

HOSPITAL POLICY BRIEFS

Administrator On Call

A designated member of the administrative staff is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to intervene when conditions immediately threaten life or health, threaten damage to equipment or buildings, or have the potential to interfere with timely and effective provision of services. All calls to the Administrator on Call will be initiated by the Director/Clinical Manager or designee. An up-to-date on-call schedule is available at the switchboard and in the Clinical Manager's office.

Anatomical Gifts (Organ Donation, Tissue Donation)

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) require that all hospitals receiving Medicare/Medicaid reimbursements adhere to the Hospital Conditions of Participation for Organ Donation. The Catholic Church teaches in the Ethical and Religious Directives the following relative to organ donation: (a) Directive #63 – Catholic health care institutions should encourage and provide the means whereby those who wish to do so may arrange for the donation of their organs and bodily tissue for ethically legitimate purposes, so that they may be used for donation and research after death; (b) Directive #64 – Such organs should not be removed until it has been medically determined that the patient has died. In order to prevent any conflict of interest, the physicians who determine death should not be members of the transplant team. Referrals to the Center for Donation and Transplant (CDT) shall be made within 1 hour of a patient's death by cardiac criteria. Referrals shall also be made when a patient meets clinical criteria for imminent death: has suffered a neurological insult, is intubated and has a Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS) less than or equal to 5 or has a loss of 3 or more brain stem reflexes. All calls are to be made to the CDT 24-hour referral number at 1-800-803-6667. If the patient is medically suitable for organ or tissue donation, the family will be approached only by CDT staff or staff from the Lion's Eye Bank of Albany (LEBA). The Lourdes associate is not to discuss organ or tissue donation with the family.

COBRA/EMTALA

Lourdes will provide an appropriate medical screening examination to any individual who comes to the hospital and requests examination and/or treatment of a medical condition. If the individual has an emergency medical condition, necessary stabilizing treatment within the hospital's capacity and capability will be provided, and if necessary, appropriate transfer to another hospital unless the transfer is refused. Medical screening and stabilization will not be delayed by inquiring about an individual's method of payment or insurance status. Medical screening examinations and, when necessary, stabilization, will be provided by a Qualified Medical Practitioner (QMP), which is an individual who is licensed and granted privileges as a credentialed member of the Medical Staff, including Medical Doctors, Doctors of Osteopathy, Certified Nurse Midwives, Nurse Practitioners and/or Physician Assistants. When patient transfer is deemed necessary and appropriate, there will be: (1) a written order by the practitioner, (2) a documented "Consent for Transfer to Hospital" form listing the risks and benefits, and when possible, informed consent from the patient and/or legally responsible person, (3) direct contact between the transferring practitioner and the receiving practitioner to discuss the patient's care and confirm acceptance, (4) copies of all available medical record information and (5) appropriate transportation including that of staff to accompany the patient.

Death Certificates

When pronouncement of death occurs in the hospital, a Certificate of Death must be completed within 24 hours by the patient's physician. If the deceased is pronounced by a physician other than the attending or covering physician, the attending physician will be notified by the Admitting/Registration Department that the Death Certificate must be signed within 24 hours of such notification. In a case involving a Coroner, a Death Certificate will be issued by that official. Any problem or delay in obtaining a signature on the Death Certificate shall be reported to the Senior Vice-President, Nursing, or designee. Copies of Death Certificates may be obtained by the appropriate Funeral Director.

Computer and E-Mail Usage

The Information Technology Department and appropriate System Administrators are responsible for maintaining a secure audit file for reviewing computer usage and access. All computers, computer files, and e-mail products furnished by Lourdes for use by employees and agents are the property of Lourdes and its affiliates and are intended for business use only. Users are accountable to the HIPAA privacy and security regulations.

Coroner's Cases

When appropriate, the Coroner shall be notified of a death. The police may be notified concurrently, as appropriate. The following situations are Coroner's cases: (a) a death in which the cause of death is unknown, suspicious, sudden or unexpected and unrelated to any underlying condition; (b) a violent death, whether by criminal violence, suicide or casualty; (c) any fatal accident; (d) any death resulting from accident, injury, poison or suspicion of same, regardless of medical treatment or length of stay in the hospital; (e) a death caused by unlawful act or criminal neglect; or (f) a death caused by suspected criminal abortion. In any of the above identified cases, the body will not be moved without the Coroner's permission, and no changes are to be made to the physical circumstances at the time of death without the Coroner's permission. The Administrator On Call or designee shall be informed of all Coroner's cases listed above. In cases where the police also shall be notified, the Nurse Director or designee will first contact the Administrator On Call before notifying the police.

Language Assistance (Translation) to Persons With Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Lourdes recognizes the diverse culture of the community it serves and provides translation services for people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) to allow for effective communication between service providers and patients. An interpreter should be used by the medical provider for patients with LEP any time informed consent is needed or any time there is meaningful medical information to be communicated to the patient. Lourdes shall provide interpreter services within 10 minutes for patients seen in the Emergency Department and within 20 minutes in all other settings. The Language Line is the preferred resource to provide interpreter services 24 hours a day. Instructions are explained in the Administrative Policy.

Smoking

Recognizing the potential hazards that smoking presents to general safety and individual health, Lourdes designates itself as a non-smoking institution. Smoking is prohibited on the grounds or in the buildings owned or leased by Our Lady of Lourdes Memorial Hospital. Signs prohibiting smoking are prominently displayed at all public entrances to Lourdes facilities.