

Policy: Sick Leave 2024

Background: COVID-19 has acted as a catalyst for clinicians and healthcare facilities to re-examine their approach to sick leave. Students have a responsibility to inform their coordinators immediately in the event they become unwell, allowing the Clinical School to safeguard patients and fellow staff members from potential illness (COVID-19 related or otherwise).

Purpose: This policy outlines the student's responsibilities regarding sick leave and return to placement.

Policy:

- **The student must not attend Clinical Placement if they are unwell, regardless of symptoms.**
- In the first instance of illness:
 - the student must contact their Student Coordinator via phone or email to inform them of their illness, and subsequent absence.
 - If the student is expected in a doctor's room, they must also inform the doctor's PA of their absence.
- If the student is experiencing cold or flu like symptoms including but not limited to: fever, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath, nasal congestion, and fatigue; the student is required to undertake a COVID-19 test.
- In the event of a student becoming ill during placement they *must immediately inform their clinical supervisor and leave the clinical environment*. If the student is experiencing cold or flu symptoms, their surgical mask must remain in place until they leave the hospital campus. The student must avoid close contact with students and staff and leave the Clinical School immediately after informing their Student Coordinator.
- *The Student Coordinator is to inform the student's day placements of the student's absence due to illness.*
- If the student is absent for 1 or 2 consecutive working days due to illness, a medical certificate is not required. If the absence exceeds 2 or more consecutive working days, a medical certificate completed by a registered medical practitioner is required stating:
 - The date on which the medical practitioner examined the student
 - The duration of the complaint expressed as a medical opinion. Certificates merely reporting the student's account of an illness will not be accepted.
 - That in the practitioner's opinion, the student was unable to attend the compulsory session on the scheduled date due to the medical condition.

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Authorised by: Head of School	To Be Reviewed: December 2024	

COVID 19 Protocol**If the student has any symptoms of an acute respiratory infection:**

- Undertake a COVID-19 test (PCR/RAT) ASAP.
- **If the student returns a negative result:**
 - The student may return to placement once they no longer have any symptoms.
- **If the student returns a positive result:**
 - The student must not enter any UnitingCare campuses for 7 days from the positive test result.
 - If a positive PCR test is obtained, a copy of the Qld Government notification must be forwarded to the Clinical School.
 - The student may return to placement once all acute respiratory symptoms and fever has resolved, apart from mild residual symptoms such as a mild dry cough.

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