Inside This Issue

- Phlebotomist Be Safe!
- Human Papillomavirus Vaccine & Cancer Prevention
- Soft Skills for Hard Jobs
- AMT Directory
Contents

34 Article 462
Phlebotomist Be Safe!
By Jeff Lavender

38 Questions for Article 462

40 Article 463
Human Papillomavirus Vaccine & Cancer Prevention:
What you can do to protect your patients!
By Dr. Rosemary N. Beavers and Dr. Lois Ramondetta

47 Questions for Article 463

48 Article 464
Soft Skills for Hard Jobs
By Dr. Julie Lavender

52 Questions for Article 464

54 AMT Directory

On the cover:
Squamous cell carcinoma
Pat is a certified Registered Phlebotomy Technician working in an accredited healthcare facility. One day while preparing to draw blood from the first patient of the day, Pat’s nose was filled with a sneeze coming on. While reaching for a tissue near the phlebotomy chair, Pat accidentally knocked the sharps container over spilling some of its contents. One of the needles from the sharps container punctured Pat’s hand. Pat dutifully sneezed in the crux of the elbow, cleaned up the mess, and successfully completed the blood draw. But there is much more Pat needs to do.

As an Instructor in Phlebotomy, I place a lot of emphasis on safety. Keeping the Phlebotomist safe; and keeping the patient safe. In class, I naturally focus more on keeping the phlebotomy student safe. But once the student becomes an employed phlebotomist, the emphasis seems to quickly turn to patient safety. I get it, hospitals and other healthcare centers want to keep the patient safe to prevent complaints and lawsuits. Healthcare employees are there because they want to help patients, and therefore put their energies towards the patient. Plus, it isn’t good for anyone when patients are injured. However, if we don’t keep the Phlebotomist safe, there won’t be anyone left to keep the patients safe and help them to heal. Healthcare workers MUST spend the time and energy taking care of themselves too. Therefore, this article will focus on the safety of you, the Phlebotomist.

There are many organizations out there that make it their business to keep you safe. The US Federal Government backed organizations go by an alphabet of acronyms, such as OSHA, NIOSH, CDC, NHSN, HICPAC, and others. Other organizations like AMT also provide training and resources for your safety, such as this article.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OSHA</th>
<th>Occupational Safety and Health Administration (US Dept of Labor)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDC</td>
<td>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US Dept of Health and Human Services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIOSH</td>
<td>National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (CDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHSN</td>
<td>National Healthcare Safety Network (CDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HICPAC</td>
<td>Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (CDC)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The key player in keeping you safe is your employer. OSHA Publication 2254, *Training Requirements in OSHA Standards* (2015), lays out the requirements of your employer to provide enough training to you at no charge to keep you safe in your work place. This publication is a result of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, which states:

“Employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthful workplace. No person should ever have to be injured, become ill, or die for a paycheck.”

(2015, p. 1)

This publication requires that your employer provide training to you on personal protective equipment (PPE), bloodborne pathogens, hazardous materials, and any other hazards they can identify. At a minimum, the training must occur upon initial hire, and annually thereafter. Furthermore, they must write, update, and provide easy access to documents such as the Bloodborne Pathogen Standard, Exposure
Human Papillomavirus Vaccine & Cancer Prevention: What you can do to protect your patients!

By Dr. Rosemary N. Beavers and Dr. Lois Ramondetta

**HPV – The Basics**

Human papillomavirus (HPV) family consists of more than 200 subtypes, nine of which are the causative agents for more than 85% of all cervical, vulvar, vaginal, penile, and oropharyngeal HPV-related carcinomas. Virtually every human being will be exposed to HPV at some point in their lives, and most go on to clear the infection with no consequence. Unfortunately, it is difficult to predict who will go on to develop HPV-related cancer. The virus is transmitted through any form of intimate contact including kissing, vaginal or anal intercourse, and oral or digital sex. The prevalence of first infection is highest in teenagers and those in their early twenties. There are approximately 14 million new infections every year in the U.S. (McQuillan et al., 2017). Most infections will clear and have no consequence. Given this information, the American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology (ASCCP) Guidelines recommend against testing young women for HPV DNA at the recommended every three-year pap smear appointment until they are 30 years old, at which point co-testing with HPV DNA and cytology is recommended every five years (U.S. Preventative Services Task Force, 2012).

The family of HPV viruses consists of circular, double-stranded DNA (Crosbie, Einstein, Franceschi & Kitchener, 2013) containing eight genes numbered E1-E7. E6 and E7 are considered to be the drivers of carcinogenesis (Crosbie et al., 2013). HPV enters its host via epithelial/mucosal trauma; namely, via the microabrasions that occur during intimate contact. Once within an epithelial basal cell, through complex inner workings, the normal cell cycle checkpoints cease to occur and neoplasia (uncontrolled growth) ensues (Derkay & Bluher, 2018).

Since the early 1970’s we have known that HPV is the primary cause of cervical cancer, but emerging research has shown causality with many other cancers in both males and females. HPV 16, 18, as well as 5 other high-risk strains are now known to cause 85% of HPV-related cancers (Saraiya et al., 2015). Certain strains (e.g. HPV 6 and 11) also cause almost all genital warts as well as juvenile (infant) recurrent respiratory papillomatosis (JORRP) which is obtained through the birth canal (Silverberg, Thorsen, Lindeberg, Grant & Shah, 2003).
Soft Skills for Hard Jobs

By Dr. Julie Lavender

Soft skills. Employability. Social intelligence. Interpersonal skills. These are some buzz terms I hear from potential employers regarding attributes that they are looking for when hiring new employees. Many employers say that if a potential employee has “this” certificate or “that” degree, then they know that the candidate has the technical or “hard” skills to perform required tasks of the job. Hard skills are acquired through formal education such as a college program, an apprenticeship, or other job-specific training. A skill set that is more difficult to define and one that potential employees often lack is in the realm of intangible skills: communication, time management, teamwork, etc. So, how does one acquire or develop those skills? Here are some of the top “soft skills” that employers are looking for, along with pointers to develop or strengthen them.

A review of several articles on the topic of soft skills identified the following skills as those most commonly sought after by employers:

1. Teamwork
2. Communication
3. Work Ethic
4. Flexibility/Adaptability
5. Time Management

In addition to those skills, the following skills were also identified as important in the health professions:

6. Empathy
7. Self-confidence
8. Attention to detail
9. Positive attitude
10. The ability to deal with pressure or criticism.

1. **Teamwork.** Teamwork, by definition, is working well with others, as a team, to accomplish a specific task or achieve a broader goal. Seems simple enough. However, as a people, we have become more and more independent-minded and in many cases, prefer to work in solitude. On the other hand, many jobs, especially those in healthcare, require some degree of teamwork.

   Teamwork is more than just working as a member of a team. In a clinic, you may be part of a team that includes office staff, nurses, technicians, and providers. As a member of that team, you are expected to perform certain functions. However, being a team player means stepping up when an emergency transpires and filling in the gaps. It is stepping in to do something that needs to be done, whether it is your job or not. Teamwork can also include building up your colleagues and offering a helping hand when someone is having a bad day.

   If teamwork is a skill that you need to develop, there are several ways to do that. In the work environment, look for opportunities to demonstrate your willingness and ability to be a team player. Outside of work, you can volunteer for an organization or project that requires teamwork—school PTA, church committee, professional organization (like AMT), etc. This may require you to step outside of your comfort zone, but the payoff can be a more pleasant work environment and opportunities for advancement, or possibly a different job.

2. **Communication.** Communication is the ability to transfer information from one person to another (or to a group of people) via written or spoken word. Communication also