Policy # FS 8

POLICY: LATEX EXPOSURE POLICY

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to assure all students and faculty members are made aware of the dangers of exposure to latex in a health care environment such as found in either clinical facilities or the Nursing Arts Lab G28B and to attempt to minimize those risks and to provide as safe as environment as possible in lieu of these risks.

BACKGROUND: Latex products are common in the medical environment. Allergic responses to latex can range from irritation and allergic contact dermatitis to the possibility of life threatening anaphylactic shock. Latex- free environments are not available in either clinical or academic settings. Therefore, an individual with a latex allergy/sensitivity wearing alternative vinyl or nitrile gloves is still exposed to latex residue of others working in the area or to latex present in the equipment, models, and mannequins. Although latex gloves are the most prominent source of latex allergen, many other products contain latex including, but not limited to:

- Blood pressure cuffs, medication vials, syringe connectors, and wound drains.
- Stethoscopes, catheters, respirators, and goggles
- Oral and nasal airways, surgical masks, and electrode pads
- Endotracheal tubes, syringes, IV tubings, and tourniquets

POLICY: It is the policy of the University of Pittsburgh at Titusville nursing program to educate all faculty and students on the importance of the risks of latex exposure and to attempt to minimize the risk in the UPT Nursing Arts Lab. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Any student or faculty who has or develops symptoms consistent with latex allergy/sensitivity is advised to consult a qualified allergist for evaluation prior to enrollment or employment in the nursing program. All such evaluations are at the student’s or faculty member’s expense. If it is determined that the individual suffers from a latex sensitivity/allergy and the individual desires an academic adjustment, including auxiliary aids or service, or reasonable accommodation due to this condition, the individual must contact the UPT Disability officer at (814) 827-4465.

2. Utilizing the utmost precautions is the responsibility of the individual to reduce
the risk of exposure and allergic reaction. This may include the carrying of an epi-pen by the individual or other precautions as advised by their health care provider.

3. It is the responsibility of the individual with a latex sensitivity to understand and to acknowledge the risks associated with continued exposure to latex during a clinical education and health care career, even when reasonable accommodations are made and to regularly consult with his/her health care provider. Please note UPT Nursing program has no control over whether clinical facilities utilized for experiences provide Latex-free gloves for student use.

4. In an effort to minimize the presence of latex in the UPT Nursing Arts Lab, the Nursing department is taking the following step to minimize latex exposure in its lab facilities:
   - Begin replacing LATEX products as the inventory is depleted with any future purchases of NON-LATEX supplies as of June 2014.

5. As with all students in the UPT Nursing Program, a student with a latex sensitivity or allergy is required to satisfactorily complete all requirements and technical standards of the program to which they have been accepted.