



# **Netball NSW**

## Infectious Diseases Policy

**Adopted by New South Wales Netball Association Ltd at its Board Meeting held on 9 December 2021**

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## 1 Introduction

- 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 Netball Activity.

## 2 Definitions

**Affiliate** means a Premier League Licensee, a Netball Association, or a Netball Club, howsoever described, whether incorporated, unincorporated, a company limited by guarantee, or otherwise, which is a member of Netball NSW.

**Blood-borne Viruses** are a specific category of Infectious Disease that some people carry in their blood and can be spread from one person to another.

**Individual Member (Member)** means a natural person who is a registered financial member of Netball NSW or an Affiliate.

**Infectious Disease** means any disease caused by infection agents that can be passed from person to person. Transmission can occur directly (through contact with bodily discharge such as blood or saliva), indirectly (for example by sharing a drink bottle) or by means of vectors (such as mosquitos).

**Netball** means the sport or game played under the World Netball Rules of Netball as adopted or amended from time to time by Netball NSW or an Affiliate.

**Netball Activity** means Netball competitions, matches, training and/or events organised, controlled or sanctioned by Netball NSW and/or its Affiliates.

**Netball NSW** means the New South Wales Netball Association Limited.

**Pandemic** means an Infectious Disease which is prevalent and transmitting throughout a whole geographic area, country or world.

**Participant** means a person who participates, including but not only as official, coaches, players or umpires, parents, guardians and spectators in a Netball Activity.

**Policy** means the Netball NSW Infectious Diseases Policy.

**Public Health Orders** relate to a small range of very serious notifiable conditions: viral haemorrhagic fevers, SARS, MERS, avian influenza in humans, typhoid, TB, HIV and AIDs (collectively Category 4 and 5 conditions). Public health orders are measures of last resort and are only used where voluntary measures are not adopted to prevent a public health risk.

### **3 Scope of this Policy?**

3.1 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; and
- g. Any other person who has agreed to be bound by this Policy.

3.2 This Policy applies:

- a. At any Netball NSW or Affiliate Netball Activity;
- 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.

### **4 Minimising Transmission of Infectious Diseases**

4.1 The risk of contracting Infectious Diseases such as hepatitis, skin infections and upper respiratory tract infections (URTI) such as Influenza or COVID-19 may increase under some sports conditions due to an increased risk of a transmission event.

4.2 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 microorganisms; or
- Come in contact with other people's blood.

4.3 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 vaccinated – vaccination is an effective and inexpensive way of significantly reducing the risk and spread of Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Influenza and COVID-19. Netball NSW strongly encourages all Members to protect themselves fully with all available vaccines subject to independent medical advice;
- c. Any person diagnosed with an infectious disease is required to obtain clearance from a medical practitioner prior to participating in any Netball Activity;

- d. Implement blood rules – See Clause 5 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.
- 4.4 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 accommodate this as far as practicable.
- 4.5 If a person is not feeling well, no matter the specific diagnosis, they should not be attending Netball Activities or participating in strenuous activities. Members should seek medical advice prior to returning to Netball Activities.

## 5 Blood-Borne Viruses

- 5.1 Blood-borne viruses include HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C. They can be transmitted through blood-to-blood contact via broken skin and open wounds, or in some instances, by contact with other bodily discharge such as saliva or sweat. Blood rules are an appropriate way of dealing with the spread of Blood-borne Viruses.
- 5.2 Netball NSW and/or Affiliates should ensure that blood rules are adopted and closely applied at all Netball Activities.

### Blood Rules

- 5.3 Clause 9.3.1 of the World Netball Rules of Netball 2020 Edition (as updated from time to time) (**Rules**) 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.
- 5.4 In addition, the following precautions should be adopted:
- All blood and body fluids should be treated 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 with a wound cover; and
    - wear gloves.

- If blood or other body fluids spill onto any person or if contact has been made with an open wound, broken skin or mucous membranes, Members should:
  - wash the area of contact thoroughly with soap and warm water;
  - if the blood contacted any person's mouth or eyes, rinse very well with water; and
  - seek medical advice as soon as possible.
- Once bleeding has stopped, and any blood or body fluids which found their way onto any Member has been thoroughly cleaned, 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.

5.5 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/>

## **6 Pandemic Advice**

- 6.1 From time to time a region, state or indeed the world may be subject to an Infectious Disease Pandemic.
- 6.2 When this occurs, Netball NSW and its Affiliates will comply with all health advice, procedures, regulations and laws as proscribed by the relevant authorities. In particular, Netball NSW and Affiliates will make and enforce any necessary amendments to the running of Netball Activities to comply with these official directions including but not limited to density requirements, vaccination requirements and any relevant check-in or other monitoring requirements.
- 6.3 In the event of a Pandemic, Netball NSW will issue appropriate guidance to its Affiliates and Members as is necessary to ensure compliance with all Public Health Orders, procedures, regulations and laws as proscribed by the relevant authorities.
- 6.4 Netball NSW strongly encourages all Members who are able (subject to independent medical advice) to obtain full vaccination against all Infectious Diseases in order to limit the spread and health implications of a potential or active Pandemic.