

SECTION SEVEN: INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES RELATIVE TO POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMS

POLICY NO: 7.1

SUBJECT: ORGANIZATIONAL CODE OF ETHICS

PURPOSE

To maintain high standards of ethical conduct by members of the Board of Trustees, physicians, volunteers, persons under contract, house staff, employees, and students, in all practices of the institution including but not limited to patient care, marketing, admission, transfer, discharge, billing, and business practices.

PROCEDURE

All patient care and health care practices of the hospital will be carried out in the following manner.

To remain sensitive to and supportive of the religious, ethnic, cultural, and lifestyle diversity of patients and to assure the same level of care to all.

To ascertain and respond to the wishes, concerns, priorities, and values of the persons we serve.

To support and empower families and/or significant others as caregivers when it is in the best interest of the patient.

To maintain patient and other information in a confidential manner. As such, patient information will not be shared in an unauthorized manner and sensitive information concerning personnel and management issues will be maintained in confidence.

To assure that quality is not compromised below an acceptable level for financial reasons.

To protect the integrity of clinical decision-making, regardless of how the hospital compensates or shares financial risk with its lenders, managers, clinical staff, and licensed independent practitioners.

To provide services only to those patients whom we can safely care for within this organization and not to turn patients away who are in need of our services based on their inability to pay or based upon any other factor that is substantially unrelated to patient care. (See SPUH Policy 950-4, "Transfer of Patients to Another Facility")

All persons involved in the hospital will be honest, truthful, and fair in their interactions and dealings with patients, families, other health care providers, educational institutions, and payers.

To fully disclose information regarding rights and responsibilities, costs, care, practices, services, discharge, and complaints (See "Statement of Patient's Rights", Policy VII.2).

To provide information regarding the Bioethics Committee as a resource for resolution of patient care ethical conflicts. (See SPUH Policy 950-12, "Adult Ethics Case Review Subcommittee")

To be truthful and accurate in public advertising and information dissemination. (See SPUH Policy 956-13, "Marketing, Advertising, and Public Relations Code of Ethics")

- To accept and make referrals in the best interest of the patients.
- To refrain from receiving inappropriate gifts of value or monetary compensation in return for favors (i.e. “kickbacks” or “payoffs”).
- To ensure that the privacy and the confidentiality of information about patients treated at Saint Peter’s University Hospital is maintained by all personnel. (See SPUH Policy 950-24, “Confidentiality of Information”)
- To not accept any gifts, favors, or hospitality that might influence one’s decision-making or actions affecting the hospital or create the appearance of a conflict of interest.
- To make every effort to honor the intent of benefactors or donors.

- To consider and prevent any appearance of conflict or interest in all business and contractual relationships and to report identified conflict of interest (See Policy VII.3, “Conflicts of Interest”)
- To direct all offers of gifts to the Saint Peter’s University Hospital Foundation. Solicitation of monetary gifts shall be made only by Foundation personnel charged with this responsibility.
- To be responsible in billing parties for services provided to patients according with all applicable federal, state, and government rules and regulations. Industry guidelines, conventions and agreements relating to the billing process will also be adhered to. When requested, itemized bills will be sent to their proper parties. Each item charged will show the following information: date of service, description of service/item; quantity; individual charge amount; and extended charge amount(s).

RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS/CONCERNS REGARDING VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF ETHICS

Persons, including patients and their families, that believe there has been a breach of this policy may call the Ethics Hotline at (732) 745-8600, extension 6799.

Complaints will be discussed and resolved, if possible, by communication and collaboration among the involved persons. Ethical issues regarding patient care or decisions will be directed to the Ethics Committee for consultation and advice.

If unresolved at the individual/physician/staff level, complaints shall be referred to the supervisor or department head/chairman.

Concerns regarding the protection of clinical decision-making will be referred to appropriate administrative personnel.

Complaints related to hospital employees and volunteers, if unresolved at the department level, shall be referred to the Human Resources Department.

Complaints related to the Board of Trustees and complaints related to the physicians that remain unresolved at the department head/chairman level shall be referred to the President of Saint Peter's University Hospital.

The President of Saint Peter's University Hospital has the ultimate responsibility for resolution of complaints not able to be resolved at lower levels.

REVIEW AND REPORTING

Human Resources shall submit a summary of each referred complaint and intervention relating to organizational ethics to the President upon resolution.

The President of Saint Peter's University Hospital shall review all complaints related to the organizational ethics policy and submit an annual summary to the Board of Trustees.

Reviewed: 7/2007