

CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

PURPOSE: To provide guidelines for embracing and effectuating a code of conduct which promotes a culture of safety and quality care.

DESIRE OUTCOME: To create a culture of safety and quality care, maintaining an environment that promotes not only safety, but satisfaction, growth and opportunity for its patients, employees, physicians, and the community.

SUPPORTIVE DATA: Executive Order 01.01.2007.01, the DHMH Corporate Compliance Program Code of Conduct (DHMH Policy 01.03.01), the Mission, Vision and core values of Thomas B. Finan Center, and the Joint Commission Leadership standards.

LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY: Center leadership, staff, Medical Staff, students, volunteers and to the Center.

DEFINITIONS:

1. "Staff" means all permanent state employees, both part-time and full-time, and all contractual employees of the Finan Center.
2. "Contractor(s)" means all agencies that have entered into a contract to provide services for the Finan Center, i.e. Linton Food Services, Western Maryland Health Systems, etc.

PROCEDURES:

1. Orientation
 - a. All staff, students, volunteers and contractors will be oriented to the Code of Conduct policy and will be given a copy of the Code of Conduct. Each orientee will be asked to sign an Intention to Comply acknowledgement, which will be retained in the individual's personnel file.
 - (1) As a part of the annual performance evaluation, all staff will again review the Code of Conduct policy and will sign an Intention to Comply with the Code of Conduct acknowledgement. Staff will be given a copy of the Code, upon request.
 - b. At the time of initiation and renewal of contracts, all contractors will be asked to sign an Intention to Comply with the Code of Conduct acknowledgement and will be provided a copy of the Code of Conduct.
2. Training
 - a. All clinical staff will be trained to address issues of safety and quality care using Team STEPPS communication techniques and will be encouraged to use these techniques actively.
 - (1) Key clinical staff members will receive additional training in conflict management techniques and will be encouraged to use these techniques in managing conflicts among staff members

related to clinical team decision-making.

3. Process for Reporting Violations
 - a. All staff members are expected and encouraged to report violations of the Code of Conduct to their supervisors in a timely manner. If, for reasons such as personal involvement with the violation, the supervisor is inappropriate to receive the violation report, the employee may report to the Personnel Department for guidance in the steps for reporting.
 - b. The person receiving the violation report will initiate investigation of the allegation and will initiate appropriate action.
 - (1) For most circumstances, the first action will be an informal discussion of the observed behavior with the violator in the context of the Code of Conduct and a discussion of the most appropriate reaction for the situation.
 - (2) If the reported behavior is part of a disruptive pattern, or if the action results in a violation of Center policy, state or Federal law, or endangers the life or health of a patient or staff member, the Center's progressive discipline policy will be immediately initiated.
 - c. In the event that a conflict arises among an employee group, which disrupts the Center's ability to provide for patient safety and/or quality care, two staff members trained in conflict management will meet with the group in order to facilitate a functional resolution of the situation. If this intervention is ineffective, the conflict will be referred to the Executive Group for resolution.

DOCUMENTATION: During initial orientation training to the Code of Conduct, all staff, students and volunteers will sign an Intention to Comply with the Code of Conduct and will be given a copy of the Code of Conduct. Contractors with the Center will sign an Intention to Comply with the Code of Conduct at the signing of the contract and will be given a copy of the Code of Conduct. Staff will be asked to review and sign an Intention to Comply with the Code of Conduct acknowledgement during the annual performance evaluation and will be given a copy of the Code of Conduct upon request.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS: The Code of Conduct applies to all who provide care and services to the Center. The Code of Conduct will be introduced to all staff, students, volunteers and contractors. There is a procedure for reporting violations of the Code and a process for handling these reports. All staff and contractors are encouraged to report violations.

CROSS INDEX: Staff-Patient Relations, Staff Conduct, Staff Relations

REVIEWING BODY: Executive Committee

COLLATERAL REVIEWERS: Ethics Committee

DATE POLICY ORIGINATED: 01/22/09

DATE OF MOST RECENT REVIEW: 01/22/09

DATE OF NEXT SCHEDULED REVIEW: 01/2011

Code of Conduct

The Thomas B. Finan Center is committed to a culture of safety and quality care, maintaining an environment that promotes not only safety, but satisfaction, growth and opportunity for its patients, employees, physicians, and the community.

We choose to demonstrate, by actions and results, the commitment to continuous improvement through the joint efforts of the Center leadership, staff, volunteers, medical staff, other health care agencies and the community.

We expect our employees to be honest and to act with integrity in all of your dealings with patients, vendors, co-workers, and other customers. This Code of Conduct will help serve as a guide to your behavior as an employee of the Center. It is each employee's responsibility to be familiar with and adhere to all policies and procedures. Claims of ignorance, good intentions, or use of poor judgment are generally not acceptable as excuses for non-compliance.

Center Administration, Medical Staff and supervisors at every level (individually and collectively referred to as Leadership) are expected to take responsibility for addressing the actions of their employees. They are responsible to ensure that their employees have an understanding of and apply the ethical standards set forth in this Code of Conduct. They are expected to listen to their employees' questions and act on their concerns. Leadership must also set a personal example of high ethical standards in job performance. It is the responsibility of the leadership to set the tone for their department and the Center.

The Code of Conduct is supplementary to the Executive Order 01.01.2007.01, the DHMH Corporate Compliance Program Code of Conduct (DHMH Policy 01.03.01) and the mission, vision and core values of Thomas B. Finan Center and applies to all who provide services to the Thomas B. Finan Center.

Mission

To provide as comprehensive an array as possible of safe and efficient mental health services to all patients admitted.

Vision

To figure prominently in the consumer-centered mental health care delivery system envisioned by the Mental Hygiene Administration, providing comprehensive services for the chronically mentally ill as part of a continuum of care that will accommodate needs ranging from long-term hospital to occasional community support, and that will emphasize case management, consumer choice and community education

In our effort to establish a culture of safety and to provide quality care, we are committed to:

COMPLY WITH THE LAW: Employees are required to understand and abide by local, state, and Federal laws.

PROVIDE EXCELLENT PATIENT CARE: Employees shall strive to treat all patients with a spirit of kindness, patience and understanding. Each patient is an individual and should be treated with respect, with their needs and desires considered as health care decisions are made. Steps shall be taken so that each patient understands his or her treatment needs and options, treatment methods utilized, and treatment outcomes. Discrimination against any person because of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or gender will not be tolerated.

PROTECT CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION: Employees shall maintain the confidentiality of patients and personnel in accordance with HIPAA requirements. Employees shall not use, disclose, or discuss patient specific information with others unless it is necessary to serve the patient or otherwise required by law.

ENSURE A POSITIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT: Undesirable and disruptive behaviors that intimidate coworkers, patients and/or visitors, decrease morale or increase staff turnover may threaten the safety and quality of services provided and **will not be tolerated**. These undesirable and disruptive behaviors may be verbal, non-verbal or written and may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- profane or disrespectful language
- demeaning behavior
- sexual comments
- racial or ethnic jokes
- outbursts of anger
- throwing of charts/objects
- criticizing other caregivers in front of patients or other staff
- comments that undermine a patient's trust in other caregivers or the hospital
- comments that undermine a caregiver's self-confidence in caring for patients
- intimidating behavior that has the effect of suppressing input by other members of the healthcare team.

REFUSE TO TOLERATE HARASSMENT OR DISCRIMINATION: The Center shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or gender in providing services to patients or the public, or in relation to employment practices. Furthermore, the Center prohibits harassment or discrimination of its employees in any form by supervisors, coworkers, customers or vendors.

REFUSE TO ACCEPT INAPPROPRIATE GIFTS OR GRATUITIES: Employees are prohibited from soliciting tips, personal gratuities or gifts from patient, family, and

vendors. Employees may, however, accept non monetary gratuities or gifts of a nominal value, such as cookies, flowers or candy if the gift would not influence, or reasonably appear to others to be capable of influencing, the employee's business judgment in conducting affairs with the patient or vendor.

REFRAIN FROM GIVING GIFTS TO PATIENTS AND VENDORS: Employees shall not offer or give money, services or other things of value, with the expectation of influencing the judgment or decision making process of any purchaser, vendor, patient, governmental official or any other person.

AVOID CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: Employees are prohibited from engaging in any activity, practice, or act which conflicts with, or appears to conflict with, the interests of the Center, its patients, or its vendors.

KEEP ACCURATE AND COMPLETE RECORDS: Employees shall not alter or destroy anything that is part of the official medical record. Employee travel related expenses must be accurately documented and supported when seeking reimbursement from the Center.

PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT: Employees shall dispose of all waste and other materials and store all chemicals and substances in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, choosing to recycle materials whenever possible.

PROVIDE A SAFE WORPLACE: The Center will comply with all applicable state and Federal laws designed to improve workplace safety through training, strict compliance to such laws, and providing employees with the necessary safety equipment to perform their duties safely.

ADHERE TO ANTI REFERRAL AND HEALTH CARE FRAUD AND ABUSE LEGISLATION: Employees are required to comply with laws that prohibit health care fraud and abuse.

HOW TO REPORT VIOLATIONS: Employees shall not withhold or fail to report knowledge of any known or suspected Code of Conduct violations. If assistance is needed in reporting concerns regarding any of the issues addressed in this Code of Conduct, please contact your Supervisor, a member of the Ethics Committee, or the Personnel Department at 2236. Retaliation against individuals who report suspected violations will not be tolerated.

INTENTION TO COMPLY:

This is to acknowledge that I have received, read and understand the Thomas B. Finan Center's Code of Conduct. I agree to comply with the standards contained in the Code of Conduct and the related policies, procedures, and laws applicable to my job. This will be expected as a part of my continued employment with the Thomas B. Finan Center.

This Code of Conduct does not constitute an employment contract and is not an assurance of continued employment.

NAME (please print)

SIGNATURE

DATE

You will be asked to sign an acknowledgement of your intent to comply with this Code of Conduct annually at the time of your Performance Appraisal (PEP).

NOTE:

Original of this Intention to Comply will be maintained in the employee's personnel file.