



# **Netball NSW**

## Infectious Diseases Policy

**Adopted by New South Wales Netball Association Ltd at its Board Meeting held on 11 August 2020**

Next Reviewed: June 2022

Last Reviewed:

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## **1 Purpose of the Policy**

- 1.1 This Policy is designed to provide an awareness of the risk of exposure and best practice approaches to infectious diseases while participating in any Netball NSW or Affiliate competition or event or associated activity.
- 1.2 This Policy applies to:
- a. Netball NSW and its members
  - b. Affiliates and their members;
  - c. Individuals sitting on Boards, committees and sub-committees of Netball NSW and/or its Affiliates;
  - d. All employees, volunteers, independent contractors and other workplace participants
  - e. Any other person or organisation that is an Individual member of or affiliated with Netball NSW;
  - f. Parents, guardians, spectators and sponsors and any other person or organisation to the fullest extent possible;
  - g. Any other person who has agreed to be bound by this Policy.
- 1.3 This Policy applies:
- a. at any Netball NSW or Affiliate competition or event;
  - b. during paid or voluntary activities, including dealing with members, media, sponsors, other support employees, volunteers, independent contractors and other participants in Netball in NSW;
  - c. during all netball related activities including games, training events and camps;
  - d. at all times when providing services on behalf of Netball NSW or an Affiliate; and
  - e. at all times when acting in any capacity, whether voluntary or paid on behalf of Netball NSW or an Affiliate.

## **2 Infectious Diseases**

- 2.1 The risk of contracting illnesses such as hepatitis, skin infections and upper respiratory tract infections (URTI) increases under some sports conditions.
- 2.2 The risk of infection increases when people:
- Live and train in close contact with others, thus increasing cross infection;
  - Train in environments where germs breed (e.g. change rooms);
  - Share contaminated items (e.g. drink bottles);
  - Are exposed to new environments when travelling to compete;
  - Damage the skin allowing transfer of germs;
  - Come in contact with other people's blood

Appropriate preventative measures can be taken to avoid the spread of infectious diseases. Generally, these are as follows:

- a. Maintain strict personal hygiene. This includes washing your hands often with soap and water, and using a tissue and covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze.

- b. Get immunised – Immunisation is an effective and inexpensive way of significantly reducing the risk of Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B and Influenza. You should seek your own medical advice regarding this.
  - c. All persons with prior evidence of infectious disease are strongly advised to obtain advice and clearance from a doctor prior to participation.
  - d. Implement blood rules – See Section 3 below.
  - e. Don't share personal equipment – Don't share clothing, razors, towels, face washers, nail clippers, drink bottles, mouth guards or any other personal equipment which may have blood, saliva or other body fluids present.
  - f. Maintain a clean environment. Dressing rooms should be clean and tidy with particular attention paid to hand-basins, toilets, showers etc. Adequate soap, paper towels, brooms, rubbish bins and disinfectants should be available at all times.
  - g. Communal bathing areas (e.g. spas, recovery baths) should be discouraged
- 2.3 As it is in everyone's best interests to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, this may require some level of flexibility. For example, if this means that any member may be prevented from attending representative trials or grading, Netball NSW and/or Affiliates should be looking at ways around this.
- 2.4 If a person is not feeling well, no matter the specific diagnosis, they should not be participating in strenuous activities.
- 2.5 For particular infectious diseases please see Sections 3 and 4 below.

### **3 Blood Borne Viruses**

- 3.1 Blood borne viruses include HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C. They are transmitted through blood to blood contact via broken skin and open wounds. Blood rules are an appropriate way of dealing with the spread of blood borne viruses.
- 3.2 Clause 9.3.1 of the INF Rules of Netball 2020 Edition (as updated from time to time) provides specifically for stoppage for blood during a game. In short, the Rules require that:
- A player who is bleeding or has blood on their clothing must immediately leave the court and seek medical attention;
  - The bleeding must be stopped, the wound dressed and blood on the player's body or clothing cleaned off before they return to the game;
  - Play must cease until all blood on the ground or equipment is cleaned up.
- 3.3 These Rules should also be adopted for any training or other netball related activities and extend to all members of Netball NSW and Affiliates as described above in clauses 1.2 and 1.3 above.
- 3.4 In addition, the following precautions should be adopted:
- You should treat all blood and body fluids as though they are potentially infectious. When spills of blood or other body fluids happen:
    - avoid direct contact with blood or body fluids;
    - cover any cuts on your hands with a wound cover; and
    - wear gloves.

- If blood or other body fluids spill onto you or someone else or if contact has been made with an open wound, broken skin or mucous membranes, you should:
  - wash the area of contact thoroughly with soap and warm water;
  - if the blood contacted your mouth or eyes, rinse very well with water;
  - see your own doctor as soon as possible.
- Once bleeding has stopped, and you've cleaned up any blood or body fluids which found their way onto you or others, it's important to disinfect the area where the spill occurred. When doing this:
  - wear gloves;
  - place a paper towel over the spill and carefully mop it up;
  - clean the surface with warm water and detergent or soap;
  - disinfect the area by wiping with bleach (use a bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite) and dry with a clean paper towel; and
    - when finished, remove gloves and put them along with the used paper towels in a sealed plastic bag and place in rubbish bin.

3.5 Further information can be obtained from Sports Medicine Australia, Infectious Diseases Policy which is available on the following link:

<https://sma.org.au/resources-advice/policies-and-guidelines/infectious-diseases/>

## 4 Coronavirus/Pandemic

- 4.1 Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness caused by a new virus. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has announced that COVID-19 is a pandemic.
- 4.2 Netball NSW will issue appropriate guidance in the event of COVID-19 or any other pandemic as may occur from time to time. This guidance will be based on advice provided by the relevant authorities and, in particular, the advice provided by the Department of Health and in accordance with any order made under the *Public Health Act 2010 (NSW)* (Public Health Order) or any other legislation that may apply at the relevant time.
- 4.3 Further information about COVID-19, including information about prevention, diagnosis and treatment can be found on the following link:  
<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>

## 5 Further Information

- 5.1 Concerns or queries over or with respect to this Policy can be made to:

Policy & Support  
 Netball NSW  
[policy@netballnsw.com](mailto:policy@netballnsw.com)  
 (02) 99515000