

## Title: Standards of Excellence and Conduct

- Applies to:**  Saint Mary's Hospital  Department Specific  
 Clinics and Physician Offices  Nursing  
 Other: Medical Staff Services

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Approval(s): Practitioner Excellence Committee  
Medical Executive Committee

**POLICY:** The purpose of this policy is to ensure optimum patient care by promoting a safe, cooperative, and professional health care environment and to prevent or eliminate conduct that disrupts operations at Mercy Health Saint Mary's, affects the ability of others to do their jobs, creates a hostile work environment for employees or other medical staff members, or interferes with their ability to work. Respectful communication between all members of the health care team is critical to patient safety and is an essential element of quality care. This policy is designed to bring together the most important issues that reflect our medical staff's culture and vision.

As a member of the medical staff of Mercy Health Saint Mary's, you serve as a trusted partner in the delivery of health care services to our patients and community. The Trinity Health Mission Statement calls us to serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities. Guided by our Core Values, we are committed to the delivery of people-centered care that leads to better health care, improved health outcomes and overall lower costs for our patients, residents, members and communities we serve.

## SECTION I: STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

### CORE VALUES

- **REVERENCE** - We honor the sacredness and dignity of every person.
- **COMMITMENT TO THOSE WHO ARE POOR** - We stand with and serve those who are poor, especially those most vulnerable.
- **JUSTICE** - We foster right relationships to promote the common good, including sustainability of earth.
- **STEWARDSHIP** - We honor our heritage and hold ourselves accountable for the human, financial and natural resources entrusted to our care.
- **INTEGRITY** - We are faithful to who we say we are.

#### 1. Six Guiding Principles

- a. Always A Safe Environment
- b. Exceed customer needs
- c. Unwavering respect
- d. Uncompromised Positive Environment
- e. Promoting and Enabling Healing
- f. Value Inclusion

The following are examples to support the core values and principles.

## **2. A Welcoming Environment**

### **a. Attitude**

- i. I will treat everyone as if he or she is the most important person in our facility.
- ii. I will exceed our patient's expectations.
- iii. I promise to exude a "CAN DO" Spirit.
- iv. I promise to be approachable, knowledgeable and flexible.

### **b. Personal Appearance**

- i. I will take pride in and care of my personal appearance. I am responsible for conveying a professional image by adhering to *MHSM Professional Image Policy*.
- ii. I will wear my ID Badge above the waist and visible at all times.
- iii. I will be responsible for uncompromising levels of cleanliness.

## **3. Courtesy, Privacy and Respect**

### **a. Confidentiality and Privacy**

- i. I will adhere to Saint Mary's privacy and confidentiality guidelines.
- ii. I will keep all patient and private discussions away from public areas.
- iii. I will ensure privacy by knocking before entering, closing curtains and doors, providing cover.
- iv. I will use scripts such as "I'm trying to protect your privacy....".

### **b. Courtesy and Respect**

- i. I will use body language that shows professionalism and respect.
- ii. I will use professional vocabulary with our guests. "Certainly", "Good Morning", "I'd be happy to", "my pleasure"...etc...
- iii. I will respond to patient's need with genuine care and compassion, exceeding their expectations.
- iv. I will recognize and respect differing viewpoints.

## **4. Communication**

### **a. Greeting**

- i. I will greet every patient with a warm and friendly smile.
- ii. If I do not have an established relationship with the patient, I will introduce myself promptly and explain my participation in the case.
- iii. I will address all patients as Mr./Mrs./Ms./Rev...[last name] unless told otherwise.

### **b. Elevator Etiquette**

- i. I will always use a warm/intentional greeting, smile and make eye contact, "Hello, what floor may I push for you?"
- ii. I will keep patients safe by not allowing them to be surrounded by other visitors or employees.
- iii. I will make room for people with special needs to be near the elevator door.
- iv. I will wait for another elevator when indicated and politely ask others to do the same.
- v. I will respect all patients' privacy by not discussing cases where others not involved in their care could overhear them.

### **c. Wayfinding**

- i. I will seek out individuals who appear lost or in need.
- ii. If I see someone who appears to need directions, I will offer assistance.

## 5. Teamwork

### a. Commitment to Co-Workers

(Physicians, Advanced Practice Professionals, Nurses, Techs, Dietary, Environmental Services and ALL other hospital employees)

- i. I will treat others with respect and courtesy.
- ii. I promise to treat every co-worker as a professional. I recognize that we each have an area of expertise.
- iii. I will show consideration and be sensitive to a fellow physician or employee's inconvenience. I will consider another's priorities in addition to my own.
- iv. I will be tolerant of fellow physicians and employees recognizing that conflicts may exist among co-workers, but professional courtesy is expected. I will maintain a respectful and calm demeanor especially during times of stress or conflict. I will set aside differences when working together. I realize we all have personal shortcomings.
- v. I am loyal to my physician colleagues, my co-workers, and Mercy Health Saint Mary's. I am discreet about what I say.
- vi. I welcome new physicians and employees. I promise to be supportive, offering help and setting an example of the cooperation expected in the workplace.
- vii. I act with honesty and integrity, taking responsibility for my actions.
- viii. I am an ambassador of the Saint Mary's Medical Staff and Mercy Health Saint Mary's, talking positively in and outside the workplace.

## 6. Service Recovery and Responsiveness

### a. Responsiveness and Wait Time

- i. I will communicate openly and educate families about the process; family members need to know that procedures generally do not begin as soon as guests enter the area.
- ii. I will respond to pages promptly (within 30 minutes) when I am on call.
- iii. I will help find a comfortable atmosphere for waiting patients and families.
- iv. If it becomes apparent that a scheduled procedure or exam will be delayed, I will inform the patient prior to the appointment. In the case of an outpatient, I will let the individual decide whether to come in later or make a new appointment.
- v. I will apologize if there is a delay, and if appropriate, offer a new appointment, if the procedure can be rescheduled.
- vi. Patient families are as important as the patient. I will update families periodically while a patient is undergoing a procedure.
- vii. I promise to thank patients for waiting and apologize for delays.

### b. Care Continuity

- i. I am responsible for safe and timely transfer of important information regarding patient care to other physicians, providers and staff.
- ii. I am responsible for the safe, timely, and appropriate discharge of my patients, including medication reconciliation and discharge instructions.
- iii. I am responsible for the safe and complete sign out on my patients to anyone who is covering for me when I am not available.
- iv. All patients are the responsibility of the entire *TEAM*.

### c. Service Recovery

- i. If I receive a complaint I will "Own it", resolve it to the patient's satisfaction and document it.
- ii. I will apply the AAA Approach:

- *Apologize for the situation: "I am so very sorry this has been a difficult experience for you".*
- *Acknowledge the situation/emotion: "I can see how very upset you are Mrs. Smith".*
- *Act or Ask: Offer options...[examples] Ask: "What can I do for you right now?"*

## SECTION II: STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

These standards are designed to support relationships with patients and others in our care, relationships with co-workers, vendors, business partners and others that assist in the delivery of care, relationships with the government and others that pay for health care services we provide, and relationships with our organizations and communities.

Medical staff leaders will work to improve individual and aggregate medical staff performance through non-punitive approaches and providing positive and constructive feedback. This philosophy and approach allows each practitioner the opportunity to grow and develop in his or her capabilities to provide outstanding patient care and valuable contributions to our hospital.

The expectations described in each area of performance below reflect current medical staff bylaws, policies and procedures, and organizational policies.

1. **Technical Quality:** Skill and judgment related to effectiveness and appropriateness in performing the clinical privileges as evidenced by the following:
  - a. Achieve patient outcomes that consistently meet or exceed generally accepted medical staff standards as defined by comparative data, medical literature and results of peer review activities.
  - b. Provide appropriate patient care that consistently meets or exceeds generally accepted medical staff standards as defined by comparative data, medical literature and results of peer review activities.
  - c. Use current evidence-based best practice guidelines in selecting the most effective and appropriate approaches to diagnosis and treatment.
  - d. Provide for patient comfort, including prompt and effective management of acute and chronic pain according to medically appropriate standards.
  - e. Cooperate with hospital efforts to implement methods to systematically enhance disease prevention.
  - f. Appropriately supervise physician extenders, allied health professionals and residents in compliance with bylaws, rules and regulations and good medical practice. (Medical Staff and other credentialed physicians only)
2. **Quality of Service:** Ability to meet the customer service needs of patients and other caregivers as evidenced by the following:
  - a. Ensure timely and continuous care of patients, 24 hours per day, seven days per week, by clear identification of covering physicians and by appropriate and timely answering service and electronic communications availability.
  - b. Assure that each patient is evaluated by a physician as often as necessary but at least daily and document findings in the medical record at that time.
  - c. Request inpatient consultations by providing adequate communication with the consultant including a clear reason for consultation and, for urgent or emergent requests, make direct physician-to-physician contact.

- d. Respond promptly to nursing requests for patient care needs and physician consultation requests.
  - e. Support the medical staff's efforts to maintain patient satisfaction rates for physicians.
3. **Commitment to Providing Quality Care that is Safe and Medically Appropriate**
- a. Commit to safety: every patient, every time.
  - b. Speak up when you see a quality or safety issue and discuss mistakes you see with others so we can learn how to prevent future mistakes.
  - c. Actively engage and support efforts to improve quality of care, including organization-approved technology advancements.
  - d. Actively participate in initiatives to improve care coordination between and among caregivers, community support agencies and other providers.
  - e. Actively participate in initiatives to improve the health of the community as a whole.
4. **Patient Safety/Patient Rights:** Cooperation with patient safety and rights, rules and procedures as evidenced by the following:
- a. Participate in the hospital's efforts and policies to maintain a patient safety culture and reduce medical errors.
  - b. Follow nationally recognized recommendations (CDC) regarding infection control procedures and precautions when participating in patient care.
  - c. Maintain medical records consistent with the medical staff bylaws and rules and regulations including but not limited to chart entry legibility and timely completion of History and Physical examination reports, Operative Reports, procedure notes, appropriate abbreviations and discharge summaries.
  - d. Communicate clearly with other physicians and caregivers, patients and their families through appropriate oral and written methods to ensure accurate transfer of information.
  - e. Respect patient rights by discussing unanticipated adverse outcomes with patients and/or appropriate family members.
  - f. Respect patient rights by not discussing patient care information and issues in public settings.
  - g. Respect patient needs when seeing or attending patients by wearing appropriate identification.
  - h. Discuss end-of-life issues when appropriate to a patient's condition, including advance directives and patient and family support, and honor patient desires.
  - i. Follow ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices, in accordance with the ethical and religious directives for Catholic healthcare systems, consulting with the Ethics Committee as appropriate.
  - j. Utilize sensitivity and responsiveness to patients' culture, age, gender, and disabilities.
  - k. Maintain a basic level of competency in the use of the electronic medical record as defined by the MEC.
  - l. Provide comfort for our patients, including prompt and effective response to their needs.
  - m. Communicate clinical information to patients and their designees in a clear and timely manner.
  - n. Discuss available treatment options openly with patients, or their designees, and involve them in decisions regarding their care.
  - o. Provide care to all patients who arrive at your facility in an emergency, as defined by law, regardless of their ability to pay or source of payment.
5. **Resource Utilization:** Effective and efficient use of hospital clinical resources as evidenced by the following:

- a. Strive to provide quality patient care that is cost effective by cooperating with efforts to appropriately manage the use of valuable patient care resources according to comparative data and current professional standards.
  - b. Cooperate with care coordination guidelines for appropriate hospital admission, level of care transfer, and timely discharge to outpatient management when medically appropriate.
  - c. Advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system complexities.
  - d. Properly use and protect all resources including materials and supplies, equipment, staff time and financial assets.
  - e. Respect the environment and follow your organization's policies for the handling and disposal of hazardous materials and infectious waste.
6. **Peer and Co-Worker Relationships:** Medical staff behavior and processes for monitoring and improving behavior are defined in medical staff policies and bylaws. Expectations regarding behavior are characterized by appropriate interpersonal interactions with colleagues, hospital staff and patients as evidenced by the following:
- a. Act in a professional, respectful manner at all times to enhance a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect and trust among members of the patient care team.
  - b. Refrain from inappropriate behavior including but not limited to impulsive, disruptive, sexually harassing or disrespectful behavior or documentation in the medical record that does not directly relate to the patient clinical status or plan of care and is derogatory or inflammatory.
  - c. Address disagreements in a constructive, respectful manner away from patients or other non-involved caregivers.
  - d. Dress in a professional and respectful manner.
7. **Citizenship:** Participation and cooperation with medical staff responsibilities as evidenced by the following:
- a. Review your individual and specialty data for all dimensions of performance and utilize this data for self-improvement to continuously improve patient care.
  - b. Respond in the spirit of continuous improvement when contacted regarding concerns about patient care.
  - c. Use information technology to manage information, access on-line medical information, and support your own education
  - d. Participate in emergency department call coverage as determined by the MEC.
  - e. Make positive contributions to the medical staff by participating actively in medical staff functions, serving when requested and by responding in a timely manner when provided information on medical staff matters requesting medical staff member input.
  - f. In the spirit of early assistance, help to identify issues affecting the physical and mental health of fellow medical staff members.
  - g. Act with honest and integrity in all activities.
  - h. Actively participate in training programs offered by your organization.
  - i. Follow your organization's policies requiring the disclosure of outside activities or relationships that could represent a conflict of interest with your medical staff role and any other responsibilities.
  - j. Follow all requirements of Medicare, Medicaid, other federal and state health care programs, as well as those of commercial insurance companies and other third-party payers. These requirements generally involve:
    - i. Delivering high-quality, medically necessary and appropriate services.
    - ii. Creating and maintaining complete and accurate medical records.



- iii. Submitting complete and accurate claims for services provided.
- iv. Protecting the privacy and security of health information we collect.
- v. Conduct all medical research activities consistent with the highest standards of ethics and integrity and in accordance with all federal and state laws and regulations, and your organization's Institutional Review Board policies.
- vi. Immediately notify your Medical Staff Office if notified you have been excluded or debarred from participation in federal or state health care programs.

## 8. Professionalism

- a. Deliver people-centered, quality health care services with compassion, dignity and respect for each individual.
- b. Deliver services without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, genetic information, payer source, ability to pay, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- c. Maintain a positive and courteous customer service orientation.
- d. Demonstrate the highest levels of ethical and professional conduct at all times and under all circumstances.
- e. Speak professionally and respectfully to those you serve.
- f. Respond to requests for information or assistance in a timely and supportive manner.
- g. Behave in a manner that enhances a spirit of cooperation, mutual respect and trust among all members of the team.
- h. Commit to working with others in a supportive team environment.
- i. Deliver services in accordance with all professional standards that apply to your position.
- j. Create and maintain complete, timely and accurate medical records consistent with medical staff bylaws.
- k. Protect the privacy and confidentiality of all personal health information - electronic, paper or verbal - you may receive.
- l. Maintain appropriate licenses, certifications and other credentials required of your position.
- m. Abstain from inappropriate physical contact with others and report any harassment, intimidation or violence of any kind that you witness.
- n. Maintain a safe work environment by performing your duties and responsibilities free from the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- o. Protect the confidentiality of all medical peer review information.

## 9. Stewardship of Resources

- a. Properly use and protect all resources including materials and supplies, equipment, staff time and financial assets.
- b. Respect the environment and follow your organization's policies for the handling and disposal of hazardous materials and infectious waste.

## Where to Find Help

If you have a question or concern about possible violations of law, regulation or the Code of Conduct you are encouraged to seek answers by contacting one of the following resources:

- Your Chief Medical Officer or Medical Staff Office at: 616-685-6343
- Another member of your organization's senior management team
- Your Integrity & Compliance Officer at: 616-685-6164
- The Trinity Health Integrity and Compliance Line at 1-866-477-4661 or you may file a written report online at [www.mycompliancereport.com](http://www.mycompliancereport.com) using access code "THO"

**Thank You!**

We appreciate your taking time to review this information and our commitment to carrying out the Mission of Mercy Health Saint Mary's with the highest standards of ethical behavior. Your dedication and support is critical to this important effort.

**Approvers: Soraida Cunningham (Coor Institutional Policy) (10/23/2018)**