

PURPOSE

The NCH Healthcare System promotes education and learning opportunities for medical professionals to improve their knowledge or enhance their skills in the practice of medicine and for students and others in the community who are interested in pursuing careers in healthcare for educational purposes only.

POLICY

Following The Joint Commission standards, Federal and State laws, and HIPAA privacy regulations, this educational opportunity may require patient consent and documentation of the Observer's attendance in the patient's medical record. The patient, their safety and their right to privacy are first and foremost in the decision on the presence of any party in their care. If the patient does not consent, there will be no retaliation or impact on patient care.

Those eligible to observe patient care: Students in the community seeking experiences that will help guide career choices; potential medical staff or residency applicants.

Requestors must be sponsored by a physician member of the NCH Medical Staff or NCH staff member in good standing in order to observe the sponsor during clinical duties in an NCH Healthcare facility. Under no circumstances shall an Observer physically engage in any patient care or patient care-related activities or actively participate in any discussions or conversations concerning patient care or make medical record entries. They strictly observe what is taking place around them. Observation of patient care experiences must be approved, with signatures from the Observer, sponsor, and GME representative. A *Request to Observe Patient Care* form must be completed before the individual is even considered as an Observer. The patient or physician involved in the care of a patient, or a procedure may deny an Observer's attendance even if the observation experience has been approved. It is the sponsor's responsibility to balance the patient's right to privacy with the organization's educational mission.

There is a twenty-eight (28) day MAXIMUM limit per calendar year on observing patient care. Observation of patient care shall only occur during the dates listed on the approved *Request to Observe Patient Care* form.

Approved Observers must complete an onboarding packet which includes a *Confidentiality Agreement* and an *Observation of Patient Care Student Attestation* prior to starting the observation experience.

Immunizations/TB testing: Proof of annual flu vaccine, COVID-19 vaccination, and negative TB test is required and must be submitted with the *Request to Observe Patient Care* form.

PROCEDURE

The observer is responsible for the accurate collection of the data on the *Request to Observe Patient Care*, *Confidentiality Statement*, and *Observers of Patient Care Attestation* forms and collection of any required supporting documents that determine eligibility. The complete information packet shall be emailed to the Graduated Medical Education (GME) Department at DL_Observation@nchmd.org.

The GME Department will review the information packet for completeness and availability of requested dates for the observation experience. The observation experience will not be approved if the individual does not meet eligibility requirements under this policy, if the packet is incomplete or if the maximum number of Observers for the requested dates have been reached (observation of patient care under this policy is limited to 12 Observers in the NCH Healthcare System at any one time). The GME Department will notify the sponsor and/or member of the sponsor's administrative team of whether the request has been denied or conditionally approved. Note: Observers will not be issued NCH ID badges. The sponsoring preceptor is responsible for escorting the observer throughout their visit.

Physicians/Medical Students:

Non-NCH privileged physicians or any medical student desiring an opportunity to view a procedure, shadow a fellow physician, tour an NCH Healthcare System facility area or who may be a potential applicant for a residency program must submit a completed *Request to Observe Patient Care* form to the Medical Staff Office at least ten (10) working business days prior to the observation date. They will need to identify a physician who will serve as their sponsor.

Student Observers of Physicians/APRNs/Physician Assistants:

A member of the medical staff must initiate the request to bring a student Observer into an NCH Healthcare System facility. Student Observers must submit a completed *Request to Observe Patient Care* form to the Graduate Medical Education (GME) Department at least ten (10) working business days prior to the observation date.

Student Observers of other Healthcare Providers:

An NCH staff member and/or employee may initiate the request to bring a student Observer into an NCH Healthcare System facility. Student Observers must submit a completed *Request to Observe Patient Care* form to the Graduate Medical Education (GME) Department at least ten (10) working business days prior to the observation date.

SPONSOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Sponsors should take into account patient privacy, specifically in regard to Psychiatry and OB/GYN, as well as any potential areas where there may be exposure to radiation or hazardous materials.

The sponsor must be educated on the policy and utilization of the *Request to Observe Patient Care form* and the information that needs to be attached to the form such as proof of flu shot, COVID-19 vaccination, negative TB test, etc.

The sponsor or a member of their administrative team is responsible for educating the Observer about the rules of NO ENGAGEMENT. All Observers must be accompanied by their sponsor at all times. The Observer will be under the direct and exclusive supervision and control of the sponsor and NCH Healthcare System shall have the right to remove an Observer in the event that such person does not satisfactorily adhere to NCH policies and procedures.

The sponsor or a member of their administrative team is also responsible to set up the observational experience and to be prepared to show documentation that the proper procedure was followed for the observation of patient care should anyone ask. The sponsor or a member of their administrative team will assist the Observer in connecting with their sponsor during the approved observation period. They must report any problems or

issues with the observation of patient care experience to the GME Department for any required follow up. Any sponsor who fails to follow the Observation of Patient Care Policy and Procedures may lose the privilege of sponsoring student Observers in the future.

There shall be no credit provided to the Observer, nor are there formal records of attendance maintained, in that the standard courtesy appointment will not be executed. Physician sponsors may exercise their prerogative to provide a letter of verification of attendance, but NCH Healthcare System shall not be stated as a sponsoring agency unless prior arrangements have been made by the organization.

Group Tours/Formal School Visits: (Examples: Local schools and clubs). Requests may be made by local schools. These tours/visits shall be general in nature and patient privacy protected. The tours/visits shall be coordinated through the Education Department.

Filming or photography is not permitted.

Age: Individuals under the age of 18 are not eligible for observation of patient care activities at NCH.

Those who fall outside of this policy: Individuals seeking observation opportunities who do not meet the requirements of this policy will be referred to the Director of Volunteer Services for possible volunteer opportunities in their area of interest.

Original Approval Date: February 10, 2015 by MEC

Effective Date 02/20/2017

Last Revision Date 01/28/2025

Categories

Category Subcategories of Organizational Policies not selected.

Sub-Category Subcategories of Organizational Policies not selected.

Legacy

Old Policy Number 3.2.10