Student Health Center
Vaccine Management

Audit Report # 15-03
December 4, 2014

Office of Auditing and Consulting Services

"Committed to Service, Independence and Quality"
December 4, 2014

Dr. Diana Natalicio
President, University of Texas at El Paso
Administration Building, Suite 500
El Paso, Texas 79968

Dear Dr. Natalicio:

The Office of Auditing and Consulting Services has completed a limited-scope audit of vaccine management procedures for the Student Health Center. The objective of the audit objective was to determine whether the SHC follows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for vaccine storage and management.

We appreciate the cooperation and assistance provided by the Student Health Center during our audit.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Lori Wertz, CPA
Interim Director
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACKGROUND</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUDIT OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUDIT RESULTS</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Policies and Procedures</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Emergency Plan</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Auditing and Consulting Services has completed a limited scope audit of the Student Health Center (SHC) vaccine management procedures.

During the audit we noted the following:

- The SHC does not have documented policies and procedures for the administration of vaccine storage and handling.
- The SHC does not have a written emergency plan for the storage and retrieval of vaccines in the event of a power outage or natural disaster.

We conclude the SHC administrative processes for the management of vaccines requires strengthening to ensure compliance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance for vaccine storage and management.

We believe that by implementing the recommendations outlined in this report, the SHC will improve the management of vaccines.
BACKGROUND

The Student Health Center (SHC) provides clinical services including physical examinations, immunizations, laboratory tests, and general health education to the University's student population. During the audit period, the SHC administered 649 vaccines.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) outlines the best practices for proper vaccine storage and handling practices in their toolkit. These practices play a very important role in protecting students and communities from vaccine-preventable diseases by helping ensure vaccines are stored correctly from the time they are manufactured to the time they are administered. Failure to adhere to required protocols for storage and handling can reduce vaccine potency and result in inadequate protection against disease.

AUDIT OBJECTIVES

The objective of this audit was to determine whether the SHC follows CDC guidelines for the storage and handling of vaccines.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Audit procedures included performing tests to verify the effectiveness of internal controls, interviewing personnel and reviewing SHC documents to verify compliance with CDC guidelines for the management of vaccines. The audit period included operations during fiscal year 2013-2014.

The audit was conducted in accordance with the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing* issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors.
AUDIT RESULTS

A. Policies and Procedures
The Student Health Center does not have written guidelines for vaccine storage and handling.

The Student Health Center should meet the CDC Toolkit guidelines, which state, "Each provider should develop and adhere to a detailed written Routine Vaccine Storage and Handling Plan that is updated annually."

Vaccine storage and handling errors can reduce vaccine potency, resulting in inadequate immune responses in patients, as well as inadequate protection against disease. By having adequate protocols that follow CDC best practices, the SHC will reduce the likelihood of errors occurring.

Recommendation:
To provide guidance to employees, the SHC should develop policies and procedures which address the following areas:

- vaccine storage and handling,
- temperature monitoring,
- inventory management, and
- preparation and disposal.

Once the policies and procedures are in place, they should be reviewed annually to help ensure continued compliance with CDC guidelines and best practices.

Management's Response:
Management agrees with the findings and recommendations regarding the development of a UTEP SHC specific policy and procedure.

The UTEP SHC nursing staff developed vaccine storage and handling policies and procedures that address the recommendations and follow CDC guidelines.

The policies and procedures will be presented to the SHC staff by December 5, 2014.

Responsible Party: Louise Castro, MSN, FNP-BC, Director

Implementation Date: December 15, 2014
B. Emergency Plan
The SHC does not have a documented Emergency Vaccine Retrieval and Storage Plan. The CDC Vaccine Storage & Handling Toolkit states, "... each facility should have a detailed written Emergency Vaccine Retrieval and Storage Plan." Establishing written protocols for emergency situations helps assure the continued viability of vaccines.

Recommendation:
The SHC should develop an Emergency Vaccine Retrieval and Storage Plan that provides up-to-date information regarding procedures to follow for the protection and/or retrieval of vaccines as quickly as possible when a potentially compromising situation occurs. This plan should include:

- up-to-date emergency contact information,
- appropriate packing protocols,
- vaccine transportation protocols, and
- alternate storage facility storage protocols.

Management's Response:
Management agrees with the finding and recommendations. The SHC nursing staff has updated the emergency contact information in collaboration with Union services, and will review contact numbers at a minimum interval of six months. The nursing staff has incorporated the packing protocols and the vaccine transportation protocols in the "Vaccine Storage and Handling" policy.

Management is in the process of working with the Director of Union Services and Environmental Health and Safety to arrange for back-up vaccine storage areas.

Responsible Party: Louise Castro, MSN, FNP-BC, Director

Implementation Date: December 15, 2014
CONCLUSION

Based on the results of audit procedures performed, we conclude that the SHC processes require strengthening to ensure compliance with CDC guidelines for the storage and management of vaccines. We believe that by implementing the recommendations outlined in this report, the SHC will improve the management of vaccines.

We wish to thank the management and staff of the SHC for their assistance and cooperation provided throughout the audit.