



Code of Conduct - Policy

PURPOSE:

- A. To define personal and professional standards of conduct and acceptable behavior for all persons while engaged in business or service with University of Utah Health Science Center (UUHSC).
- B. To prohibit intimidating and disruptive behaviors that can foster medical errors, contribute to poor patient care, preventable adverse outcomes, and increase costs.
- C. To encourage and promote quality of patient care and patient safety which is dependent on team work, communication and a collaborative work environment.

DEFINITIONS:

- A. Appropriate behaviors: actions that result in quality patient outcomes and a safe environment for patients, staff, health professionals, volunteers, visitors, and students. Below is a list of appropriate behaviors, however, this list is not intended to be all inclusive.
 1. Demonstrate sensitivity to diverse backgrounds (e.g., gender, race, age, disability, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, etc.)
 2. Communicate openly, respectfully, and directly in a positive, team-building, constructive, and solution-oriented manner.
 3. Encourage, support and respect the right and responsibility of all persons to assert themselves in promoting patient safety and quality care.
 4. Adhere to high ethical standards in patient care, teaching, and conducting research.
 5. Appropriate reporting of concerns, adverse events, potential safety hazards, or as otherwise required by University policy.
 6. Participation in investigations, briefings and debriefings of adverse events.
 7. Be respectful and maintain privacy and confidentiality of all individuals.
- B. Disruptive / intimidating behaviors: patterns of conduct that undermine safe patient care and quality outcomes, disturb day to day interpersonal relationships and business, decrease morale, and have a negative effect on a person's feeling of safety in the environment.
 1. May be verbal or physical (e.g., verbal outbursts, profanity, condescending attitudes, refusal to participate in assigned patient care activities, physical threats, blaming / name calling, or throwing objects, etc.)
 2. Are often accompanied by strong emotion.
- C. Inappropriate / Unacceptable behaviors: actions that are detrimental to efficient and effective quality of patient care are disruptive to departmental or facility operations, or are in violation of established standards, policies, bylaws, federal or state law, or local ordinances. Below is a list of behaviors that are inappropriate/ unacceptable, however, this list is not intended to be all-inclusive.
 1. Verbal tirades, with or without obscene / abusive language.
 2. Insulting, threatening, intimidating, abusive or coercive behaviors (e.g., non-constructive criticism addressed to its recipient in a way as to intimidate, belittle or to assign stupidity or incompetence).
 3. Harassment- verbal, physical or sexual.
 4. Discrimination based on any status protected by law or University policy (e.g., race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, status as a protected veteran, sexual orientation, gender identity/gender expression, etc.).



5. Un-consented physical contact (with or without injury).
6. Disorderly conduct disrupting the performance of assigned functions.
7. Mental / Physical Impairment (e.g., alcohol / drug use, mental exhaustion that prevents successful completion of job duties, etc.).
8. Derogatory comments about quality of care made publicly or written in patient records / other official documents.
9. Disruption of hospital performance review functions (e.g., peer review, committee meetings, event reporting, etc.).

POLICY:

- A. All health care professionals, staff, students, volunteers and others associated with University of Utah Health Care are expected to:
 1. Demonstrate appropriate behaviors that foster collegial and collaborative relationships that support a health care and workplace environment that improves patient quality care, fosters a safety culture and is professional, courteous and respectful to all individuals.
 2. Avoid engaging in disruptive / intimidating and inappropriate / unacceptable behaviors.
 3. Adhere to ethical standards and code of conduct as outlined in University (<http://www.hr.utah.edu/ethicalstandards/>), facility or departmental standards as well as state and federal laws and regulations.
 4. Hold others to the same standards and appropriately address concerns.
 - a. Disruptive, intimidating, inappropriate or unacceptable behaviors or violations / concerns relating to the code of conduct should be reported to appropriate departmental, administrative or human resources representatives.
 - b. Processes used to address reports of violation or concern will follow corrective actions defined in policy / procedure (e.g., **University Policy 5-111**) and medical staff bylaws.
 1. Steps involved generally include informal intervention (applied in a supportive, corrective manner), verbal warning, letter of expectations etc., or formal intervention, corrective action including, written warnings, final written warnings, suspension and / or termination;
 2. Medical staff bylaws generally include the same options plus steps such as revocation/suspension/termination of privileges; chaperone requirements; proctoring; etc.
 5. UUHC prohibits retaliation against an individual who files a complaint, expresses a concern or asks for help in dealing with aspects of the code of conduct.

REFERENCES:

- A. Joint Commission 2009 Hospital Accreditation Standards
- B. Rosenstein, A.H. & O'Daniel, M. 2008. A survey of the impact of disruptive behaviors and communication defects on patient safety. *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety*, 34. (8). 464-471.
- C. Porto, G. & Lauve, R. 2006. Disruptive clinician behavior: a persistent threat to patient safety. *Patient Safety & Quality Healthcare*. July / August.
- D. World-Class U - University Hospitals and Clinics 'PROMISE' Behavior Standards (see, *Setting the Standard, World-Class Performance*).
- E. University of Utah Regulations Library, Regulation 1-004 *Violence in the Workplace and Academic Environment*
- F. University of Utah Regulations Library, Regulation 5-106 *Non Discrimination Employment*



- G. University of Utah Regulations Library, Regulation 5-107 *Sexual Harassment and Consensual Relationships.*
 - H. University of Utah Regulations Library, Regulation 5-111 *Corrective and Disciplinary Action for Staff Employees.*
 - I. University of Utah Regulations Library, Regulation 5-113 *Drug-Free Workplace.*
 - J. University of Utah Regulations Library, Regulation 5-114 *Drug Testing.*
 - K. University of Utah Hospitals and Clinics Medical Staff Bylaws
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