

Epidemic Response Policy and Procedure		
Code: B3.02	Area: Non-Academic B	
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VERSION HISTORY

Version	Updated by	Approval Date	Details
1.0	BoD	5 Feb 2020	Document creation
1.1	BoD	9 Dec 2022	Regular review

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide confidence that SITCM is well-prepared to withstand epidemics.
- Provide a clear procedure for SITCM management to follow during an epidemic.

This policy applies to all staff and students at the Sydney Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine (SITCM).

1 OVERVIEW

The Sydney Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine (SITCM) is committed to ensuring a safe campus in which students have no cause to fear contracting an epidemic. This is of importance to all higher education providers, but particularly higher education providers that contain a clinic.

This policy has been informed by the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*, in particular Section 2.3 Wellbeing and Safety. For information on general infectious control methods used by the SITCM Teaching Clinic, refer to the *Manual for Clinical Practice*.

2 POLICY

2.1 GENERAL

- 1) The CEO is responsible for implementing this policy.
- 2) This policy defines “epidemic situation” as a situation in which a disease that has the potential to be highly infectious:
 - a. Is currently spreading in at least one country or region, and
 - b. Is widely reported as likely to spread to other countries or regions (including Australia) in the coming days or weeks.
- 3) For the purposes of this policy, “window period” refers to the maximum time from when an infection occurs to when symptoms emerge.
- 4) In an epidemic situation, SITCM will follow all instructions and/or advice provided by relevant government authorities.

- 5) To remain aware of potential epidemic situations to which this policy will apply, the CEO will monitor news media and information published by relevant government authorities on a daily basis.

2.2 RESPONSE

- 1) This policy recognises two classifications for epidemic situations:
 - a. Those with suspected or confirmed cases in Australia; and
 - b. Those with suspected or confirmed cases in Sydney.
- 2) Within one (1) business day of identifying an epidemic situation with suspected or confirmed cases in Australia, the CEO will call a meeting of key operational staff.
 - a. Attendees will determine how to apply any instructions and/or advice provided by relevant government authorities.
 - b. Attendees will consider the appropriateness of implementing any of the control measures outlined in Section 2.3.
- 3) Within one (1) business day of identifying an epidemic situation with suspected or confirmed cases in Sydney, the CEO will call another meeting of key operational staff.
 - a. Attendees will reevaluate the situation and determine what any additional control measures, if any, are appropriate.
- 4) The CEO will closely monitor the situation and will call additional meetings of key operational staff if necessary.

2.3 POSSIBLE CONTROL MEASURES

- 1) Possible control measures to be considered by key operational staff include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. SITCM sending to all staff and students an email that includes one or more of the following:
 - i. Information about what a person should do if they suspect that they are infected.
 - ii. Information about the availability of SITCM student support services.
 - iii. A request that those who have recently been in a country or region where the potential epidemic has spread not enter the SITCM Campus if they have the symptoms of the disease.
 - iv. A request that those who have recently been in a country or region where the potential epidemic has spread not enter the SITCM Campus until they are outside the window period.
 - v. A request that any staff who cannot conduct their scheduled work at SITCM due to possible infection notify SITCM immediately.
 - vi. A reminder that any students who cannot attend one or more classes at SITCM due to possible infection notify SITCM in accordance with the *Attendance Policy*.
 - b. SITCM screening all SITCM Teaching Clinic patients for potential infection before providing consultation or treatment.
 - c. All staff and students who are engaged in teaching and learning activities in the SITCM Teaching Clinic being provided face masks free of charge.
 - d. Hand sanitiser being made available free of charge at the SITCM Campus Reception Desk and at the SITCM Teaching Clinic Reception Desk.
 - e. Posters outlining recommended personal infection control practices being placed around the SITCM Campus.
 - f. The closure of the SITCM Clinic.
 - g. The suspension of the *Attendance Policy*.
 - h. Classes being moved online or postponed.

- i. Staff working from home.
- 2) All staff and students must receive timely email updates from SITCM informing them of new control measures and the availability of support services as necessary.

3 PROCEDURE

3.1 EPIDEMIC SITUATION PROCEDURE

- 1) The CEO becomes aware of an epidemic situation and calls a meeting of key operational staff within one (1) business day of identifying an epidemic situation without confirmed cases in Sydney.
- 2) Before the meeting, the CEO investigates whether any instructions or advice has been provided by relevant government authorities.
- 3) At the meeting, attendees:
 - a. Discuss how to implement any government instructions or advice; and
 - b. Consider the appropriateness of implementing any of the control measures outlined in Section 2.3.
- 4) Any actions arising from the meeting are implemented and reported to the CEO.
- 5) If the epidemic situation spreads to Sydney, the CEO will call a second meeting of key operational staff within one (1) business day.
- 6) Sections (2) to (4) are repeated for the second meeting.
- 7) The CEO continues to monitor the situation and calls additional meetings if necessary.

4 RELATED POLICY AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION

- 1) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021.
- 2) Manual for Clinical Practice.
- 3) Attendance Policy.