

Safety Alert October 2021

Subject: Venepuncture Process

UNSW Safety are issuing a Safety Alert to remind staff and students that blood collection must occur in the correct facility type/location.

Background:

An incident occurred where a worker had witnessed evidence of blood being collected from human volunteers in a side room of a PC2 laboratory, no one was injured.

- The investigation identified:
- the room was not a designated blood collection location
- the area was not the room identified for blood collection in the Human Ethics application
- the research group did not have their own specific protocol for blood collection
- researchers involved had not completed relevant training on the current Safe Work Procedure (SWP) for blood collection
- The vaccination status of the venepuncturist was not checked by the supervisor prior to blood collection



Actions taken following incident:

- an investigation into the incident was conducted as per UNSW procedures
- the supervisor will personally supervise all further venepuncture by the research group
- the designated venepuncture room as listed in the SWP and Human Ethics application will be used for any further blood collection
- venepuncturists will all be confirmed as having read and declared the SWP and group's protocol for venepuncture and having relevant vaccinations prior to any blood collection taking place
- DVCR RECS Human Ethics were notified of the breach in protocol

What is recommended going forward:

- all staff involved in venepuncture should be fully trained in their group's protocols and SWP
- all venepuncturists must be fully trained via an approved course
- the vaccination status of the venepuncturists must be confirmed prior to any blood collection

- any blood collection should comply with Human Ethics application requirements including the location of blood collection
- the principal researcher implements a thorough checking process to ensure that every researcher is fully aware of correct workflows for their procedures
- supervisors are trained in and fulfil their responsibilities as detailed in Health and Safety Responsibility, Authority and Accountability Procedure
- Also refer to HS435: Immunisation Guideline and HS651: Risk determination of human biological material - Guidelines

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