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## Managing Possible Exposures

### A. Introduction

In this section you will find information on the following:

- reporting a possible exposure to a designated officer
- assessing if there was an exposure to a communicable disease
- notification protocols

### B. Reporting a Possible Exposure to a Designated Officer

Any emergency service worker who believes that she or he may have been exposed to one of the specified diseases should report the incident promptly to the designated officer using the prescribed form. The worker should provide detailed information on the emergency situation, the precautions taken and equipment used, any failure in the equipment and any other information the designated officer may need to assess the situation.

### C. Assessing an Exposure

When a worker reports a possible occupational exposure, the designated officer is responsible for assessing the situation and determining whether an exposure may have occurred. To determine whether an exposure has occurred, the designated officer will complete an [Incident Assessment Form](#) to find out the following:

- The nature of the exposure
- The worker's immune status
- The precautions used during the incident
- The body fluids the worker was exposed to
- The length or duration of the contact or exposure
- Any other available information

#### Determining an Exposure Risk

The designated officer will consider the following questions:

- How much of a substance was present in the environment and how much of it did the person come in contact with?
- Was there direct contact with the reservoir that carries this disease?

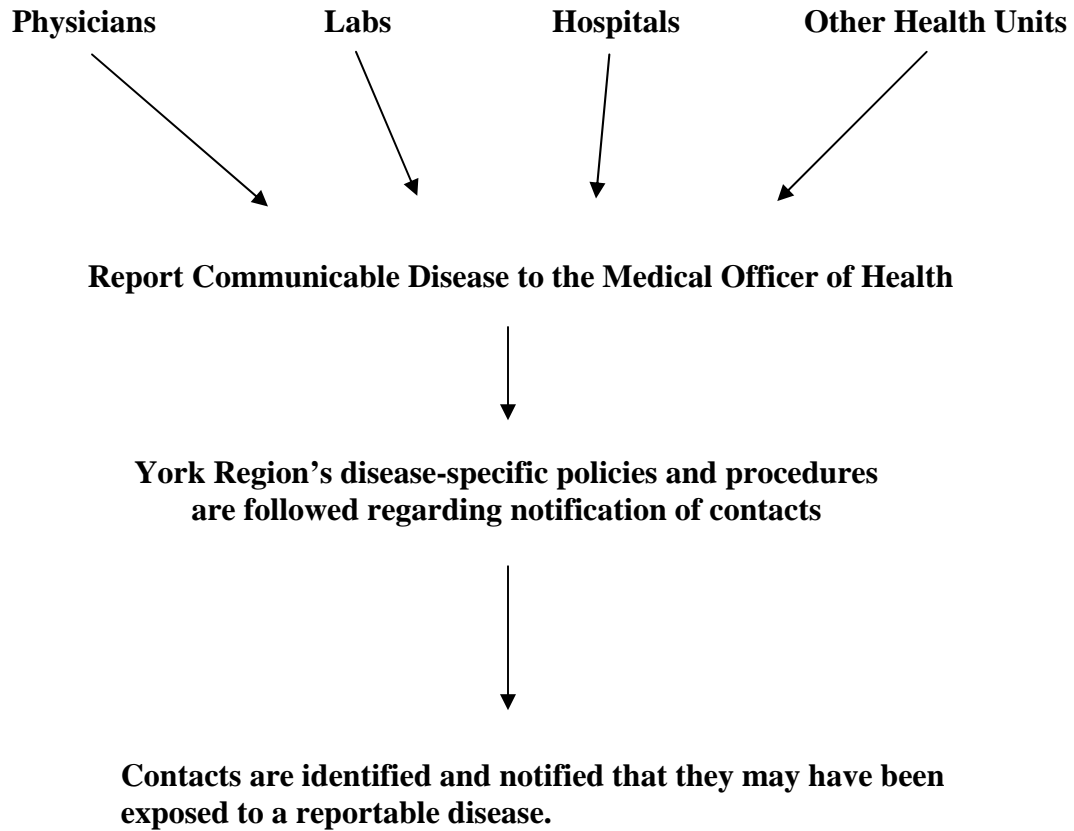
- How long was the exposure? (The length of exposure is more significant for transmission of respiratory illnesses than for bloodborne viruses)
- Was protective clothing and/or equipment used that should have prevented the transmission of the disease (e.g. gloves, eye protection, mask)?
- Was the personal equipment compromised?
- Is the person susceptible?
- Was there an appropriate “route of entry” for the disease in question?
- Was the person in question infected with an infectious disease? (Normally the designated officer would not have this information due to confidentiality. However, in some cases, people will offer this information voluntarily. When this happens, the designated officer can use the information volunteered to perform the risk assessment.)

## **D. Notification Protocols**

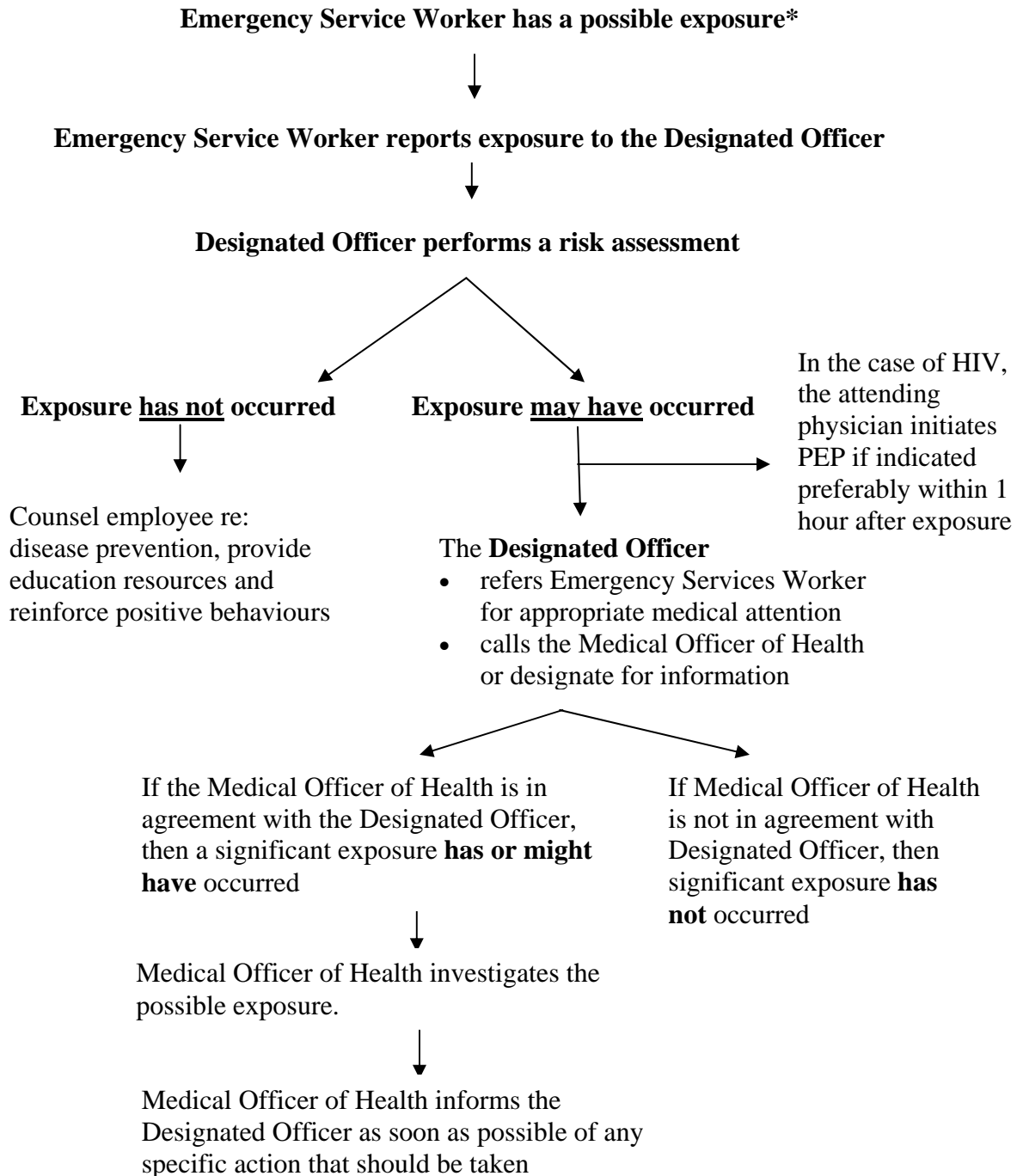
On the following pages you will find the protocols that are followed when York Region Community and Health Services is notified of a reportable communicable disease.

The first protocol describes what happens when notification is received from a physician, a laboratory, a hospital or another health unit, and the second protocol describes what happens when notification is received from an emergency services worker.

# 1. Notification Process Initiated By Medical Officer of Health



## 2. Notification Process Initiated by Emergency Services Worker



\* [Mandatory Blood Testing Act](#)