



SATS

South African Theatre Nurse
operating and trading as South African Theatre Sister

SATS Position Statement.

Protection of Health care workers against Blood borne pathogens

Researchers have found that blood borne infections, in the majority of cases are transmitted to healthcare workers through needle stick injuries and contaminated sharp items.

Needle stick injuries accounted for 0, 3% seroconversion to HIV in the profession and 6-30% to HBV. The risk of developing HVC after exposure ranges from 0-7% with an average of 1.8% (AORN position statements 2004 edition (p143))

The publication and implementation of STANDARD PRECAUTIONS, urges risk managers, to develop an exposure control program and the implementation of plans to prevent the risk of exposure to blood borne pathogens in the peri-operative setting. This includes, free HBV vaccination, the availability of protective attire in the form of overshoes, eyewear, gowns and gloves. Each facility, treating patients at risk, should have training programs, post exposure evaluation and emotional support programs for staff, and the process to change dangerous work practice

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT SATS:

- *Implores all employers to provide members of staff with policies and processes on the prevention of infection with blood borne pathogens.*
- *Supports the implementation of continuous educational programs on the dangers of blood borne pathogens.*
- *Encourages and supports the principle of the “neutral zone” when handling sharps*
- *Encourages all employers to provide healthcare workers/ Professionals with appropriate and correct protective attire.*
- *Supports the provision and establishment of an environment that minimizes the risk of exposure*
- *Urges employers to continuously monitor compliance to safety procedures*
- *Believes in making available to all people at risk ,free counseling (emotional and other) after exposure, access to treatment, and confidentiality*
- *Supports vaccination for healthcare professionals at risk*

- ***E**ncourages and implores all health care professionals to adhere to policies and risk management guidelines implemented to safe guard them against exposure.*
- *Urges all healthcare professionals to remain updated and knowledgeable on the changes and developments regarding blood borne infections*
- *Supports the provision of free treatment and follow up after exposure*

Updated V. Pieterse June 2009/2010/2011