



## 5:17 PROCEDURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF HIV/AIDS/HEPATITIS:

### PUPIL WELFARE:

- Whether or not they have symptoms of illness all students will be enabled to make a positive contribution to their learning environment.
- There is no need for isolation since HIV, Aids and Hepatitis are not acquired through casual or sporting contact which occurs in a school environment.
- There are other infections in a school environment which may present a risk to those who have HIV/Aids/Hepatitis. A decision on attendance at school for the sufferer should be made by their health professional.
- A few learner/sufferers may pose an increased risk to others if they have moist or weeping skin which cannot be covered, or if they persistently bite. These pupils may need a more restricted environment pending more knowledge about the actual risk of transmission in such circumstances. Advice from the Medical Officer of Health should be sought by the Principal.
- Identification of a pupil with these illnesses may lead to discriminatory attitudes by others. A pupil's right to privacy is to be ensured. The decision as to who requires knowledge in order to provide the proper care rests with the parent/caregiver.
- Absenteeism and learning difficulties may be a consequence of these illnesses. Special services may be required, and a decision may need to be reached in consultation with the care-givers as to how much information should be given to the special services.
- It has been observed that students who are sufferers of these illnesses can often develop difficult social behaviours - the result of "special" treatment by care-givers and the media, and of the belief that there may be little length or quality of life ahead. It is likely that they will make sure that other students *are* fully aware of who they are and what their conditions are. They may find it difficult to exist happily just as one of a group.
- In the interest of the social and emotional needs of the learner it may therefore be considered beneficial, despite the right of privacy, that all of the teachers be aware of the special needs in order to provide the best pastoral care.

### EMPLOYEE WELFARE:

- Any person has a right to be employed or continue in employment after the disclosure of HIV infection or AIDS illness.
- An employee with HIV will remain healthy for some time and can contribute productively to the school as health permits.
- As with students, while there is no risk of transmission to others through the casual contact which occurs in the school, employees with HIV/AIDS may be at risk from other infections which can be acquired in the school environment.
- An employee with HIV/AIDS is entitled to the same consideration and support as any other sufferer of a life-threatening illness.
- Leave entitlements and other conditions of employment should be as for any other employee.
- As with students, the medical condition is a private matter between the sufferer and his/her doctor. Schools should take reasonable measures to protect the privacy of individual employees and community members.
- A significant group within the school community may be disadvantaged by a lack of knowledge and skills which protect them from HIV and the lack of a supportive and inclusive environment may make them more vulnerable to practices which put them at risk.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAMME:**

- The Health Syllabus provides opportunity to develop an understanding of HIV/AIDS, to address areas of risk behaviour, and to look at causes and effects of such behaviour.
- Education about HIV/AIDS should occur within the context a broader programme dealing with human relationships, sexuality, and STD depending on the ages of the pupils.
- Programmes should foster attitudes and behaviours which respect human rights, preventing discrimination towards sufferers of any illness or disability.
- A successful programme will be based on the needs of the learners, building on their knowledge and working towards goals seen as relevant and achievable. Such a programme will promote understandings and behaviours which are sustainable by the community, respond to the learners' needs and are sensitive to the community's cultural, religious and philosophical beliefs.

## **HYGIENE AND SAFETY PROCEDURES:**

- In addition to HIV/AIDS, the presence (known or unknown) of Hepatitis B and C make it important to ensure that normal hygiene and first aid procedures are always strictly followed in the school. These procedures are relevant to many diseases, HIV being one of the least infectious of the communicable diseases that might be found in schools.

## **SERIOUS ILLNESS SAFETY PROCEDURES:**

**The following first aid routines are imperative.**

- Cover cuts and grazes
- Wear disposable gloves when giving first aid or dealing with toileting a child or with blood or any body fluids.
- Wash blood off hands with warm soapy water
- Clean spills and instruments with freshly prepared solution of 1 part household chlorinated bleach to 9 parts cold water. Spilled blood or bloodied instruments are soaked for 20 minutes.
- Used gloves, dressings, tissues etc should be placed in disposable bags and buried or burnt

## **SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS:**

**All employees should be experienced in the use of these precautions.**

- **Blood:** There is very little risk of acquiring HIV/Hep B or C while giving first aid to a bleeding patient except theoretically if the blood entered the care-giver's bloodstream through an open wound or sore. Healthy skin is a barrier to infection. In an emergency, in the absence of gloves, towels or cloth, even the patient's clothing can be used.
- **Saliva and tears:** HIV has been found in tears but not in sufficient concentration to allow transmission of the virus. Therefore there is no risk from spitting, kissing or wiping noses. This applies also to Hep C.
- **Biting:** There has been no proven case where biting has caused infection. If there is a biting incident where skin is broken, wash the bitten area with warm soapy water and rinse the bitten child's mouth.
- **Urine and faeces:** As blood is not always visible appropriate hygiene procedures should always be followed. Procedures which guard against gastroenteritis and Hepatitis B & C are more than adequate for HIV prevention.
- **Vomit:** The HIV virus is not found in vomit as the gastric juices in the stomach destroy it.