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**FAQs about Influenza Vaccination Requirement for MSU Healthcare Workers:**

1. **Why is influenza vaccine required for MSU healthcare workers?**
	* About 50,000 deaths in this country occur from influenza each year, many of which could be prevented by immunization of healthcare workers. In December 2012, there have already been two deaths of children in Michigan from influenza. The immunization policy is to protect the patients we serve, as well as healthcare workers. This decision is based on the CDC/MDCH and multiple other professional medical society recommendations, such as the American Academy of Family Physicians, Institute of Medicine, American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and the Infectious Disease Society of America. CDC recommendations for healthcare workers are the guidelines for all required vaccines for MSU healthcare workers.
2. **What if I choose not to be vaccinated?**
	* If you have a documented medical contraindication to the vaccine or choose not to be vaccinated, you will be required to wear an MSU-supplied mask when working in patient care areas.
3. **What is considered a patient care area?**
	* In outpatient clinics, it includes all areas where healthcare workers are within 3 feet of patients: exam rooms, clinic or hospital hallways, waiting rooms, reception areas, some offices where patients are seen by a healthcare worker. In hospital settings, it is the entire hospital area where patients are located, or are going from one place to another.
4. **What if I am not sure if I qualify as a healthcare worker?**
	* You can call Occupational Health at 353-9137, and one of our staff members will explain the specific criteria used to determine the job duties that require an employee to be considered a healthcare worker at MSU.
5. **Where do I get the masks?**
	* Your clinic will provide these. Ask your clinic manager or nurse manager where they are located.
6. **How often do I need to change my mask?**
	* You should change your mask after lunch and breaks if you leave the clinical area during these times, as well as after using the restroom.
7. **How long is influenza season?**
	* This varies by year and location. The CDC defines it as November 1 through May 1. In Michigan, we generally see influenza around December 1. If the season begins or ends outside the CDC time frame, notification will be sent to inform those wearing masks that they need to wear them earlier or can discontinue wearing them.
8. **How should I dispose of masks?**
	* Used masks should be placed in regular trash containers.
9. **What is the best way of preventing influenza in the healthcare setting?**
	* The most important factors are the annual vaccination of healthcare workers who have contact with patients and careful, regular handwashing.
10. **What do I say if a patient asks me why I am wearing a mask?**
* A good response would be, "I’m wearing a mask to protect myself and prevent the spread of influenza to patients because I have not been vaccinated."
1. **How will supervisors know who needs to wear a mask?**
* Supervisors will be given a list of employees in their unit who need to wear masks during flu season.
1. **Why is influenza vaccine required for MSU healthcare workers?**
* There are 20,000 to 50,000 deaths in this country from influenza each year, many of which could be prevented by immunization of healthcare workers. The immunization policy is to protect patients and healthcare workers. This decision is based on recommendations from entities like the CDC, American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and the Infectious Disease Society of America. Current CDC recommendations are the basis for all required vaccines for MSU healthcare workers.
1. **Do other healthcare facilities require influenza vaccination?**
* Yes. U of M Hospitals (including Sparrow), St. Joseph Mercy in Ann Arbor, the Detroit Medical Center, Corewell Health in Grand Rapids, and Henry Ford, among many others, require influenza vaccination.
1. **What if I got my influenza vaccine at a healthcare facility other than MSU Occupational Health?**
* You need to call that facility and request documentation of your immunization. The documentation can be faxed to Occupational Health at 355‐ 0332, emailed as an attachment to occhealth@ht.msu.edu or sent via campus mail to Occupational Health, Olin Health Center.
1. **What if I work in a facility that has different requirements than MSU?**
* If you are an MSU employee, you must comply with MSU's requirement. If, as an MSU employee, you work in other healthcare facilities that require vaccination and don’t accept masking, you must comply with the vaccine requirement unless you have clearly documented medical contraindications.
1. **What if I have other questions?**
* Call MSU Occupational Health at 353-9137.