited to Hepatitis B virus (HBV), Hepatitis C virus (HCV), and Human Immunodeficiency virus (HIV)], if not currently under the care of a personal physician, are strongly urged to contact the Student Health Service so that appropriate medical and psychological treatment may be instituted or continued.

Students infected with a blood-borne pathogen must avoid situations in which they could potentially transmit their infection to others. They are required, therefore, to disclose their infection status to the Assistant Dean for Student Advising in order to arrange any necessary adjustments to practice. Such notification is considered a professional responsibility of the student, and failure to disclose blood-borne pathogen infection status will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the medical school.

The University of Massachusetts, School of Medicine reserves the right to restrict students who may transmit blood-borne pathogens from situations that place others at risk. Reasonable adjustments will be made for any student who has tested positive for a blood-borne pathogen to be able to continue medical education. Restrictions and adjustments will be determined on a case by case basis by the UMMS Blood-Borne Pathogen Review Panel. In addition, the Assistant Dean for Student Advising will provide career guidance and elective rotation oversight to all students who have a blood-borne pathogen infection. Every reasonable effort shall be made to maintain confidentiality regarding the blood-borne pathogen status of students. Nevertheless, before an infected student begins a clerkship; directors and supervisors of that clerkship may be informed on a need-to-know-basis of limitations imposed on the student’s activities. In the event that an urgent determination is required, the Assistant Dean for Student Advising will issue temporary restrictions.

The full UMMS Policy regarding Students Infected with a Blood Borne Pathogen contains a list of some of the procedures which infected students may not be allowed to undertake or participate in. Students infected with blood-borne pathogens should be aware that, based on current medical
knowledge and practice, they may be restricted from future residency training and specialty practices which require the performance risk-prone procedures.

A student infected with HBV, HCV, or HIV may continue in the MD program as long as he or she is able to carry out the physical and intellectual activities of all students as outlined in the UMMS Technical Standards.

Demonstrated competence on Standard Precautions is required of students in clinical programs of the University of Massachusetts, School of Medicine. In addition to the UMMS Policy, students on clinical rotations are also subject to the blood-borne pathogen disease policies for health care workers at those individual host sites.

The complete UMMS Policy regarding Students Infected with a Blood Borne Pathogen can be found in the UMMS Student Handbook.

I have read the above Policy Statement on Blood-Borne Pathogen Infection and understand its implications.

Name: _______________________________ Date: __________________

AMCAS#: _______________