ACTION ON SIGNIFICANT LABORATORY EXPOSURE TO HUMAN BODILY FLUIDS BY EXPOSURE OF MUCOUS MEMBRANES (INCLUDING THE EYE), THROUGH BROKEN SKIN (ABRASIONS, CUTS, ECZEMA ETC) OR BY SHARPS INJURY

If present, the affected person’s supervisor should take charge and ensure that the procedure below is followed. Otherwise the most senior member of staff in the laboratory should assume responsibility for the response to the incident.

1) Immediate treatment:
   - Gently squeeze wound (Do not suck area);
   - Wash affected area with soap and water (Do not scrub);
   - Rinse mucous membranes with warm water (Do not swallow water).

2) Ensure that the sample of the body fluid which resulted in the exposure is retained in case it is needed for testing.

3) If source of body fluid is known to be HIV positive, prophylactic therapy must be offered to exposed worker, if possible within one hour of contact. This can arranged by telephoning the hospital switchboard (01224-681818) and asking to speak to the Infection Unit. (Work should not have commenced with known HIV positive material without arrangements having been made for post exposure treatment.)

4) Otherwise telephone NHS Grampian Occupational Health Service (01224-553663) or, outside normal working hours, go to Accident and Emergency at nearest Hospital. Occupational Health or A&E will assess the circumstances of the exposure and, if they deem it necessary:
   - Take blood from exposed worker for storage or virology;
   - Consider need for post exposure hepatitis B and/or HIV prophylaxis;

5) Report the incident using the University Accident Report Form.

Note 1: Minimise likelihood of needlestick injury by ensuring that laboratory rules include
- prohibition on re-sheathing needles other than in exceptional circumstances (when it should always be a one handed operation)
- requirement for immediate discard of used sharps into sharps container
- requirement for needle and syringe to be discarded as complete unit (i.e. needle not to be removed from syringe)

Note 2: Ensure that departmental safety guidance includes a strong recommendation that all laboratory workers working with human body fluids receive, where feasible, appropriate immunisations. Supervisors should ensure that they are aware of who has and who has not been immunised.