



TERMINATION OF THE INPATIENT/PHYSICIAN RELATIONSHIP

(Previously titled Inpatient dismissal of attending physician – SHMC only)

Approved PSHMC Medical Staff 6-2011, reviewed 9-2013

PURPOSE:

On occasion, an inpatient may dismiss a physician. For continuity of care, this is not encouraged, but is sometimes necessary. In these instances, the following principles will be followed:

1. If the patient indicates they wish to dismiss a **consulting** physician, the issue will be deferred to the patient's attending to discuss with the patient and, if needed, to arrange for a different consultant to participate in care.
2. If the patient indicates they wish to dismiss a **hospitalist**, this will be deferred to the hospitalist service which will communicate with the patient and arrange for alternate hospitalist/s to manage the patient.
3. If an **attending** is being dismissed, the attending will continue to direct care until a new attending physician is confirmed.
 - a. The attending will document in the medical record that the patient has dismissed him/her, and that s/he will continue to care for the patient until a new physician is established.
 - b. If the attending is part of a group practice, effort should be made to establish the patient with another member of the group. If the attending is not part of a group, the patient/family should bear the primary responsibility of finding a new attending physician. Information regarding alternate group practices may be provided to the patient/family with the recommendation that they confirm with their insurance the alternate physician's inclusion in their insurance plan.
 - c. If the patient/family fails to establish a new attending physician yet continues to indicate their desire to dismiss their attending, hospital staff will contact the ED on-call physician in that specialty. If the ED on-call physician is the existing attending or a partner, hospital staff will contact the appropriate Department or Committee chair for assignment.
4. The dismissed physician will speak directly with the physician assuming care to provide all pertinent medical information.
5. **All instances of dismissal will be reviewed by the appropriate peer review committee.**

The Charge Nurse, Patient Advocate, or Case Manager is available to assist in this process as requested by hospital staff.

SEARCH WORDS: TERMINATION, DISMISSAL, ATTENDING PHYSICIAN