

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Objective

The St. Patrick Hospital and Health Sciences Center (SPH) and St. Joseph Medical Center (SJMC) are strongly committed to providing high quality patient care in a work environment that fosters teamwork and respect for the dignity of each patient, visitor, employee, volunteer, resident, student, allied health professional, referring physician and member of the Medical Staff. The goal of the Code of Conduct for Professional Behavior ("Code") is to define expectations for practitioners' behavior that promotes a safe and professional health care environment.

Definition of Practitioner

For the purposes of the Code, "Practitioner" includes any member of the Medical Staff or Allied Health professional as defined in the SPH/SJMC Staff Bylaws and policies. Practitioner also includes any student, intern, resident or fellow.

Appropriate Conduct for Practitioner

Practitioners are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Appropriate professional behavior is outlined below:

1. Practitioners will treat patients, staff, and colleagues with dignity and empathy.
2. Practitioners will be honest-honorable in all encounters, principles, intentions, and actions – with all colleagues and others they encounter.
3. Practitioners will uphold and comply with all ethical and legal standards that apply to Providence Health and Services, including the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services.
4. Practitioners will respect the privacy and confidentiality of patients and their protected health information such as is contained in the patient's medical record while in clinical and public areas.
5. All verbal, nonverbal and written communication will be conducted in a mutually respectful manner.

Unacceptable Conduct for Practitioners

Practitioners are expected to behave in a professional manner, showing respect to other patients, visitors, employees, volunteers, residents, students, referring physicians and other members of the Medical Staff. Conduct that is disruptive or harassing is unacceptable and is outlined below.

1. Disruptive behavior is an act, or pattern of actions by a Practitioner which adversely affects the hospital's health care team to the degree it may impede the team's ability to deliver quality patient care. Unacceptable disruptive conduct includes, but is not limited to, behavior such as:
 - a. Conduct that interferes with the provision of quality patient care.
 - b. Attacks (verbal, written or physical) directed at others which are personal or go beyond the bounds of fair professional conduct.
 - c. Shouting or using vulgar or profane or abusive language.
 - d. Writing of malicious, or inappropriate comments (or illustrations) made in the patient medical record or other written documents.
 - e. Making public derogatory comments about the quality of care being provided by other Practitioners or nursing personnel, rather than working through peer review/quality review process or other avenues to address the issues.
 - f. Inappropriate expressions of anger such as destruction of property or throwing objects.

- g. Physical assault; and
- h. Conduct that demeans the dignity of any person(s) or disrupts the orderly operation of SPH or SJMC.

2. SPH or SJMC prohibits all forms of unlawful and unacceptable harassment, including harassment due to race, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation and disability. Sexual harassment in the form of discrimination is expressly prohibited pursuant to Providence Health & Services corporate policy. Conduct, which may constitute sexual harassment, includes repeated, unsolicited verbal comments, gestures, drawings or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which is unwelcome and damaging to the integrity of the professional relationship. Examples of such conduct include:

- a. Unwelcome or unwanted physical advances of a sexual nature.
- b. Requests or demands for sexual favors. This includes subtle or blatant expectations, pressures, or requests for any types of sexual favor accompanied by an implied or stated promise for preferential treatment or the risk of negative consequences concerning one's employment status.
- c. Verbal abuse or joking that is sexually oriented and unacceptable to another individual.
- d. Any type of sexually oriented conduct that unreasonably interferes with another's work performance.

3. Other forms of unacceptable or unprofessional conduct include but are not limited to:

- a. Falsification, alteration or destruction of medical records.
- b. Fraud (intentional deception or misrepresentation) or abuse (a practice or activity that is not part of generally accepted, sound industry standards that may result in unnecessary costs or the receipt of an improper payment).
- c. Conflict of interest (participation in situations of competing professional or personal interests).

Practitioner conduct problems will be addressed as outlined in the Medical Staff Bylaws and applicable policies.

Professional Peer Review

It is intended that the reviews, processes and actions taken in conjunction with the Code are taken in the course of professional peer review and constitute professional peer review action. It is also intended that the professional review bodies, reviewers, participants and witnesses in the professional peer review processes outlined in the Code and all professional review records and forms created, generated or reviewed pursuant to the Code, be covered by the confidentiality, immunity and other protections available pursuant to state and federal law.

Adoption, Amendment or Repeal

The Code may be adopted, amended or repealed upon approval of the Medical Staff Executive Committee.