

PROFESSIONAL STAFF POLICY

POLICY ORIGIN: Jt. Medical Advisory Committee

POLICY NO: PSP10-002

SECTION TITLE: CLINICAL OBSERVERSHIPS

TOPIC: PROFESSIONAL STAFF OBSERVERSHIP POLICY

PURPOSE

To identify the process for providing Observers with educational opportunities to observe and gain insight into how healthcare is provided in hospitals and/or how various hospital departments function.

To clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Observer while engaged in an observership at Grand River Hospital and St. Mary's General Hospital (the "Hospitals").

To clarify the roles and responsibilities of the supervising Professional Staff (the "Supervisor") to ensure that Observers are provided with appropriate supervision and are involved in activities that are appropriate to their role.

This policy does **not** address clinical placements by clinical clerks, residents, or midwives which are coordinated separately by the Chief of Staff office, nor does it address visits or secondments arranged through educational institutions (including Take Your Kid to Work Days) or other health care facilities, which are dealt with through the Organizational Development Department.

PROCEDURES

All Observers engaging in clinical educational activities must meet the requirements set out below and must be approved by the Chief of Staff Office at the Hospitals. It is the Observer's responsibility to contact and secure a Supervisor for their observership term. Once a Professional Staff member agrees to be the Supervisor, he/she should advise the Observer to contact the Chief of Staff office to obtain the required paperwork. Upon request, the Chief of Staff office may provide an application package to the individual requesting the opportunity to observe at the Hospitals.

All documentation relating to the application must be completed by the Observer and Supervisor, as applicable, and be submitted to the Chief of Staff office **at least two weeks** prior to the anticipated or requested start date.

Each application must be submitted to the Chief of Staff office and shall further contain without limitation the following:

- a) a completed Observership Request form signed by the Observer, the Supervisor, the Department Chief and the VP Medical
- b) a completed and signed Confidentiality Agreement
- c) a completed Offence Declaration Form
- d) proof of completion of the online Privacy Awareness Training
- e) proof of completion of the online Hand Hygiene Course
- f) proof of enrolment, graduate or employment status
- g) an Observership Acknowledgment and Waiver of Liability signed by the Observer

Upon receipt of the observership application package, the documentation will be submitted to the Chief of Staff office for review and approval. All observerships must be approved by the observer's Supervisor, the Department Chief, the VP Medical and the Chief of Staff. The Chief of Staff office will send a confirmation to the Observer and the Supervisor regarding approval or non-approval of the observership. International Medical Graduates (IMG's) and International Medical Students can participate in observerships for a **maximum of 30 hospital days/year**; all other observers are limited to **10 days/year**. Observerships beyond 30 days require special approval by the Chief of Staff office and clearance by the Occupational Health office.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this document, the following capitalized terms shall have the following meaning:

"the Hospitals" refers to both Grand River Hospital and St. Mary's General Hospital.

"College" means a Supervisor's applicable regulatory College under the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991.

"Observer" means an individual attending either Hospital for the specific purpose of gaining knowledge about the provision of healthcare and/or the practice of medicine in hospitals in Canada. An observer may be:

- an International Medical Graduate (IMG) (30 day/year maximum)
- an International Medical Student (30 day/year maximum)
- an undergraduate or graduate student (10 days/year maximum)
- a medical or pharmaceutical representative (10 days/year maximum)
- special consideration for observerships can be presented to the Chief of Staff Office for review

"Professional Staff" means a member of the Medical, Dental, Midwifery or Extended Class Nursing Staff to whom hospital privileges have been granted.

"Supervisor" means the Professional Staff member who has taken on the responsibility of supervising an observer throughout the duration of their observership. A Professional Staff member must hold active or associate privileges to be a supervisor to an observer.

"Department Chief" means the medical leader of the department/program in which the observership is occurring.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISORS

The Supervisor must provide appropriate supervision to the Observer. This includes:

- a) ensuring that the Observer is accompanied by the Supervisor at all times
- b) being willing and able to explain the various processes being observed and clarifying any procedures or answering any questions the Observer may have
- c) being able to intervene and/or prevent the Observer from behaving in a way that is unsafe, inappropriate or in contravention of hospital policies, procedures or expectations

If the Observer will be present during any contact with a patient, the Supervisor must introduce the Observer to the patient as a visitor/IMG as appropriate and explain the reason for the observership.

In accordance with Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004, the Supervisor must obtain express consent from the patient, or the patient's substitute decision-maker where applicable, before permitting the Observer to observe patient encounters, or to have access to patient records. Consent can be oral, but must be recorded in the patient's medical record. Each patient is entitled to withhold or withdraw consent. A patient's decision to provide, withhold, or withdraw consent must not alter the patient's access to healthcare in any manner.

In addition to complying with this Policy, a Supervisor must comply with the applicable policies, guidelines and/or expectations of his/her regulatory College.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OBSERVERS:

An observer is **not** permitted to participate in the treatment of patients in any way. Treatment of patients includes, but is **not limited to:**

- taking a medical history
- conducting physical examinations
- diagnosing or treating a patient's condition
- ordering, preparing or administering drugs
- documenting in patients' health records, either in electronic or hard copy format
- having independent access to health records, either in electronic or hard copy format
- providing health care advice

When on hospital premises, an Observer **must** be accompanied by his/her Supervisor at all times. The Supervisor must be close enough to monitor the Observer and to intervene and/or prevent the Observer from behaving in a way that is unsafe, inappropriate or in contravention of hospital policies, procedures or expectations.

An Observer is not an employee or agent of the hospitals. An Observer will not receive educational credit, remuneration, reimbursement or other compensation for participating in the observership.

HAND HYGIENE:

All individuals interested in pursuing an observership are required to complete the Hand Hygiene Course and supply proof of completion to the Chief of Staff Office as part of the application process. Instructions for completing the course will be included in the observership application package.

OBSERVER WAIVER:

Prior to participating in any observership, the Observer must review, sign and submit an Observership Acknowledgment and Waiver of Liability.

REFUSAL, TERMINATION OR CANCELLATION OF OBSERVERSHIP:

The Supervisor and/or the Hospitals may refuse, terminate or cancel an observership at any time at their sole discretion.

Any concerns regarding the appropriateness of the Observer’s conduct or behaviour will be addressed by the Supervisor and, if necessary, by the chief of staff/department chief, and may result in the observership being terminated immediately and the Observer being required to leave the premises.

HOSPITAL IDENTIFICATION:

Hospital-issued photo identification must be worn and visible at all times. There is at \$10.00 cash only deposit required for a St. Mary’s General Hospital ID badge. The deposit is refundable upon return of the ID badge.

To obtain an ID badge please contact:

Grand River Hospital: Security Office: (519) 749-4300 ext. 2883. Located outside the ER across from Triage

St. Mary’s General Hospital: Human Resources Office: (519) 744-3311 ext. 6669. Located in the Gordon A. Mackay Administration Building, Third Floor.

COMPUTER ACCESS & DICTATION:

Observers will not be permitted to have computer access at the Hospitals as they are not permitted to participate in any direct patient care (they are not part of the circle of care). Observers are also not permitted to dictate any patient reports.

APPROVAL: Joint Medical Advisory Committee, November 6, 2012

DISTRIBUTION: All Professional Staff, All Observers

REVIEW: Annual

REVISED:
