The accreditation standards relating to occupational health and safety include those most critical to staff safety in the non-hospital setting; however, they do not encompass all of the requirements under the *Workers Compensation Act* of British Columbia. Medical directors are encouraged to review section 115 of the Act and the associated Occupational Health and Safety Regulations to ensure they are meeting all regulatory requirements in British Columbia. Questions specific to the Act and the associated Occupational Health and Safety Regulations should be directed to WorkSafeBC for interpretation, advice and direction.

**The health and safety of non-hospital staff is supported through an established occupational health and safety program**

**INDICATORS:**

- An occupational health and safety program is in place and includes:
  - monthly safety inspections of the facility, equipment, work methods and practices to identify and resolve safety hazards
    
    *Guidance: Occupational health and safety regulations require safety audits/inspections to be conducted regularly. The inspection results must be reviewed at the monthly occupational health and safety committee meetings or by the health and safety representative.*
  
  - reviewing health and safety activities and incident trends
  - identifying and implementing courses of action to resolve health and safety concerns
  - the prompt investigation of staff related safety incidents including near misses to determine action necessary to prevent recurrence
    
    *Guidance: A near miss is an incident that did not result in injury, illness or damage but had the potential to do so.*
  - the retention of records and statistics, including reports of safety inspections and staff incident investigations
  - training and supervision of staff in the safe performance of their work
  - musculoskeletal injury prevention information
  - personal protective equipment information
  - prevention of blood and body fluids exposure
  - immunization information
○ Staff receive health and safety education and training at hire, when there are changes, and after a long absence

○ Health and safety education and training includes but is not limited to:
  - the facility’s occupational health and safety program
  - workplace risks and hazards
  - personal protective equipment (PPE)
  - first aid program and reporting of illnesses and injuries
  - Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) information requirements
  - management of occupational exposure to blood/body fluid

○ Records of all health and safety education and training provided are maintained

○ Needleless devices or safety-engineered medical sharps are used

○ Staff at risk of occupational exposure to hepatitis B virus or other biological agent (see the BC Centre for Disease Control Communicable Disease Control Immunization Program Manual) are offered vaccination by the employer at no cost

### An occupational first aid program is in place

**INDICATORS:**

○ Up-to-date written procedures for providing first aid are in place and include:
  - the equipment, supplies, facilities, first aid attendant(s) and services available
  - the location of, and how to call for, first aid
  - how the first aid attendant is to respond to a call for first aid
  - the authority of the first aid attendant over the treatment of the injured worker(s) and the responsibility of the employer to report injuries to the Workers’ Compensation Board
  - who is to call for transportation for the injured worker and the method of transportation

○ First aid equipment, supplies, attendant and services are adequate and appropriate for promptly rendering first aid to staff if they suffer an injury at work

○ First aid equipment and supplies are readily accessible

○ The first aid kit is appropriate for the number of workers per shift, level of risk of injury and how long it takes to transport an injured person to hospital (see Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Regulation Schedule 3-A Minimum Levels of First Aid)

○ The first aid attendant holds a current first aid certificate at the required level (see OHS Regulation Schedule 3-A)

○ Records are maintained for all injuries or exposures to contaminants that are reported or treated

○ First aid records are kept for at least three years
**Blood and body fluid precautions are in place and followed**

**INDICATORS:**

- Staff are aware of or have access to their immunization history, medical history or serologic test results
- Staff that have the potential to be exposed to blood and body fluids are offered the hepatitis B vaccination and any other biological agent (see the BC Centre for Disease Control *Communicable Disease Control Immunization Program Manual*).
  
  *Guidance: WorkSafeBC requires the hepatitis B vaccination series be offered to employees with "occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens." Occupational exposure is defined as reasonably anticipated contact.*
- Safety-engineered sharps or devices that have built in safety mechanisms are used
- There is a defined follow-up process that addresses possible or actual blood and body fluids exposure
- For blood and body fluids exposures the staff member receives first aid, if required, and then is immediately referred for medical assessment (within two hours) and appropriate therapy and follow up
  
  *Guidance: It is preferable to go to an emergency department as they have the necessary medications on site, rather than a family physician who does not have the medications in his/her office.*
- An incident investigation is completed for all staff who have had a potential or actual blood or body fluid exposure
- There are policies and procedures for the prevention and follow-up of blood and body fluids exposures

**The musculoskeletal injury (MSI) prevention program minimizes the risk of injury to staff**

**INDICATORS:**

- Staff are educated in the signs and symptoms of MSIs and trained in specific measures, work procedures and mechanical aids to prevent MSIs
- There are guidelines for proper body mechanics to ensure optimal ergonomics
- There are mechanisms in place to prevent staff from assuming posture that could result in musculoskeletal injuries
- Patient positioning and immobilizing devices are available to staff
- Adequate assistance and transfer/lift devices are available when moving or lifting patients
  
  *Guidance: Transfer/lift devices include “transavers,” slider boards and ceiling or mobile patient lifts.*
- The weight limit of lifting equipment is clearly marked
Personal protective equipment is in place

INDICATORS:
○ Written procedures for the selection, use, inspection, cleaning, maintenance and storage of personal protective equipment are in place
○ Personal protective equipment is selected and used in accordance with recognized standards and provides effective protection
○ Staff receive education and training in the correct use and maintenance of the protective equipment
○ Appropriate personal protective equipment is readily available to staff
○ Staff properly don personal protective equipment as required
○ Safety eyewear is worn if handling or exposed to material which is likely to injure or irritate the eyes
○ Footwear provides appropriate protection for the following factors, slipping (non-slip), abrasion, ankle protection and foot support and puncture hazards

The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) provides health and safety information about hazardous products in the workplace

INDICATORS:
○ A WHMIS program is in place and includes:
  • WHMIS education and training of staff
  • periodic evaluation of staff knowledge using suitable means such as written tests and practical demonstrations
  • review of the WHMIS program annually at a minimum, or more frequently if there is a change in work conditions or available hazard information
○ Staff are aware of the hazardous products in their workplace
○ Staff who work with a hazardous product or who may be exposed to a hazardous product in the course of work are trained in:
  • hazardous product labelling
  • the procedures for the safe use, storage, handling and disposal of the hazardous product
  • the procedures to be following in case of an emergency involving the hazardous product (e.g. spill)
○ Staff follow safe work procedures when working with hazardous products
○ Hazardous products are properly labelled (see Appendix A) and the label is legible
○ Staff follow the instructions on the label and the safety data sheet (SDS) when using a hazardous product
○ Up-to-date (within three years) safety data sheets are readily available for all hazardous products
○ Up-to-date safety data sheets for gases, dyes and coolants used in equipment (e.g. lasers) are readily available

○ Hazardous product containers are in good condition to securely contain the substance

○ Hazardous products are stored in a manner which ensures that it will not readily fall, become dislodged, suffer damage or be exposed to conditions of extreme temperature

○ An inventory of all hazardous products is maintained; the inventory identifies the nature, location and approximate quantity of all such substances and the location of SDS

○ Material or equipment necessary for the control and disposal of the hazardous product (e.g. spill kit) is readily available

  Guidance: The type and number of spill kits will depend on the variety of chemicals in the facility and the quantities that are typically in use.

○ Written procedures to control and clean up spill are in place and readily available to staff

  Guidance: As with any emergency situation, staff must have prior training in the procedures and the required personal protective equipment.

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### Cytotoxic drugs are handled in a manner that ensures the safety of staff

**INDICATORS:**

○ Written procedures are in place for all aspects of receiving, storage, preparation, administration and waste handling of cytotoxic drugs

○ Cytotoxic drug information including acute and chronic toxicity, any potential reproductive hazard, acute exposure treatment and safe handling, is maintained and readily available

○ Cytotoxic drug containers and the shelf or bin in which they are stored are appropriately labelled

○ Staff involved in any aspect of handling a cytotoxic drug receive education and training on the handling of the substance

○ Exposure records of all staff who prepare or administer cytotoxic drugs, including the name of the drugs handled, and when practicable, the number of preparations or administration per week are maintained

○ Exposure records are maintained for the duration of employment plus 10 years and training records for three years from the date that the training occurred

○ All cytotoxic drug-related waste is placed in an appropriate leak-proof waste disposal container

○ Written emergency procedures to address spills of a cytotoxic drug are in place

○ Spill kits are clearly labelled and kept near cytotoxic drug preparation, administration and storage areas and a sign detailing spill procedures is posted in all such areas
Emergency washing facilities are readily available

INDICATORS:

- Appropriate emergency washing facilities (eyewash stations, shower facilities) are provided within the work area where a worker’s eyes or skin may be exposed to harmful or corrosive materials or other material which may burn or irritate
- Emergency washing facilities are located within 10 seconds walking distance of the hazard area but not further than 30 m (100 feet)
- Emergency washing facilities are clearly identified by signs which indicate their location and provide clear directions for their use
- Staff are trained in the location and proper use of emergency washing facilities

Appendix A: WHMIS labels

A supplier label must include the following information:

1. product identifier – the brand name, chemical name, common name, generic name or trade name of the hazardous product
2. initial supplier identifier – the name, address, and telephone number of either the Canadian manufacturer or the Canadian importer
3. pictogram(s) – hazard symbol within a red, diamond-shaped border
4. signal word – a word used to alert the reader to a potential hazard and to indicate the severity of the hazard
5. hazard statement(s) – standardized phrases that describes the nature of the hazard posed by a hazardous product
6. precautionary statement(s) – standardized phrases that describe measures to be taken to minimize or prevent adverse effects resulting from exposure to a hazardous product or improper handling or storage of a hazardous product

A workplace label must include the following information:

1. product identifier – the name of the hazardous product identical to the one found on the hazardous product’s safety data sheet
2. safe handling information for the hazardous product
3. a reference to the availability of a safety data sheet (SDS)
References


